



PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

2



Self-Assessment

Curriculum & Assessment



MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK SELF-ASSESSMENT

Program quality touches all areas of a family child care program. Because of this, it is important for family child care educators to regularly assess and refine their program quality practices through a process of continuous quality improvement or CQI.

Responsive & Supportive Interactions, Environment, Curriculum & Assessment, Business Practices, Leadership & Professional Learning, and Family & Community Engagement are the domains of program quality that can be measured, assessed, and refined through a process of CQI. The **Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment** is one tool that family child care educators can use to assess program quality in relation to the Program Quality Framework for Family Child Care Programs when engaging in the CQI process.

As with all aspects of CQI, when family child care educators engage with the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment, it is important to think flexibly about the ways the practices can look in their program. To aid family child care educators in their assessment of program quality and engage in CQI goal setting, the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment offers examples of practice to consider. **However, there are many ways that quality can be identified in programs and the examples listed here are one way they can look.** The Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment provides a tool for family child care educators to identify the ways that programs demonstrate their unique quality practices through the lens of the EEC Program Quality Framework.

How To Use the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment

To complete the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment family child care educators should:

1. **Review** each priority area and its related actions by reading the practices in the left column and the example of **one** way the practice might look in the middle column. The information in these columns will help family child care educators to understand what quality looks like in a family child care program.
2. **Observe** their program in action and look for ways that the priority area is present in their setting.
3. **Record** the ways that their program demonstrates this action in the column on the far right. The information in this column will be their unique program data to review, discuss and interpret.
4. **Discuss** the program's overall reflections for each priority area as a team and assign each priority area a number by entering the appropriate number using the following descriptors into the score box:
 - **3** = We demonstrate this priority area in full and consistently.
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5. **Use** the findings from this program self-assessment as a starting point to guide quality improvement goal setting and planning (see Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook for more information).

PRIORITY AREA 2.A: If the mission emphasizes “child-led learning and exploration,” prioritize open-ended materials and opportunities for children to make choices, rather than highly structured, teacher-directed activities.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Create learning activities based on key early education and care models, theories, and philosophies, focusing on child development and learning.	<i>Preparing learning centers for preschoolers that incorporate sensory materials and hands-on play.</i>	
Use plans for learning activities that are developmentally-appropriate and evidence-based, with clear learning goals informed by learning standards.	<i>Posting a weekly plan for learning that includes learning goals and appropriate activities to support the children’s goals and interests.</i>	
Involve children, families, and the community in the design and implementation of learning activities and curricula that are reflective of their culture and languages.	<i>Routinely offering opportunities for families to share how they live such as by leading a cooking activity, reading a book from their home, or by teaching the class rules to a new game.</i>	
Use screening tools to document children’s developmental progress, identify children’s unique strengths and needs (across all areas of development) and inform learning goals.	<i>Working with families to complete a screening (such as Ages and Stages Questionnaire ASQ) at the beginning of each school year.</i>	
Use shared and individualized learning goals for children to inform learning activities.	<i>Regularly observing children and taking notes to plan future learning experiences.</i>	

Use formative assessments (observation) and documentation to capture children’s learning and development over time.	<i>Collecting samples of children’s work in a portfolio to show how they have developed over a period of time.</i>	
Use information and data from observation, documentation, and assessment to inform decisions about instruction, supports for children, and use of learning materials.	<i>Using photographs of children building towers in the block area to decide what learning activities should be planned next to foster this interest.</i>	

Additional Notes:



