



SCORING MATRIX

CENTERS

STEP QUALITY AREA 1: REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of child care licensing history for the past 3 years <p>Quality Rating Outcome:</p> <p>Pass or Fail</p> <p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The same standard applies for all levels. 	<p>Program has secured and holds a child care license for at least 12 months.</p> <p>License is <u>not</u> probationary and program is <u>not</u> involved in a compliance plan.</p> <p>Program has <u>not</u> been fined by the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division for failing to correct a deficiency in a timely manner or for repeated offenses.</p> <p>Program has passed annual health and fire inspections, and has not been subject to administrative hearings or actions for failure to correct deficiencies.</p>	Same as Step 1	Same as Step 1	Same as Step 1	Same as Step 1

STEP QUALITY AREA 2: TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Observation</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p> <p>Additional Notes: Review consists of assessing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher-to-child ratios Group size. Rating on Adult Involvement Scale. 	<p>Meets Title 22 ratios:</p> <p>Infants (birth-to-2 yrs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 4 infants -or- 1 teacher to 12 infants and at least 2 aides, each supervising no more than 4 infants for a 1 to 4 staff-to-child ratio No group size requirement <p>Toddlers(18 to 30 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 6 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 12 children, maximum group size is 12 children for a 1 to 6 staff-to-child ratio. <p>Preschoolers (2 or 2.5 years to 5 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 12 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 15 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide with 6 units to 18 children. No group size requirement <p>Average score on the Adult Involvement Scale is less than 3.0.</p>	<p>Exceeds Title 22 ratios:</p> <p>Infants (birth-to-2 yrs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 10 infants with at least 2 aides, each aide supervising no more than 3 infants for a 1 to 3 staff-to-child ratio No group size requirement <p>Toddlers (18 to 30 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 5 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 10 children, maximum group size is 10 children for a 1 to 5 staff-to-child ratio. <p>Preschoolers (2 or 2.5 years to 5 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 10 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide to 14 children -or- 1 teacher and 1 aide with 6 units to 17 children. No group size requirement <p>Average score on the Adult Involvement Scale is between 3.0 and 3.9.</p>	<p>Meets Title 5 ratios:</p> <p>Infants (birth-to-18 mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 18 infants with 5 aides for a 1 to 3 staff-to-child ratio No group size requirement <p>Toddlers (18 to 36 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 16 children, with 3 aides for a 1 to 4 staff-to-child ratio No group size requirement <p>Preschoolers (3 to 5 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher and 2 aides for a 1 to 8 staff-to-child ratio No group size requirement <p>Average score on the Adult Involvement Scale is between 4.0 and 4.9.</p>	<p>Meets Title 5 ratios +</p> <p>Infants (birth-to-18 mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 18 infants with 5 aides for a 1 to 3 staff-to-child ratio Group sizes of 6-8 children <p>Toddlers (18 to 35 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 16 children, with 3 aides for a 1 to 4 staff-to-child ratio. Group sizes of 12-14 children <p>Preschoolers (3 to 5 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher and 2 aides for a 1 to 8 staff-to-child ratio Group sizes of 24 children <p>Average score on the Adult Involvement Scale is between 5.0 and 5.9.</p>	<p>Meets NAEYC criteria:</p> <p>Infants (birth-to-15 mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 8 infants with 1 staff to 3 or 4 infants Maximum group size of 8 infants <p>Toddlers (12-28 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 12 children, with 1 staff to 3 to 4 toddlers Maximum group size of 12 toddlers <p>Younger Preschool (30-48 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 18 children, with 1 staff to 6 to 9 children Maximum group size of 18 children <p>Older Preschool (4-5 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 teacher to 24 children, with 1 staff to 8 to 10 children Maximum group size of 24 children 3 staff with one of whom is a fully qualified teacher <p>Average score on the Adult Involvement Scale is equal to or over 6.</p>

STEP QUALITY AREA 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Observation</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p> <p>Additional Notes: Review consists of assessing the child care center using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS)* -and/or - the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS)*</p>	<p>Average overall score on the ERS is less than 3.0.</p>	<p>Average overall score on the ERS is 3, verifying that custodial and some basic developmental needs are being met.</p>	<p>Average overall score on the ERS is 4, verifying that custodial needs and more basic developmental needs are met than in Level 2.</p>	<p>Average overall score on the ERS is 5, verifying that basic dimensions of developmental care are present.</p>	<p>Average overall score on the ERS is 6, verifying that additional dimensions of high-quality care are present.</p>

***Note:** The ITERS is designed to assess programs for children from birth to 30 months of age. The ECERS is used to assess programs for children from 2½ to 5 years of age. More information about the ITERS and ECERS can be found in section 3 of the STEP Resource Guide for Centers, available online at www.childcare.lacounty.gov.

