

THE CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM (QRS) ASSESSMENT



Indiana Paths to Quality

QRS Profile

April 2010



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Policy Research, Inc.



Indiana Paths to Quality

QRS Profile

Prepared for:

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Administration for Children and Families
Department of Health and Human Services
370 L'Enfant Plaza Promenade, SW
7th Floor West, Room 7A011
Washington, D.C. 20447

Project Officers:

Ivelisse Martinez-Beck
Kathleen Dwyer

Prepared by:

Child Trends

4301 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 350
Washington, DC 20008

Subcontractor to:

Mathematica Policy Research

600 Maryland Ave., S.W., Suite 550
Washington, DC 20024-2512

Project Director:

Gretchen Kirby, Mathematica

Co-Principal Investigators:

Kimberly Boller, Mathematica
Kathryn Tout, Child Trends

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Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) Assessment Study

PROFILE

Site:	Indiana
Program Name:	Paths to Quality
Respondents:	Melanie Brizzi Indiana Bureau of Child Care, Family and Social Services Administration
Information Reviewed and Finalized:	March 17, 2010

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Indiana – Paths to Quality

Program Information

This section provides general information about the QRS including the location, numbers and types of programs participating in the QRS, funding amounts, funding sources and goals.

Site name:	Indiana
Program name:	Paths to Quality
Service area:	Statewide
Details about other geographic area:	N/A
Pilot:	Pilot Completed
Pilot time frame:	July 2001- 2007
Date full program launched:	January 2008
Voluntary:	Yes
Website:	http://www.in.gov/fssa/2554.htm
Eligible programs:	Center-based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, licensed family child care, school-aged programs, unlicensed registered ministries
Source of funds for eligible public program:	N/A
Total numbers of programs participating:	1540
Number of participating child care centers:	399
Number of participating family child care programs:	1121
Number of other programs participating:	20 Unlicensed Registered Ministries
Percent of total programs enrolled in QRS:	65% Centers, 35% Family Child Care
Percent of programs at each rating level:	1- 75.5%, 2-12.2%, 3-5.6%, 4-6.7%
Goals:	<p>Paths to QUALITY is dedicated to supporting the well-being and success of all Indiana children through a statewide system that improves child development and age-appropriate learning experiences, promotes high quality child care, and supports and empowers parents as teachers and decision makers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education of parents on the need for quality early education and child care and how to identify and select developmentally appropriate experiences that will help children as they enter school • Advocacy and public awareness within the community that promotes quality

child care standards, child care worker education and its impact on business and economic development

- Development of well-trained qualified child care and early education staff through child care professional training and mentoring
- Availability of high quality, affordable child care and appropriate early education experiences for families and children at all socio-economic levels
- Collaboration with other community organizations as well as private businesses and foundations to develop solutions to ensure that all of our community's children will have opportunities to develop to their fullest potential

Language from statute: No state statute exists for Paths to Quality.

Rating Details

This section provides details about how the rating component is structured and the process that is used to rate programs.

Rating structure:	Building Blocks
Number of levels:	4
Length of time rating is valid:	1 year
Rating process:	An Independent Vendor conducts rating visits both on request for level advancement visits and annual to confirm current rating level. Visits are scheduled in advance with the program. Every indicator in each level must be met before the program can achieve the next level.
Method of combining points:	The requirements at each level must be met before moving on to the next.
Method used to assess programs for infants/toddlers:	Yes. There are separate indicators within each program standard's Level 2 & 3.
Method used to assess programs for school-aged children:	Yes. School-aged children receive modified rating visits. There is a rating checklist for rating visits and for school age, there is an N/A box if the item does not apply.
Different process used to assess family child care:	Yes. Family child care programs have separate indicators.
Different process used to assess Head Start/Early Head Start:	N/A
Different process used to assess accredited programs:	Yes. Accredited child care centers are at a Level 4 as long as previous level indicators are met.
Events that trigger re-rating:	Licensing Violation
Appeal process:	Yes. A provider must submit a written request to Bureau of Child Care. There is an internal process for reviewing and granting an appeal.
Availability of technical assistance for rating process:	Yes

Description of technical assistance for rating process:	Onsite technical assistance and mentoring is available to every participant.
Availability of technical assistance for preparatory process:	Yes
Description of technical assistance for preparatory process:	Mentors help providers prepare for the rating visit. Mentors also request rating visits.

Quality Indicators for Center-Based Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of center-based programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and the category labels used in the profile may differ from the site-specific category names used in a QRS.

Paths to Quality's Indicators are more extensive than the information provided in this profile. For detailed information on Licensed Center standards see this document:

<http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/files/CentersPTQStandards.pdf>

Number of site-specific indicator categories:	N/A
Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:	<p>N/A</p> <p>Indicators for Indiana's Paths to Quality are not separated into categories.</p> <p>The Purdue University Evaluation broke them into 10 categories as follows: Regulation, Teacher Education and Specialized Training, Structural Quality, Process Quality, Assessment, Provision for Children with Special Needs, Program Policy and Procedures, Director Professional Development, Parent-teacher communication and involvement, Accreditation by NAEYC and other organizations.</p>

Licensing Compliance (centers)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Licensing compliance included:	Yes
Licensing required for enrollment:	Yes

Licensing equivalent to the first level:	Yes
Licensing compliance referred to within:	N/A
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted
Comments:	Licensing or Voluntary Certification Program completion is required at first level. Licensed providers are included in the state database and are eligible. Registered Ministries must first meet health and safety standards (the Voluntary Certification Program standards) and are documented by a completed inspection report. The obtainment of the Voluntary Certification Program by a Registered Ministry is also entered in the state database.

Ratio and Group Size (centers)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Ratio and group size indicators included:	No
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Health and Safety (centers)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Health and safety indicators included:	No
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Curriculum (centers)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Curriculum indicators included:	Yes
Description:	Level 3: -A written curriculum reflects the program philosophy and goals, is based on child development and appropriate practice and provides for the various ages, ability levels, and

	<p>developmental stages of the children (consistent with Indiana's Foundation for Young Children, family is involved in curriculum, all staff members are oriented, and it is reflected in everyday practice).</p> <p>-Children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, math, and creative development are supported.</p> <p>-Children are actively engaged throughout the day in making choices about activities and materials.</p>
Curriculum review process:	Yes
Description of curriculum review process:	Mentors review the curriculum to ensure that it is developmentally appropriate and aligns with the Early Learning Guidelines.
Approved curricula identified:	No. Curriculum must be developmentally appropriate and aligned with Indiana Foundations for Young Children
Curriculum referred to within:	N/A
Curriculum source of evidence:	Documentation submitted, Observation

Environment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Environment indicators included:	Yes
Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:	No
Description:	<p>Level 2:</p> <p>-Classroom environments are welcoming, nurturing and safe for children to have interactions and experiences that promote their physical, social and emotional well being.</p> <p>-Outdoor playtime occurs daily (weather permitted) with a variety of materials available.</p>
Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g., activities, interactions, specific features):	<p>Level 2:</p> <p>-The classroom is arranged and utilizes enough materials and activities to provide a variety of age and developmentally appropriate interest centers that invite children's exploration. Each interest center must contain at least three different items</p>

(specified in Standards Document).