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PRIORITY AREA 2.B: Use inclusive practices to meet the strengths and needs of all children, including multilingual learners, children facing challenges, children with disabilities, and children experiencing trauma.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Respect and value children's strengths and differences.	<i>Offering open-ended activities and the choice of multiple materials that allow children to show and use their strengths.</i>	
Intentionally address the needs of any children facing challenges.	<i>Working with families, specialists, and colleagues to support children facing challenges with specific accommodations.</i>	
Use modeling and scaffolding to support children's learning and development at all levels.	<i>Repeating 1-2 step instructions clearly, using visual cues, or offering simple language for children to respond to.</i>	
Use learning materials that nurture positive identity and appreciation for diversity.	<i>Using materials such as crayon/marker colors, wall displays, dramatic play materials, dolls, and puzzles that show different cultures, family structures, abilities, races and ethnicities.</i>	

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PRIORITY AREA 2.C: Help children develop social-emotional skills, described in the learning standards and as guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Offer activities to engage children in cooperative play.	<i>Providing materials that encourage cooperative play, sharing of materials, and making a group decision such as blocks, games, and puzzles.</i>	
Guide children on how to handle social situations, make good choices, and build relationships with others.	<i>Acting out situations through role play where children make choices, such as how to share toys or resolve conflicts with words instead of physical actions.</i>	
Provide opportunities for children to value themselves and others.	<i>Assigning group “jobs” such as line leader/caboose or timekeeper to help children feel a sense of responsibility.</i>	
Teach children to recognize and label feelings and use strategies to self-regulate emotions.	<i>Reading books that focus on feelings, relationships, and problem-solving and talking out loud about how the characters are dealing with their emotions.</i>	
Offer activities that help children with memory and recall.	<i>Providing games such as “Memory,” “Simon Says,” or singing familiar rhyming songs and fingerplays.</i>	

Provide opportunities for children to self-regulate through their choice of activities (independent vs. group) and practice impulse control.	<i>In times of trauma or stress, offering simple choices like, “Do you want to play with the blocks or the puzzle?” or creating a quiet space where children can go to relax, manage their emotions, and choose items such as comforting soft toys, and calming pictures.</i>	
Integrate social-emotional learning across activities and interactions.	<i>Modeling thinking aloud when solving a problem or being patient during activities throughout the day.</i>	

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PRIORITY AREA 2.D: Help children develop language and literacy skills as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Offer activities to engage children in singing, storytelling, and rhyming, to encourage play with language and sounds of language.	<i>Using finger plays, songs, and rhyming games during transitions.</i>	
Provide activities that help children improve their speaking, understanding, and listening skills.	<i>Conducting a routine during the daily circle time such as "All About..." where children can share stories, answer questions, and listen to others.</i>	
Offer both guided and free-play activities that help children build phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, knowledge of letters and sounds, and emergent writing.	<i>Clapping out syllables in children's names, playing letter sound-matching games, and exploring beginning sounds of words with picture cards or objects.</i>	
Read aloud to children from a variety of books using interactive strategies to spark their imagination, help them learn about the world, show how words and pictures work together.	<i>Using interactive reading strategies such as picture walks, asking questions, summarizing, and predicting when reading aloud to children.</i>	
Use strategies that help multilingual learners and native English-speakers with language and reading.	<i>Using props, puppets, and expressive voices during storytelling and read-alouds.</i>	

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PRIORITY AREA 2.E: Help children develop knowledge and skills in mathematics as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Provide learning activities to support math thinking, reasoning, language, and problem-solving.	<i>Using daily routines such as snack time as an opportunity for counting and comparing, “How many crackers do you have?” “James has 3 crackers and Sally has 2 crackers. Who has more crackers?”.</i>	
Provide learning activities that include counting, recognizing numbers, how numbers relate (more/less), and addition and subtraction.	<i>Incorporating math songs with visual aids such as “Five Little Ducks,” “Ten in the Bed,” “One, Two, Buckle My Shoe”.</i>	
Provide learning activities that include recognizing and naming shapes and understanding spatial relations (above, below, next to).	<i>Looking for real-life examples of shapes like circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles in the indoor and outdoor environments.</i>	
Provide learning activities that include recognizing and making patterns, sorting, and classifying.	<i>Providing sets of items such as blocks, beads, or other manipulatives and set up activities that encourage sorting, or pattern making.</i>	
Provide learning activities that include comparing sizes and making measurements.	<i>Providing a sensory table with measuring cups, spoons, and containers of various sizes for filling and dumping.</i>	