STEP QUALITY AREA 4:

IDENTIFICATION AND INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Portfolio review</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p> <p>Additional Notes: Review consist of examining the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marketing practices to welcome children of all abilities ▪ Knowledge of community resources ▪ Use of a developmental screening tool ▪ Inclusion of children with special needs ▪ Staff training in special needs topics 	<p>No criteria</p>	<p>Families of children with special needs are welcomed to the program.</p> <p>The program is aware of supports available through basic early intervention services provided by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the local Regional Center and ▪ the local school district(s) 	<p>Step 2+:</p> <p>Identification: Center makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool* available to all families enrolling their children in the center.</p> <p>Program works with families to screen their children within 90 days of enrollment.</p> <p>Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner.</p> <p>Staff uses screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the local Regional Center ▪ the local school district ▪ and/or other resources 	<p>Step 2+:</p> <p>Identification: Center makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool* available to all families enrolling their children in the center.</p> <p>Program works with families to screen their children within 90 days of enrollment and at least once a year thereafter.</p> <p>Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner.</p> <p>Staff uses screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to implement interventions strategies and adaptations as appropriate.</p>	<p>Step 2+:</p> <p>Identification: Program makes a high quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate screening tool* available to all families enrolling their children in the center.</p> <p>Program works with families to screen their children within 45 days of enrollment and at least twice a year thereafter.</p> <p>Families are engaged in the screening process. Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner.</p> <p>Staff uses screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment.</p> <p>Program staff use screening results to implement interventions strategies and adaptations as appropriate.</p>

*Note: Refer to the STEP Screening Tool Tip Sheet available online at [Hwww.childcare.lacounty.gov](http://www.childcare.lacounty.gov)H for a list of STEP-approved screening tools.

**STEP QUALITY AREA 4:
IDENTIFICATION AND INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (CONTINUED)**

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Portfolio review</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p>	<p>Inclusion: No criteria</p> <p>Special Needs Training: No criteria</p>	<p>Inclusion: A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment to support at-risk* children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: At least one staff member has completed, in the past 3 years, professional development training that prepares them to work with children with special needs.</p>	<p>Inclusion: A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment <u>and</u> activities are implemented to support at-risk* children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: At least one staff member has completed, in the past 3 years, specialized college coursework <u>or</u> professional development trainings that prepare her/him to work with children who have special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools. This individual is available to assist colleagues.</p>	<p>Inclusion: A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment <u>and</u> activities are implemented to support at-risk* children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p> <p>Clear and explicit intervention strategies and adaptations are based on assessment results and implemented to support at-risk children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: At least 1 staff member in each classroom has completed, in the past 3 years, specialized college coursework <u>and</u> professional development trainings that prepare them to work with children who have special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools.</p>	<p>Inclusion: A variety of adaptable materials are available in the learning environment <u>and</u> activities are implemented to support at-risk* children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p> <p>Clear and explicit intervention strategies and adaptations are based on assessment results and implemented to support at-risk* children and to facilitate the inclusion of children with identified special needs.</p> <p>A monitoring system is implemented to observe and record children's progress and to determine if further assessment is needed.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: A majority of teaching staff** have completed in the past 18 months specialized college coursework and professional development trainings that prepares them to work with children with special needs. Training includes administration and interpretation of developmental screening tools.</p>

* STEP defines **at-risk children** as those who show signs of learning difficulties and struggle to learn.

****Teaching staff** in child care centers include teachers, assistant teachers, aides and all other individuals who have regular and direct caregiving responsibilities with participating children and their families.