-Daily schedule provides ample time for child-directed choices with activities and materials that are geared to the age, interests, and abilities of each child.

-Children are read to daily and encouraged to explore books and other print materials.

Environment referred to within:

N/A

Environment source of evidence:

Observation

Comments:

Environmental Rating Scale is built into the evaluation conducted by Purdue University. It is not a formalized part of Paths to Quality outside of the Evaluation. Indiana is using the Environmental Rating Scale scores in select facilities as part of the evaluation of Paths to Quality to ensure that higher Paths to Quality levels align with higher Environmental Rating Scale scores.

Child Assessment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Child assessment indicators included:

No

Staff Qualifications (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Staff qualification indicators included:

Yes

Indicators for teachers include:

Education, training

Indicators for directors include:

Education, Training, Years of Experience

Directors qualifications related to administration and management

No

Bachelors degree indicator for director:

No

Bachelors degree indicator for teacher:

No

Bachelors degree indicator for assistant teacher:

No

Description:

Level 2:

-Director must receive orientation and train staff on the Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children Age Birth to Five.

- Director must be a member of a nationally recognized early childhood organization.
- 25% of teaching staff, including the Director, have either a Child Development Associate credential (CDA) or equivalent certificate, OR an early childhood degree or equivalent degree, OR have completed 45 clock hours of educational training leading to an Early Childhood/Child Development degree or CDA credential.
- At least 50% of teaching staff participate annually in a minimum of 15 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.

Level 3:

- 50% of teaching staff have either a CDA or equivalent certificate, an early childhood degree or equivalent degree OR completed 60 clock hours of educational training leading to an early childhood/child development degree or CDA credential.
- At least 50% of teaching staff, including the Director, participate annually in a minimum of 20 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.

Staff qualifications referred to within:	N/A
Staff qualifications source of evidence	Documentation submitted
Comments:	For directors, years of experience is not required if they have a Bachelor’s degree.

Family Partnership (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Family partnership indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Level 1: A system is in place for communicating pertinent information to families, daily and in an annual family conference for each child.</p> <p>Level 2: Program evaluation is completed annually by</p>

	families and staff.
Family partnership referred to within:	N/A
Family partnership source of evidence:	Documentation submitted, Observation

Administration and Management (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Administration and management indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program has a written philosophy and goals for children. -An advisory board is in place to provide input and support to the director. <p>Level 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program has been in operation for a minimum of one year. -At a minimum, the Lead Teacher receives paid planning time. -A strategic plan is completed and includes annual evaluation/ goal setting and long range planning/goal setting <p>Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Director volunteers to informally mentor a program at a Level 1, 2, or 3.
Administration and management referred to within:	N/A
Administration and management source of evidence:	Documentation submitted

Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:	Yes
Comments:	In Level 2, the standard states: the environment includes representation of each child and family including age, abilities, cultures which might include books, pictures, photographs, music/songs, games, toys, dress up

clothes/materials and foods.

Accreditation (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) and the Council on Accreditation (COA) are commonly included accreditation systems used in QRSs for center-based programs.

Accreditation included:	Yes
If yes, is accreditation:	One criterion in highest rating
Comments:	At Level 4, in addition to accreditation, programs must meet the requirements of all previous levels and the director must volunteer to informally mentor a program at a Level 1, 2, or 3.

Community Involvement (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Community involvement indicators included:	No
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Provisions for Children with Special Needs (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:	Yes
Comments:	Level 3: Plans and environmental accommodations for children with special needs are evident (Written plan, space arrangement, adaptation of materials, inclusion in age-appropriate self-help activities, and handling questions about differences).

Indicators for Family Child Care Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of family child care programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and these category labels may not be used in their QRS.

Paths to Quality's Indicators are more extensive than the information provided in this profile. For detailed information on Family Child Care standards see this document:

<http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/files/HomesPTQStandards.pdf>

Number of site-specific indicator categories:	N/A
Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:	<p>N/A</p> <p>Indicators for Indiana's Paths to Quality are not separated into categories.</p> <p>The Purdue University Evaluation broke them into 10 categories as follows: Regulation, Teacher Education and Specialized Training, Structural Quality, Process Quality, Assessment, Provision for Children with Special Needs, Program Policy and Procedures, Director Professional Development, Parent-teacher communication and involvement, Accreditation by NAEYC and other organizations</p>

Licensing Compliance (family child care)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Licensing compliance included:	Yes
Licensing required for enrollment:	Yes
Licensing equivalent to the first level:	Yes
Licensing compliance referred to within:	N/A
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted, Observation
Comments:	Licensing or Voluntary Certification Program completion is required at first level.

Ratio (family child care)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Ratio and group size indicators included:	No
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Health and Safety (family child care)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Health and safety indicators included:	No
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Curriculum (family child care)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Curriculum indicators included:	Yes
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Description:	<p>Level 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A written curriculum reflects the program philosophy and goals, is based on child development and appropriate practice and provides for the various ages, ability levels, and developmental stages of the children (consistent with Indiana's Foundation for Young Children, family is involved in curriculum, assistants are oriented, and it is reflected in everyday practice). -Children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, math, and creative development are supported. -Children are actively engaged throughout the day in making choices about activities and materials.
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Curriculum review process:	Yes
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Description of curriculum review process:	Mentors review curriculum to ensure that it is developmentally appropriate and aligns with the Early Learning Guidelines.
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Approved curricula identified:	No
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List of approved curricula:	Curriculum must be aligned with Indiana Foundation for Young Children.
Curriculum referred to within:	N/A
Curriculum source of evidence:	Observation

Environment (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Environment indicators included:	Yes
Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:	No
Description:	<p>Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The home is welcoming, nurturing, and safe for children to have interactions and experiences that promote their physical, social, and emotional wellbeing. -Outdoor playtime occurs daily (weather permitted) with a variety of materials available.
Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g. activities, interactions, specific features):	<p>Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Daily schedule provides ample time for child-directed choices with activities and materials that are geared to the age, interests, and abilities of each child. -The home is arranged and utilizes enough materials and activities to provide a variety of age and developmentally appropriate interest centers that invite children's explorations. Caregiver offers at least three of the following centers daily, from which the children may choose. Caregiver regularly rotates the interest centers that are offered. Each interest center must contain at least three different items (See Standards Document for specifics). -Children are read to daily and encouraged to explore books and other print materials.
Environment referred to within:	N/A
Environment source of evidence:	Observation
Comments:	Environmental Rating Scale is built into the evaluation conducted by Purdue University. It is not a formalized part of Paths to Quality outside of

the Evaluation. Indiana is using the Environmental Rating Scale scores in select facilities as part of the evaluation of Paths to Quality to ensure that higher Paths to Quality levels align with higher Environmental Rating Scale scores.