Integrate math learning across activities and interactions.	Assigning group jobs that involve counting or sorting, such as passing out materials or counting attendance.	
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PRIORITY AREA 2.F: Help children develop knowledge and skills in scientific inquiry as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Offer learning activities that extend children’s learning and help them develop conceptual thinking skills.	<i>Prompting children to sort things by their features, such as sorting toy animals by body parts, habitat, diet, or movement.</i>	
Provide activities that spark children’s curiosity and help them make and test predictions.	<i>Setting up hands-on science stations with a question prompting children to make a prediction, such as a water table with objects that sink and float, “Which objects will sink? Which will float?”.</i>	
Provide learning activities that help children make connections to prior learning and teach new science ideas and words.	<i>Incorporating scientific terms into everyday conversation, using language like “observe,” “experiment,” “predict,” or “construct” during activities throughout the day.</i>	
Provide learning activities that teach about plant and animal life, the human body, and the world around them.	<i>Prompting children to document scientific observations (daily weather observations, how their seed has grown from week to week, or tracking their own height throughout the year) through writing and drawing in journals.</i>	
Integrate science learning across activities and interactions.	<i>Asking simple, open-ended questions to encourage exploration and problem solving throughout the day.</i>	

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PRIORITY AREA 2.G: Help children develop knowledge and skills in understanding society and culture as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Provide opportunities for children to learn about people and how they live.	<i>Encouraging children to learn and ask questions about the people in and out of their community and how they live now and in the past.</i>	
Offer learning activities that reflect children's real lives and interests.	<i>Including pictures of children and their families in room displays and asking children questions such as, "What is your favorite food at home?" "What is your favorite holiday that you celebrate with your family?"</i>	
Offer learning activities that help children build awareness of the world around them, including different cultures and places.	<i>Reading books about different cultures and locations in the world and talking about what you see or what may be missing.</i>	
Integrate learning about society and culture across activities and interactions.	<i>Providing both old and new objects (an old telephone vs. a smartphone or a typewriter and keyboard) for dramatic play, and discuss how these objects have changed over time.</i>	

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PRIORITY AREA 2.H: Help children develop fine and gross motor skills as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop age-appropriate gross motor skills, body awareness, and physical movement.	<i>Organizing indoor and outdoor spaces to include places to safely climb, roll, sit up, lie down, jump over, or weave through.</i>	
Provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop age-appropriate fine motor skills (especially related to writing) through planned activities, free play, daily routines, and self-help skills.	<i>Providing various activities that encourage children to use the small muscles in their hands such as using play dough, picking up smaller objects, and holding mark-making tools such as crayons and paint brushes.</i>	
Integrate opportunities to practice fine and gross motor skills across activities and interactions.	<i>Providing opportunities to practice with buttons, zippers, and snaps such as busy boards on a wall, or encouraging older children to zip and button their own jackets.</i>	

Additional Notes:



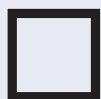
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PRIORITY AREA 2.I: Helping children develop knowledge and skills in the arts as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Provide learning activities that allow children to express themselves through a variety of ways (i.e., visual arts, music, movement and dance, and dramatic and imaginative play).	<i>Using puppets, musical instruments, or various art supplies and media to express feelings and tell stories.</i>	
Encourage children to discuss their own art and others' art, emphasizing the creative process rather than just the final result.	<i>Asking open-ended questions such as, "Can you tell me about your art?" instead of asking "What did you make?" or "What is this?"</i>	
Integrate the arts across activities and interactions.	<i>Providing art activities that connect to what children are learning about in other curriculum areas such as drawing pictures of the stages of a growing plant they planted from a seed.</i>	

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