STEP QUALITY AREA 5: STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Portfolio review</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p> <p>Additional Notes: Review consist of examining the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator's education • Teachers' education • Assistant teachers' education • Compensation and staff retention 	<p>Program Director***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has completed a minimum of 15 units in ECE <u>and</u> ▪ Has at least 4 years teaching experience in ECE <p>Lead Teacher(s): Each classroom or group is staffed by at least 1 teacher who has completed 12 units in ECE and has 6 months teaching experience.</p> <p>Assistant Teacher(s): If there are 18 or more children in a group or class, at least 1 assistant has completed 6 units in ECE.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: No criteria.</p>	<p>Program Director***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has at least an Associate of Arts (AA) degree in ECE -or- ▪ Holds an AA in another field with at least 12 ECE units <u>and</u> has at least 1 year administrative experience. <p>Lead Teacher(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fifty percent (50%) of the classrooms or groups are staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Teacher permit. ▪ The remaining classrooms or groups are staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for an Child Development Associate Teacher Permit. <p>Assistant Teacher(s): All other assistant teaching staff, at a minimum, have completed 6 units in ECE.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: Refer to STEP 2 Special Needs Training criteria on previous page.</p>	<p>Program Director***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holds or has applied for a Child Development Site Supervisor Permit. <p>Lead Teacher(s): Each classroom or group is staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit.</p> <p>Assistant Teacher(s): All other assistant teaching staff, at a minimum, hold or have applied for a Child Development Assistant Permit.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: Refer to STEP 3 Special Needs Training criteria on previous page.</p>	<p>Program Director***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holds or has applied for a Child Development Program Director Permit. <p>Lead Teacher(s): Each classroom or group is staffed by at least 1 person who holds or has applied for a Child Development Master Teacher Permit.</p> <p>Assistant Teacher(s): All other assistant teaching staff, at a minimum, hold or have applied for a Child Development Associate Teacher Permit.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: Refer to STEP 4 Special Needs Training criteria on previous page.</p>	<p>Program Director***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a Master of Arts (MA) in ECE or related field, <u>and</u> holds or has applied for a Program Director Permit. <p>Lead Teacher(s): Each classroom or group is staffed by at least 1 teacher who either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in ECE -or- ▪ has a BA/BS in another field and has completed at least 12 units in ECE. <p>Assistant Teacher(s): All other teaching staff hold or have applied for a Child Development Teacher Permit.</p> <p>Special Needs Training: Refer to STEP 5 Special Needs Training criteria on previous page.</p>

*** STEP defines a center's **Program Director** as the person located on-site who is responsible for the administration, planning and evaluation of the program.

**STEP QUALITY AREA 5:
STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND WORKING CONDITIONS (CONTINUED)**

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Portfolio review</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p>	<p>Staff Stability: No criteria</p> <p>Employee Benefits: No criteria</p> <p>Working Conditions: The program has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A written staffing plan (which specifies the qualifications and duties of staff) ▪ A plan for in-service education of staff 	<p>Staff Stability: At least 60% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.</p> <p>Employee Benefits: Program offers access to health insurance.</p> <p>Working Conditions: Meets criteria from STEP 1+:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gives employees written confirmation of job title, salary and hours ▪ Gives employees written job descriptions and implements a salary scale ▪ Has formal grievance procedures ▪ Implements 4 staff meetings per year 	<p>Staff Stability: At least 80% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.</p> <p>Employee Benefits: Program offers access to partially-paid health insurance or menu of appropriate options.</p> <p>Working Conditions: Meets STEP 2+:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offers employees paid time-off (e.g. sick, personal, vacation) ▪ Provides annual evaluations and development plans for teaching staff ▪ Implements 6 staff meetings per year 	<p>Staff Stability: At least 85% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.</p> <p>Employee Benefits: Program offers access to partially-paid health <u>and</u> dental insurance (or appropriate menu).</p> <p>Working Conditions: Meets STEP 3+:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implements a salary scale which rewards education and experience; staff are aware of the salary scale ▪ Provides paid preparation and planning time ▪ Implements staff meetings once a month. 	<p>Staff Stability: At least 90% of currently employed teachers have been employed for 3 years or more.</p> <p>Employee Benefits: Program offers access to partially-paid health <u>and</u> dental insurance <u>and</u> pension plan (or appropriate menu).</p> <p>Working Conditions: Meets STEP 4+:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gives staff paid release time to provide professional development training and to participate in professional development activities. ▪ Implements a salary scale that is aligned with the Los Angeles County Model Compensation Scale****

****The Los Angeles County Model Compensation Scale is available online at www.childcare.lacounty.gov.

STEP QUALITY AREA 6: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Quality Assessment Information	Step 1 Beginning Quality	Step 2 Intermediate Quality	Step 3 Good Quality	Step 4 Advanced Quality	Step 5 Excellent Quality
<p>Quality Assessment Method: Portfolio review</p> <p>Quality Rating Outcome: Rating of 1-to-5</p> <p>Additional Notes: Review consist of examining the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcoming families and encouraging their involvement ▪ Communication practices used with families ▪ Supporting family strengths, including improving their understanding of parenting and child development ▪ Facilitating meaningful connections between families and community resources 	<p>Program informs parents of their right to visit and/or observe their children in the program and welcomes such visits.</p>	<p>Step 1+:</p> <p>Welcomes families and encourages their involvement:</p> <p>Applies at least 3 strategies from Section A (refer to next page).</p> <p>Establishes intentional communication practices with families:</p> <p>Applies at least 3 strategies from Section B (refer to next page).</p>	<p>Step 1+:</p> <p>Welcomes all families and encourages their involvement:</p> <p>Applies at least 5 strategies from Section A</p> <p>Establishes intentional communication practices with families:</p> <p>Applies at least 5 strategies from Section B.</p> <p>Promotes family strengths, including an understanding of parenting and child development:</p> <p>Applies at least 4 strategies from Section C.</p> <p>Facilitates meaningful connections between families and community resources:</p> <p>Applies at least 4 strategies from Section D.</p>	<p>Step 1+:</p> <p>Welcomes all families and encourages their involvement:</p> <p>Applies at least 6 strategies from Section A</p> <p>Establishes intentional communication practices with families:</p> <p>Applies at least 6 strategies from Section B.</p> <p>Promotes family strengths, including an understanding of parenting and child development:</p> <p>Applies at least 6 strategies from Section C.</p> <p>Facilitates meaningful connections between families and community resources:</p> <p>Applies at least 6 strategies from Section D.</p>	<p>Step 1+:</p> <p>Welcomes all families and encourages their involvement:</p> <p>Applies at least 8 strategies from Section A</p> <p>Establishes intentional communication practices with families:</p> <p>Applies at least 8 strategies from Section B.</p> <p>Promotes family strengths, including an understanding of parenting and child development:</p> <p>Applies at least 8 strategies from Section C.</p> <p>Facilitates meaningful connections between families and community resources:</p> <p>Applies at least 8 strategies from Section D.</p>