Child Assessment (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Child assessment indicators included:	No
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Staff qualifications (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Staff qualification indicators included:	Yes
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Indicators for family child care providers include:	Education, Training, Years of Experience,
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Family child care qualifications related to administration and management	No
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Bachelors degree indicator for family child care provider:	No
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Description:	<p>Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lead Caregiver receives orientation and trains assistants on the <i>Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children, Birth to Age Five</i>. -Lead Caregiver is a member of a nationally recognized early childhood organization. -Lead Caregiver will have a current CDA or equivalent certificate, OR an early childhood degree or equivalent degree OR have completed 45 clock hours of educational training in early childhood education within the past three years leading to a CDA or an early childhood/ child development degree. -At least 50% of caregivers, including the lead caregiver, annually participate in a minimum of 15 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.
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Level 3:

-Lead Caregiver has at least 12 months experience as a caregiver in a licensed child care setting or in a child care setting that is accredited by one of the Bureau of Child Care approved, nationally recognized organizations.

-Lead Caregiver will have a current CDA or equivalent certificate, OR and early childhood degree or equivalent degree; OR have completed 60 clock hours of educational training leading to an early childhood/child development degree or CDA credential within the past three years.

-At least 50% of caregivers, including the lead caregiver, annually participate in a minimum of 20 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.

Level 4:

-Lead Caregiver has a current CDA or equivalent or ECE degree or an equivalent degree.

Staff qualifications referred to within:

N/A

Staff qualifications source of evidence

Documentation submitted, Observation

Family Partnership (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Family partnership indicators included:

Yes

Description:

Level 2:

-A system is in place for communicating pertinent information to families, daily and at an annual family conference for each child.

-Written emergency plan is shared with and signed by parents.

-Written policies and a child care contract is established and implemented with families. The contract should be signed by the parent.

Level 3:

-Program evaluation is completed annually by families.

Family partnership referred to within:	N/A
Family partnership source of evidence:	Documentation submitted, observation

Administration and Management (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Administration and management indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child care home has a written philosophy and goals for children. -A written emergency plan is established and implemented. The plan is shared with parents at the time of enrollment and any time the provider initiates a change in any aspect of the plan. The purpose of the written emergency plan is to make all emergency policies and procedures clear to parents. The plan is to be signed by the parent(s) to indicate their understanding and acceptance or the policies and procedures (Also noted in Family Partnerships). -Written policies and a child care contract is established and implemented with families. The contract should be signed by the parent (also noted in Family Partnerships). <p>Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lead caregiver volunteers to informally mentor a program at a Level 1, 2, or 3.
Administration and management referred to within:	N/A
Administration and management source of evidence:	Documentation submitted

Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:	Yes
Comments:	In Level 2 the standard states: the environment includes representation of each child and family including age, abilities, cultures which might

include books, pictures, photographs, music/songs, games, toys, dress up clothes/materials and foods.

Accreditation (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. Accreditation by the National Association of Family Child Care is a commonly included accreditation used in QRSs for family child care programs.

Accreditation included:	Yes
If yes, is accreditation:	One criteria in highest rating
Comments:	At Level 4, in addition to accreditation, programs must meet the requirements of all previous levels, the lead caregiver must have a current CDA or equivalent or ECE degree or an equivalent degree, and the lead caregiver must volunteer to informally mentor a program at a Level 1, 2, or 3.

Community Involvement (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Community involvement indicators included:	No
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Provisions for Children with Special Needs (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:	Yes
Comments:	At Level 3, plans and environmental accommodations for children with special needs are evident (Written plan, space arrangement, adaptation of materials, inclusion in age-appropriate self-help activities, and handling questions about differences).

Application Process

Information in this section describes specific features of the application process in the QRS.

Requires self-assessment tool:	Yes
Description of self-assessment:	A workbook leads providers through each level. This process helps meet programs where they are, and informs the work that providers do with mentors.
Availability of preparatory process:	Yes
Describe preparatory process:	Assistance is given to providers to help decide which level is appropriate for them to apply.
Requires orientation:	Yes
Describe orientation :	All providers must attend an Introduction Session prior to enrollment.
Time from application to rating:	Less than 3 months
Can apply for particular rating:	Yes
Describe apply for particular rating:	Providers may request a rating at whatever level they are in compliance with.

Outreach

This section describes the strategies that a QRS uses to disseminate information to parents, providers/programs, and the public.

Outreach to parents:	Yes
Method of outreach to parents:	Assistance provided to non-English speaking parents, information in languages other than English, website, written materials disseminated through partners, and written materials mailed.
Outreach to providers:	Yes
Method of outreach to providers:	Information in languages other than English, website, written materials disseminated through partners, written materials mailed, and toolkit with marketing materials.
Outreach to public:	Yes
Method of outreach to public:	Billboards, information disseminated through partners, print advertising, radio, television, and website.
Percent of budget dedicated to marketing:	Approximately \$100,000 per year.

Use of Observational Tools

N/A-Observational Tools are not used in Paths to Quality. Paths to Quality standards were intentionally designed to be closely aligned to the Environment Rating Scales. A one- time study was done to assess the correlation between the Environmental Rating Scale scores and the Paths to Quality level.

Improvement Process

This section provides information about the strategies used to provide or support quality improvement in the QRS.

Training available that is linked to QRS:	Yes
Content of linked training:	Business Practices, Environmental Assessment, Language and literacy, Safety, Social and Emotional Development, Specific Curriculum
Total duration of training:	Varies
Trainer approval process:	Yes
Target population for training:	All providers
Onsite assistance available that is linked to QRS:	Yes
Content of linked onsite assistance:	Business Practices, Environmental Assessment, Language and Literacy, Safety, Social and Emotional Development, Specific Curriculum, Support in Navigating QRS, Indiana Early Learning Guidelines
Onsite assistance frequency	Varies
Length of onsite sessions	Varies
Total duration of onsite assistance:	Varies
Formal approval for onsite assistance provider:	N/A
Target population for onsite assistance:	All Providers
Comments about improvement process:	All technical assistance providers come through and are trained by the Resource and Referral Agency

Financial Incentives

A variety of strategies may be used to provide financial incentives to providers to participate in the QRS or to support quality improvement efforts. This section provides information about different financial incentives.

Tiered reimbursement:	Yes. A provider who achieves and maintains accreditation through an approved accrediting body is eligible, on an ongoing basis, to receive a 10% higher reimbursement rate through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Voucher Program.
Quality award/bonus:	Yes. Enrolled providers who successfully complete Levels 2 and 3 are eligible for one-time non-cash Recognition Awards upon attainment of each level

	(Homes \$300 non-cash, Centers and Ministries \$1000 non-cash). After completing the standards for Level 4, providers are eligible for special one-time cash Recognition Award to recognize their achievement of the highest level of quality (Homes \$500 cash, Centers and Ministries \$1500 cash). An Annual Level 4 Accreditation Maintenance Award will be given to providers who annually maintain the standards for Level 4 as well as accreditation from an approved accrediting body (Homes \$300 cash, Centers and Ministries \$1000).
Startup award:	Yes. All providers who enroll in the Paths to Quality system will receive a Participation Incentive of \$50 non-cash.
Scholarship (T.E.A.C.H)	Yes, T.E.A.C.H. is available to all providers.
Wage enhancement	No
Retention bonus:	No
Improvement grants:	Yes. Providers who achieve Level 3 and desire to move on to Level 4, which includes becoming accredited by an approved national accrediting body, will be eligible for financial support and technical assistance. The amount of financial support is based on need and the number of children enrolled in a program. Support is available to assist with the accrediting process, the validation/endorsement phase, and/or equipment needed to meet the accreditation criteria.

Administration Details

This section provides details about the QRS administration and funding.

QRS lead :	Indiana Family and Social Services Administration
QRS lead type:	State agency
Overall funding amount for most recent fiscal year:	Information not available (QRS was incorporated into existing work).
Overall funding sources:	Child Care Development Fund
Administration funding for most recent fiscal year:	None
Administration funding source:	N/A
Quality improvement funding for most recent fiscal year:	\$750,000 per year for outside raters
Quality improvement funding source:	Child Care Development Fund
Evaluation funding for most recent fiscal year:	\$200,000 for year 2008 to 2012
Evaluation funding source:	Child Care Development Fund

Partners

This section provides information about the roles and responsibilities of partners in the QRS.

Partner 1 type :	University
Partner 1 name:	Purdue University
Partner 1 function:	Evaluation
Work plan in place:	Yes
Partner 2:	Community Colleges
Partner 2 name:	Ivy Tech Community College
Partner 2 function:	Partnerships are in place with the local community colleges to provide formal Child Development Associate which supports the increased education requirements of Paths to Quality.
Work plan in place:	No work plan is in place because they operate through a collaborative model. Articulation agreements have been made through forum with Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children at Higher Education Summit.
Partner 3 type :	State Agency Partners
Partner 3 name:	Indiana Head Start Collaboration Office
Partner 3 function:	functions include the Development of Standards and being an Executive Steering Committee partner. Note: Also Collaboration efforts with Indiana Department of Education, development of standards to align with the Early Learning Guidelines.
Work plan in place:	No
Partner 4 type :	Resource and Referral
Partner 4 name:	Indiana Association for Child Care Resource & Referral (IACCRR)
Partner 4 function:	Manage communication/information dissemination, provide financial Incentives, system navigation support, TA and quality improvement Services
Work plan in place:	Yes
Partner 5 type :	Other Non-Profit Contractors
Partner 5 name:	Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children
Partner 5 function:	Manage communication/information dissemination, provide financial incentives, system navigation support, TA and quality improvement services, accreditation support and TEACH
Work plan in place:	

 scholarships

Linkage of QRS with Other Systems

This section provides information about how the QRS is linked with other systems/standards including child care subsidies, professional development, state early learning guidelines, and core knowledge /competencies for providers.

Child care subsidies :	Yes
Description:	Integrated into financial incentives for accredited programs.
Professional development:	Yes
Description	A Provider Professional Development Committee is designed to ensure that training is consistent across training providers.
Incorporation of other standards:	Yes
Description:	Indiana's Early Learning Guidelines. Crosswalk to Head Starts Performance Standards.

Evaluation

Status of evaluation :	Ongoing
List research questions for ongoing evaluation:	Purdue will be comparing Paths to QUALITY (PTQ) levels with Environmental Rating Scale scores to ensure that higher Paths to Quality levels equate to higher Environmental Rating Scale scores. Purdue will also be evaluating how providers move through the levels including any barriers that exist to movement and the length of time that it takes to move. Lastly Purdue will be evaluating the level of parent/community knowledge about Paths to Quality.
Evaluator type:	External
Evaluator name (if external)	Purdue University
If external, was RFP issued:	Yes
Published reports to date :	http://www.in.gov/fssa/files/ScientificBasisPTQ.pdf http://www.in.gov/fssa/files/PTQ_TechReport2_Measur

Key Contacts

Category :	Overall management
Contact name:	Melanie Brizzi
Organization:	Indiana Bureau of Child Care, Family and Social Services Administration State Administrator
Email:	melanie.brizzi@fssa.in.gov
Phone:	317-234-3313

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Standards for Participation in Indiana

Licensed Child Care Center



Licensed Child Care Center Level 1

Level 1 Licensed Child Care Centers will be able to:

- ★ Meet minimum health and safety standards
- ★ Develop and implement basic health and safety policies and procedures

Licensed Child Care Centers meet the standards for a level 1 rating providing the following are met:

1. **The license issued by Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the Division of Family Resources (DFR) is current and in good standing.**

Licensed Child Care Center Level 2

Level 2 Licensed Child Care Centers will be able to:

- ★ Provide an environment that is welcoming, nurturing, and safe for the physical, emotional, and social well-being of all children
- ★ Provide a variety of learning materials that reflect the age, interests, and abilities of each child
- ★ Provide for children's language and literacy skill development
- ★ Provide pertinent program information to families
- ★ Promote staff development and training

Licensed Child Care Centers meet the standards for a level 2 rating providing the following are met:

1. **All requirements of Level 1 are met.**
2. **Director receives orientation and trains staff on the *Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children Age Birth to Five*.**
3. **Director is a member of a nationally recognized early childhood organization.**
4. **Program has a written philosophy and goals for children.**
5. **25% of teaching staff, including the Director, have either a Child Development Associate credential (CDA) or equivalent certificate, OR an early childhood degree or equivalent degree, OR have completed 45 clock hours of educational training leading to an Early Childhood/Child Development degree or CDA credential.**
6. **At least 50% of teaching staff participate annually in a minimum of 15 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.**
7. **A system is in place for communicating pertinent information to families, daily and in an annual family conference for each child.**
8. **An advisory board is in place to provide input and support to the director.**

9a. Classroom environments are welcoming, nurturing and safe for children to have interactions and experiences that promote their physical, social and emotional well being. Indicators must include:

1. Each child and his/her family are warmly acknowledged upon arrival and departure
2. Each child feels safe, accepted, and protected and this is supported by daily practices that reinforce respect for people, feelings, ideas, and materials
3. Children are under adult supervision at all times
4. The environment includes representation of each child and family (including all age groups, abilities, and cultures), which might include books, pictures, photographs, music/songs, games, toys, dress-up clothes/materials, and foods
5. A place for storage of each child's personal belongings and possessions is labeled with the child's name
6. Teachers communicate with and listen to children (verbal and non-verbal messages) with lots of one-on-one attention throughout the day and usually at eye-level, including time when the teacher is down on the floor with the children
7. Children's ideas, requests, and questions are acknowledged with a verbal response or physical gesture
8. Children's feelings are acknowledged with an accepting, non-critical verbal response or physical gesture
9. Teachers refrain from negative verbal or physical responses to children at all times, which includes yelling, criticizing, scolding, threatening, using sarcasm, name calling, yanking, pinching, squeezing, or spanking
10. Destructive or disruptive behavior is addressed with children (face-to-face rather than from a distance) by the teacher, explaining the effect of the behavior, stating the desired behavior and redirecting, or helping the child make alternate choices
11. Conflicts are resolved by/with children through a problem-solving approaches (acknowledge feelings, listen to children share what happened, ask for ideas or solutions, and follow through)
12. The teacher sometimes joins in children's play, expanding upon their ideas and playing interactively
13. The classroom is generally characterized by varying sounds and/or comfortable conversations from engaged children and involved adults