STEP QUALITY AREA 6: LIST OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTION STRATEGIES

SECTION A). THE PROGRAM WELCOMES ALL FAMILIES AND ENCOURAGES THEIR INVOLVEMENT BY PROVIDING:

- A1. A comprehensive orientation to all families
- A2. A parent handbook that describes the program's mission statement, educational philosophy, policies and procedures
- A3. Written materials in home languages of families
- A4. Communications in home languages of families, including securing adults to translate as needed
- A5. A variety of opportunities for parents to contribute to the program (e.g. in-class helpers, field trips, donated items)
- A6. Materials and activities that incorporate the cultures of enrolled families and the community at large
- A7. Facilitation of two annual group activity for children and their families (e.g. family picnic, potluck)
- A8. Meeting and event times are determined by family schedules
- A9. Opportunities for families to participate in positions of leadership and to have decision-making roles in the program (e.g. Board members, Parent Advisory Committees, etc)
- A10. Staff use creative strategies to adapt the program to meet family needs

SECTION B). THE PROGRAM FOSTERS STRONG, RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES BY ESTABLISHING INTENTIONAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES SUCH AS:

- B1. A system utilizing families' preferred communication means
- B2. Staff schedules that allow for meaningful communications with families
- B3. One scheduled parent/teacher conference per year to discuss child's progress
- B4. Two scheduled parent/teacher conferences per year to discuss child's progress; additional parent conferences available by request
- B5. An annual, written developmental report
- B6. Calendars of daily schedule and activities are readily available to families
- B7. Use of a group information dissemination system, such as a newsletter
- B8. Annual home visits
- B9. Opportunities for families to help shape curriculum and program practices
- B10. Intentional partnering with families, recognizing parents as their child's first and most important teacher

SECTION C). THE PROGRAM PROMOTES FAMILY STRENGTHS, INCLUDING AN UNDERSTANDING OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, AND FACILITATES SOCIAL CONNECTIONS BY OFFERING:

- C1. Opportunities for mutual support among families
- C2. Library services for families to check out books, toys, videos and resource materials
- C3. Information and coaching about healthy child growth and development
- C4. To work with families on strategies for creating consistency between home and the program relating to developmentally appropriate practices with children
- C5. Child-specific, home-based activity ideas to families based on child's talents and opportunities for growth
- C6. Physical space where parents can gather and meet
- C7. A support person for families to address areas of need (e.g. social workers, legal advocate, early intervention specialist)
- C8. Opportunities to create family support plans and annual review of such plans (or more often as needed)
- C9. Training and support for parents to develop their advocacy skills
- C10. Support and encouragement for parents to become better informed primary decision makers for their child

SECTION D). THE PROGRAM FACILITATES MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND FAMILIES BY:

- D1. Cultivating working relationships with public and community-based services (e.g. health, education, and social services)
- D2. Developing and maintaining a current list of community resources
- D3. Linking families to identified liaisons in public and community-based services
- D4. Qualified staff participating in assessment and evaluation meetings with families (e.g. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings)
- D5. Initiating discussions about kindergarten at least one year prior to kindergarten entry
- D6. Engaging in transition to school activities, in partnership with established school/center liaisons (e.g. hosting information sessions for parents, offering field trips/school visits and on-site enrollment support)
- D7. Helping families navigate community resources and providing direct advocacy as needed
- D8. Inviting community programs to share their areas of expertise with staff, parents and children (e.g. library, local artists, police, story tellers, etc)
- D9. Informing families of relevant, local community events
- D10. Relaying policy changes at local, state or national levels that effect early care and education services to families