9b. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. Infants are frequently held and comforted when crying
2. Infants are given one-to-one attention during feeding and diapering
3. Teachers engage in many one-to-one face-to-face interactions with infants/toddlers, including singing and playful interactions
4. Teachers acknowledge infant/toddler babblings with a verbal response, vocal imitation or physical gesture
5. Teachers engage in conversation with toddlers
6. Teachers give toddlers simple words to use to express feelings. Verbal toddlers are then encouraged to use words in conflict situations

10a. Daily schedule provides ample time for child-directed choices with activities and materials that are geared to the age, interests, and abilities of each child. Indicators must include:

1. The daily schedule is consistent and predictable
2. The classroom is arranged with areas for individual, small group, and large group activities
3. Children are encouraged to choose the area in which they want to participate, and whether they want to play alone, with one friend, or with several
4. Routine tasks (which might include labeling, sorting, classifying, folding clothes, counting while cleaning up or setting the table) are used as learning opportunities
5. Transitions are generally relaxed, allowing time for play and completing activities. Children are transitioned from one activity to the next to avoid idle sitting and waiting time
6. Meal times are relaxed, with no scolding or nagging. Children are encouraged to sample new foods but allowed to eat the foods of their choice
7. Nap time is relaxed with alternative, supervised quiet activities available for the non-nappers
8. The teacher has a system for rotating toys and materials for variety so that unused toys are stored and later reintroduced
9. TV/VCR/DVD, if used, is primarily an educational experience. Caregiver discusses what is viewed with children, and provides an alternative activity; OR TV/VCR/DVD is not used at all

10b. Outdoor play time indicators must include:

1. Outdoor play is included daily when weather, air quality, or environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk. Active indoor play may be a replacement when necessary
2. Outdoor/large motor activities and plentiful play materials for a variety of skills are offered (for example, climbing, running, jumping, balancing, riding and playing with balls)

10c. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. Individual napping schedules are respected for infants and toddlers
2. Play areas are protected and have open spaces for exploring
3. Children are offered a variety of outdoor play experiences

11a. The classroom is arranged and utilizes enough materials and activities to provide a variety of age and developmentally appropriate interest centers that invite children's exploration. Each interest center must contain at least three different items. Interest centers must include:

1. Reading:
Materials might include books, soft washable seating/pillows for use while reading
2. Writing:
Materials might include writing tools, paper, envelopes, typewriter, letters, and numbers
3. Art:
Materials might include drawing materials (crayons, markers, thick pencils, variety of paper, sizes and types, not coloring books or dittos/worksheets), painting materials, tools (scissors, hole punch, tape), staplers for school-age children, three-dimensional materials (play dough, clay with tools), collage materials (catalogs, magazines, paper scraps, fabric pieces, string, yarn, cotton balls, pipe cleaners, craft sticks)
4. Blocks:
Materials might include different size/types of blocks and accessories such as small people, animals, vehicles, road signs, and materials to enhance building, sticks, stones, tape, string, craft sticks, interlocking blocks
5. Dramatic Play:
Materials might include dress-up clothes, such as work boots, high heels, and a variety of hats, career gear/attire/uniforms, purses, billfolds and multi-cultural outfits. Other items would also include large pieces of fabric/scarves, child-size play furniture, dishes, pots, pans, dolls (multicultural dolls included), dollhouse or other play-sets, accessories for dolls, and "props" for different themes
6. Math/Numbers:
Materials might include small objects to count/sort/classify, measuring tools (scales, rulers), numbers/shapes, number games, puzzles and pattern blocks
7. Music and Movement:
Materials might include audio equipment, variety of tapes/CDs, and music boxes, musical toys, instruments, dance props such as scarves/streamers
8. Nature and Science:
Collections of natural items (shells, rocks, flowers, bugs), living plants, pets to care for, science games, toys, magnets, magnifying glasses, cooking opportunities
9. Sensory Play:
Materials might include water, play dough, sand, or similar materials, along with kitchen utensils, measuring containers, shovel, trough, buckets, small cars and trucks and water-play accessories for pouring, measuring, squeezing, and basting
10. Small Motor/Manipulative:
Materials might include blocks, puzzles, crayons, pencils, scissors, interlocking blocks and other small building toys, pegboard and pegs, games, counting materials, sorting or classifying materials and containers

11b. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. Materials are organized consistently on low, open shelves for independent use by children
2. Materials are sturdy and in good condition
3. Enough materials to avoid problems with children making the same toy choice and waiting
4. A variety of open-ended, washable toys, which might include rattles, teething/rings, balls, pop beads, nesting toys, containers, cuddle toys, push/pull toys are available
5. Furniture adapted for toddlers is available
6. Low, stable furniture is available for children to pull themselves up
7. Soft, washable elements, such as cuddle toys, soft furniture or cushions

12a. Children are read to daily and encouraged to explore books and other print materials. Indicators must include:

1. Teachers read and/or look at books with children daily, including during quiet, individual lap time
2. Books are available and accessible daily for children to look at and enjoy on their own
3. Children are invited to tell stories or “read” a picture book
4. Children are encouraged to explore print and writing. Examples might include scribbling, inventing spellings, writing their names or other words, and making books
5. Teachers write words dictated by children as they tell a story or describe their pictures
6. A variety of writing materials and toys to be used while writing is available
7. Materials might include: markers, child-sized pencils, chalk and chalk board, paper, envelopes, stamps, tape, paper punch, stickers, magazines, calendars, toy telephones, puppets, tape recorder, alphabet letters, or flannel boards
7. Preschoolers are provided language materials daily, in addition to books, which might include puppets, flannel boards, recorded stories, and picture card games
8. Books for preschoolers must include a variety of imaginative, rhyming, and informational books
9. Books for school-age children must include a variety of reading levels and topics, which might include adventures, mysteries, and informational books and magazines

12b. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. The availability of durable books with short stories about common daily activities
2. The availability of sturdy, simple books with pictures of real objects for toddlers to look at on their own
3. Daily language activities using books, pictures or puppets
4. Toddlers are encouraged to experiment with a variety of writing materials
5. Teachers respond to sounds/speech, including by imitating infants’ vocalization and engaging toddlers in conversation
6. Teachers talk about objects and events that infants and toddlers experience

Licensed Child Care Center Level 3

Level 3 Licensed Child Care Centers will be able to:

- ★ Implement a planned curriculum that addresses the stages of child development
- ★ Demonstrate professional growth of Director and staff in excess of licensing requirements
- ★ Facilitate family and staff input into the program
- ★ Establish a strategic plan
- ★ May be working towards accreditation

Child Care Centers meet the standards for a Level 3 rating provided that the following are met:

1. **All requirements for Level 1 and 2 are met.**
2. **Program has been in operation for a minimum of one year.**
3. **At a minimum, the Lead Teacher receives paid planning time.**
4. **50% of teaching staff have either a CDA or equivalent certificate, an early childhood degree or equivalent degree OR completed 60 clock hours of educational training leading to an early childhood/child development degree or CDA credential.**
5. **At least 50% of teaching staff, including the Director, participate annually in a minimum of 20 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.**
6. **Program evaluation is completed annually by families and staff.**
7. **A strategic plan is completed and includes annual evaluation/ goal setting and long range planning/goal setting.**

8. A written curriculum reflects the program philosophy and goals, is based on child development and appropriate practice and provides for the various ages, ability levels, and developmental stages of the children. This curriculum meets the following requirements:

1. Provides for children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and social-emotional development. It includes goals for children that are consistent with the Indiana Foundations for Young Children
2. Families are made aware of the curriculum of the program through one or more of the following ways: parent handbooks, newsletters, orientation, and/or family meetings
3. Staff members are oriented to the curriculum. Lead teachers plan daily activities with assistants so that curriculum can be implemented effectively to provide support for children in their active learning experiences
4. The curriculum and goals for children are reflected in everyday practice including through daily, weekly, or monthly written lesson plans
5. Assessment is appropriate to the curriculum and focuses on children's strengths. It may include portfolios, conversations, anecdotal notes, and developmental notes

9a. Children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, math, and creative development is supported. Indicators must include:

1. Many opportunities throughout the day for communication (all ages), which might include sharing information, pointing out logical relationships, and encouraging children's ability to reason
2. Many opportunities throughout the day for reading
3. Every day children have many experiences and materials available to encourage imagination and creativity
4. Children's thinking is stimulated through experimentation, exploration, and access to interesting materials and adult support
5. Displays of children's art are available at children's eye level and show that most art work is exploratory and unique to each child
6. Teachers encourage language and literacy development through interactions which might include books, songs, puppet play, and writing/drawing opportunities
7. Math experiences are a part of everyday activities and routines
8. Daily music experiences are available and may include singing, creative movement, a variety of types of music, and a variety of musical and rhythmic instruments
9. Science exploration is part of daily activities (examples may include, collections of natural objects, living things to care for, cooking, and simple experiments)
10. The daily schedule provides a balance of activities including: quiet and active, individual and small group and large group, child initiated and adult initiated
11. Large group activities are not excessive for any part of the daily routine

9b. Specific Infant and Toddler indicators must include:

1. Infants and toddlers are not expected to function as a large group
2. Infants and toddlers are offered a variety of sensory experiences each day
3. Toddlers are offered opportunities for writing experiences each day

10. Children are actively engaged throughout the day in making choices about activities and materials. Indicators must include:

1. Children should be given several free choice periods daily. Children's choice (individual or small group play) occur at least one third of the time and includes indoor and outdoor play
2. The teacher supports children's development by gathering information through child observations that is used to guide lesson planning
3. The teacher supports children's play by providing additional materials and experiences that expand on children's interests and skills
4. The teacher extends learning for children by talking about what they are doing and asking open-ended questions that promote critical thinking skills
5. The teacher finds ways to help children learn skills when it is developmentally appropriate and when the child shows an interest
6. The teacher takes advantage of the many natural learning experiences associated with daily life and makes those "teachable moments" opportunities for learning

11. Plans and environmental accommodations for children with special needs are evident. Indicators must include:

1. A written plan is in place for effectively caring for children with special needs
2. Space is arranged to provide children of different ages and abilities daily access to materials and opportunities to engage in play and projects without limitation or interference from one another
3. Adaptation of materials occurs to provide children of different ages and abilities daily access to materials and opportunities to engage in play and projects without limitations or interference from one another
4. The teachers include children in age-appropriate self-help activities, such as dressing, picking up toys, washing hands, folding clothes, serving food, and setting or cleaning up meals
5. The teachers answer children's questions about differences in a respectful and factual way

Licensed Child Care Center Level 4

Level 4 Licensed Child Care Centers will be able to:

- ★ Meet the highest standards for high quality early care and education
- ★ Director agrees to assist other programs in quality improvement through volunteer mentoring

Licensed Child Care Centers meet the standards for Level 4 rating provided that the following are met:

1. **Program meets all the requirements for Levels 1, 2, and 3.**
2. **Accreditation by a Bureau of Child Care approved, nationally recognized accrediting body has been achieved and maintained.**
3. **Director volunteers to informally mentor a program at a Level 1, 2, or 3.**



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Standards for Participation in Indiana

Licensed Child Care Home



Licensed Child Care Home Level 1

Level 1 Licensed Child Care Home Providers will be able to:

- ★ Meet minimum health and safety standards
- ★ Develop and implement basic health and safety policies and procedures

Licensed Child Care Home Providers meet the standards for a level 1 rating providing the following are met:

1. **The license issued by Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the Division of Family Resources (DFR) is current and in good standing.**

Licensed Child Care Home Level 2

Level 2 Licensed Child Care Home providers will be able to:

- ★ Provide an environment that is welcoming, nurturing, and safe and promotes the physical, emotional, and social well-being of all children
- ★ Provide a variety of learning materials that reflect the age, interests, and abilities of each child
- ★ Provide for children's language and literacy skill development.
- ★ Provide pertinent program information to families
- ★ Promote assistant caregivers' development and training

Licensed Child Care Home providers meet the standards for a level 2 rating providing the following are met:

1. **All requirements of Level 1 are met.**
2. **Lead Caregiver receives orientation and trains assistants on the *Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children, Birth to Age Five*.**
3. **Lead Caregiver is a member of a nationally recognized early childhood organization.**
4. **Child care home has a written philosophy and goals for children.**
5. **Lead Caregiver will have a current CDA or equivalent certificate, OR an early childhood degree or equivalent degree OR have completed 45 clock hours of educational training in early childhood education within the past three years leading to a CDA or an early childhood/ child development degree.**
6. **At least 50% of caregivers, including the lead caregiver, annually participate in a minimum of 15 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.**
7. **A system is in place for communicating pertinent information to families, daily and at an annual family conference for each child.**

8. A written emergency plan is established and implemented. The plan is shared with parents at the time of enrollment and any time the provider initiates a change in any aspect of the plan. The purpose of the written emergency plan is to make all emergency policies and procedures clear to parents. The plan is to be signed by the parent(s) to indicate their understanding and acceptance of the policies and procedures. The written plan will include:

1. The procedure for notifying parents in the event of the provider's illness, the illness of a member of the household who may be contagious to others, or any emergency that prevents children from being cared for in the provider's home
2. Back-up plan for care that the provider will arrange in the event of an emergency
3. Directions to parents for having a back-up plan for care in place, in the event of their child's illness or the provider's inability to care for children
4. Alternative contacts and medical care authorization available in case parents can not be reached in the event of an emergency
5. A list, provided by the parent(s), of people authorized to pick up a child.
6. A plan for fire evacuation or any other type of evacuation
7. A plan for safe shelter during a tornado warning or any other threatening weather emergency

9. Written policies and a child care contract is established and implemented with families. The contract should be signed by the parent and must contain:

1. Persons authorized to pick up a child
2. Illness policies, including reasons for exclusion
3. Guidance and discipline policy
4. Medication administration procedure
5. Policy regarding parent conferences, visits and open door policy
6. Information on transportation and field trips
7. Hours care is provided
8. Late pick up policy
9. Payments and fee schedule
10. Vacation policies for both provider and family vacations
11. Sick leave policies for both provider and children's illness
12. Alternate care/substitute policies
13. Termination of care policy
14. Child information including any special needs, fears or food preferences/allergies

10a. The home is welcoming, nurturing, and safe for children to have interactions and experiences that promote their physical, social, and emotional well-being. Indicators must include:

1. Each child and his/her family are warmly acknowledged upon arrival and departure
2. Each child feels safe, accepted, and protected. This is supported by daily practices that reinforce respect for people, feelings, ideas, and materials
3. The environment includes representation of each child and family (including all age groups, abilities, and cultures), which might include books, pictures, photographs, music/songs, games, toys, dress-up clothes/materials, and foods
4. A place for storage of each child's personal belongings and possessions is labeled with the child's name
5. Caregivers communicate with and listen to children (both verbal and non-verbal messages) with lots of one-on-one attention throughout the day and usually at eye-level, including time when the caregiver is down on the floor with the children
6. Children's ideas, requests, and questions are acknowledged with a verbal response or physical gesture
7. Children's feelings are acknowledged with an accepting, non-critical verbal response or physical gesture
8. Caregivers refrain from negative verbal or physical responses to children at all times, which includes yelling, criticizing, scolding, threatening, using sarcasm, name calling, yanking, pinching, squeezing, or spanking
9. Destructive or disruptive behavior is addressed with children (face-to-face rather than from a distance) by the caregiver, explaining the effect of the behavior, stating the desired behavior and redirecting or helping the child make alternate choices
10. Conflicts are resolved by/with children through a problem-solving approaches (acknowledge feelings, listen to children share what happened, ask for ideas or solutions, and follow through)
11. The caregiver sometimes joins in children's play, expanding upon their ideas and playing interactively
12. The home is generally characterized by varying sounds and/or comfortable conversation from engaged children and involved adults

10b. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. Infants are frequently held and comforted when crying
2. Infants are given one-to-one attention during feeding and diapering
3. Caregivers engage in many one-to-one face-to-face interactions with infants/toddlers, including singing and playful interactions
4. Caregivers acknowledge infant/toddler babblings with a verbal response, vocal imitation or physical gesture
5. Caregivers engage in conversation with toddlers
6. Caregivers give toddlers simple words to use to express feelings. Verbal toddlers are then encouraged to use words in conflict situations

11a. Daily schedule provides ample time for child-directed choices with activities and materials that are geared to the age, interests, and abilities of each child. Indicators must include:

1. The daily schedule is consistent and predictable
2. Children direct their own free play (individual or group play) for at least one half hour at a time, totaling at least two hours in an eight hour day
3. Routine tasks (which might include, labeling, sorting, classifying, folding clothes, counting while cleaning up or setting the table) are used as learning opportunities
4. Transitions are generally relaxed, allowing time for play and completing activities. Children are transitioned from one activity to the next to avoid idle sitting and waiting time
5. Meal times are relaxed, with no scolding or nagging. Children are encouraged to sample new foods but allowed to eat the foods of their choice.
6. Nap time is relaxed with alternative, supervised activities\ available for the non-nappers
7. The caregiver has a system for rotating toys and materials for variety so that unused toys are stored and later reintroduced
8. TV/VCR/DVD, if used, is primarily an educational experience. Caregiver discusses what is viewed with children and provides an alternative activity; OR TV/VCR/DVD is not used at all

11b. Outdoor play time indicators must include:

1. Outdoor play is included daily when weather, air quality, or environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk. Active indoor play may be a replacement when necessary
2. Outdoor/large motor activities and plentiful play materials for a variety of skills are offered (for example, climbing, running, jumping, balancing, riding, and playing with balls)

11c. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. Individual napping schedules are respected for infants and toddlers
2. Play areas are protected and have open spaces for exploring
3. Children are offered a variety of outdoor play experiences

12a. The home is arranged and utilizes enough materials and activities to provide a variety of age and developmentally appropriate interest centers that invite children's explorations. Caregiver offers at least three of the following centers daily, from which the children may choose. Caregiver regularly rotates the interest centers that are offered. Each interest center must contain at least three different items. Interest centers must include:

1. Reading:
Materials might include books, soft, washable seating/pillows for use while reading
2. Writing:
Materials might include writing tools, paper, envelopes, typewriter or keyboard, letters, numbers
3. Art:
Materials might include drawing materials (crayons, markers, thick pencils, variety of paper, sizes and types, not coloring books or dittos/worksheets), painting materials, tools (scissors, hole punch, tape), staplers for school-age children, three-dimensional materials (play dough, clay with tools), collage materials (catalogs, magazines, paper scraps, fabric pieces, string, yarn, cotton balls, pipe cleaners, craft sticks)
4. Blocks:
Materials might include different size/types of blocks and accessories such as small people, animals, vehicles, and road signs to enhance building, sticks, stones, tape, string, craft sticks, interlocking blocks
5. Dramatic Play:
Materials might include dress-up clothes (such as work boots, high heels, a variety of hats, career gear/attire/uniforms, purses, billfolds, and multicultural outfits.) Other items would also include large pieces of fabric/scarves, child-size play furniture, dishes, pots, pans, dolls (multicultural included), dollhouse or other play-sets, accessories for dolls, and "props" for different themes
6. Math/Numbers:
Materials might include small objects to count/sort/classify, measuring tools (scales, rulers), numbers/shapes, number games, puzzles and pattern blocks
7. Music and Movement:
Materials might include audio equipment, variety of tapes/CDs, music boxes, musical toys and instruments, dance props such as scarves/streamers
8. Nature and Science:
Materials might include collections of natural items (shells, rocks, flowers, bugs), living plants, pets to care for, science games, toys, magnets, magnifying glasses, cooking opportunities
9. Sensory Play:
Materials might include water, play dough, sand, or similar materials, along with kitchen utensils, measuring containers, shovel, trough, buckets, small cars and trucks, and water-play accessories for pouring, measuring, squeezing, and basting
10. Small Motor/Manipulative:
Materials might include blocks, puzzles, crayons, pencils, scissors, interlocking blocks and other small building toys, pegboard and pegs, games, counting materials, sorting or classifying materials and containers

12b. Specific Infant and Toddler indicators include:

1. Materials are organized consistently on low, open shelves for independent use by children
2. Materials are sturdy and in good condition
3. Enough materials to avoid problems with children making the same toy choice and waiting
4. A variety of open-ended, washable toys, which might include rattles, teething/rings, balls, pop beads, nesting toys, containers, cuddle toys, push/pull toys are available
5. Furniture adapted for toddlers is available
6. Low, stable furniture is available for children to pull themselves up
7. Soft, washable elements, such as cuddle toys, soft furniture or cushions

13a. Children are read to daily and encouraged to explore books and other print materials. Indicators must include:

1. Caregiver reads and/or looks at books with children daily, including during quiet, individual lap time
2. Books are available and accessible daily for children to look at and enjoy on their own
3. Children are invited to tell stories or “read” a picture book
4. Children are encouraged to explore print and writing. Examples might include scribbling, inventing spellings, writing their name or other words, or making books
5. Caregiver writes words dictated by children as they tell a story or describe their pictures
6. A variety of writing materials and toys to be used while writing is available. Materials might include: markers, child-sized pencils, chalk and chalk board, paper, envelopes, stamps, tape, paper punch, stickers, magazines, calendars, toy telephones, puppets, tape recorder, alphabet letters, or flannel boards
7. Preschoolers are provided language materials daily, in addition to books, which might include puppets, flannel boards, recorded stories and picture card games
8. Books for preschoolers must include a variety of imaginative, rhyming, and informational books
9. Books for school-age children must include a variety of reading levels and topics, which might include adventures, mysteries, and informational books and magazines

13b. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:

1. The availability of durable books with short stories about common daily activities
2. The availability of sturdy, simple books with pictures of real objects for toddlers to look at on their own
3. Daily language activities using books, pictures or puppets
4. Toddlers are encouraged to experiment with a variety of writing materials
5. Caregiver responds to sounds/speech, including by imitating infants’ vocalization and engaging toddlers in conversation
6. Caregiver talks about objects and events that infants and toddlers experience

Licensed Child Care Home Level 3

Level 3 Licensed Child Care Home Providers will be able to:

- ★ Implement a planned curriculum that addresses the stages of child development
- ★ Demonstrate professional growth in excess of licensing requirements
- ★ Facilitate family and assistant input into the program.
- ★ Actively engage in program evaluation and have an action plan for improvement
- ★ May be working towards accreditation

Child Care Home providers meet the standards for a Level 3 rating provided that the following are met:

1. **All requirements for Level 1 and 2 are met.**
2. **Lead Caregiver has at least 12 months experience as a caregiver in a licensed child care setting or in a child care setting that is accredited by one of the Bureau of Child Care approved, nationally recognized organizations.**
3. **Lead Caregiver will have a current CDA or equivalent certificate, OR and early childhood degree or equivalent degree; OR have completed 60 clock hours of educational training leading to an early childhood/child development degree or CDA credential within the past three years.**
4. **At least 50% of caregivers, including the lead caregiver, annually participate in a minimum of 20 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.**
5. **Program evaluation is completed annually by families.**

6. A written curriculum reflects the program philosophy and goals, is based on child development and appropriate practice and provides for the various ages, ability levels, and developmental stages of the children. This curriculum meets the following requirements:

1. Provides for children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and social-emotional development. It includes goals for children that are consistent with the Indiana Foundations for Young Children
2. Families are made aware of the curriculum of the program through one or more of the following ways: parent handbooks, newsletters, orientation, and/or family meetings
3. Assistants are oriented to the curriculum. The lead caregiver plans daily activities with assistants so that the curriculum can be implemented effectively to provide support for children in their active learning experiences
4. The curriculum and goals for children are reflected in everyday practice, including through daily, weekly, or monthly written lesson plans

7a. Children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, math, and creative development is supported. Indicators must include:

1. Many opportunities throughout the day for communication (all ages), which might include sharing information, pointing out logical relationships, and encouraging children's ability to reason
2. Many opportunities throughout the day for reading
3. Every day children have many experiences and materials available to encourage imagination and creativity
4. Children's thinking is stimulated through various means which might include experimentation, exploration, and access to interesting materials and adult support
5. Displays of children's art are available at children's eye level and show that most art work is exploratory and unique to each child
6. Caregiver encourages language and literacy daily through interactions which might include books, songs, puppet play, and writing/drawing opportunities
7. Math experiences are a part of everyday activities and routines
8. Daily music experiences are available and may include singing, creative movement, a variety of types of music, and a variety of musical and rhythmic instruments
9. Science exploration is part of daily activities (examples may include collections of natural objects, living things to care for, cooking, and simple experiments)
10. The daily schedule provides a balance of activities including: quiet and active, individual and small group and large group, child initiated and adult initiated

7b. Specific Infant and Toddler Indicators must include:

1. Infants and toddlers are not expected to function as a large group
2. Infants and toddlers are offered a variety of sensory experiences each day
3. Toddlers are offered opportunities for writing experiences each day

8. Children are actively engaged throughout the day in making choices about activities and materials. Indicators must include:

1. Children should be given several free choice periods daily. Children's choice (individual or small group play) occurs at least one third of the day and includes indoor and outdoor play
2. The caregiver supports children's development by gathering information through child observations that is used to guide lesson planning
3. The caregiver supports children's play by providing additional materials and experiences that expand on children's interests and skills
4. The caregiver extends learning for children by talking about what they are doing and asking open-ended questions that promote critical thinking skills
5. The caregiver finds ways to help children learn skills when it is developmentally appropriate and when the child shows an interest
6. The caregiver takes advantage of the many natural learning experiences associated with daily life and makes "teachable moments" opportunities for learning

9. Plans and environmental accommodations for children with special needs are evident. Indicators must include:

1. A written plan is in place for effectively caring for children with special needs
2. Space is arranged to provide children of different ages and abilities daily access to materials and opportunities to engage in play and projects without limitation or interference from one another
3. Adaptation of materials occurs to provide children of different ages and abilities daily access to materials and opportunities to engage in play and projects without limitations or interference from one another
4. The caregiver includes children in age-appropriate self-help activities, such as dressing, picking up toys, washing hands, folding clothes, serving food, and setting or cleaning up meals
5. The caregiver answers children's questions about differences in a respectful and factual way

Licensed Child Care Home Level 4

Level 4 Licensed Child Care Home Providers will be able to:

- ★ Meet the highest standards for high quality early care and education
- ★ Assist other programs in quality improvement through volunteer mentoring

Licensed Child Care Home providers meet the standards for Level 4 rating provided that the following are met:

- 1. Program meets all the requirements for Levels 1, 2, and 3.**
- 2. Lead Caregiver has a current CDA or equivalent or ECE degree or an equivalent degree.**
- 3. Accreditation by a Bureau of Child Care approved, nationally recognized accrediting body has been achieved and maintained.**
- 4. Lead caregiver volunteers to informally mentor a program at a Level 1, 2, or 3.**



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