



PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

4



Self-Assessment

Environment



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.
 - **2** = We demonstrate this priority area sometimes or partially.
 - **1** = We do not demonstrate this priority area yet.
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 4.A: Manage a physical environment that promotes all children’s learning, growth, development, health, and safety.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Make sure the environment is safe and appropriate for children's health and safety, including ease of supervision, preventing access to dangerous materials, and reducing risks for children.	<i>Ensuring toys and materials are safe and suitable for the age group such as avoiding small parts that could be choking hazards for younger children.</i>	
Ensure that the environment is set up to allow children to explore, discover, and engage safely and freely.	<i>Planning for children’s gross motor needs by setting up an area with a soft climber to encourage safe climbing and exploration.</i>	
Make the physical environment accessible and engaging for all children as they grow and develop.	<i>Organizing materials so that they are accessible for children to independently access such as placing art supplies at eye level and with visual labels.</i>	
Select and refresh learning materials to reflect children’s interests, identities, learning needs, and cultural backgrounds.	<i>Regularly rotating diverse learning materials and activity stations based on children’s evolving interests and needs.</i>	
Monitor and supervise children’s safety.	<i>Arranging furniture so that it does not block the line of sight to ensure children are always within view.</i>	

Demonstrate care for the environment and help children become environmentally responsible.	Modeling how to care for the environment for children by having a consistent routine for disposing of trash, and cleaning up materials together.	
SCORE	3 = We demonstrate this priority area in full and consistently. 2 = We demonstrate this priority area sometimes or partially. 1 = We do not demonstrate this priority area yet.	

PRIORITY AREA 4.B: Use consistent routines and flexible schedules.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Use verbal and nonverbal cues and reminders about routines and expectations.	<i>Playing a familiar song when it is time to clean up the room, or using cues like timers, clapping, or songs to signal transitions.</i>	
Set a consistent schedule with efficient transitions and adequate time to engage in learning activities and play.	<i>Displaying a visual schedule with pictures for each part of the day and referencing this schedule frequently to remind children of the routine and expectations.</i>	
Provide opportunities for eating, toileting, and sleeping that meet each child's needs.	<i>Creating a safe, calming environment for rest that is separate from more active parts of the learning environment.</i>	

Additional Notes:



SCORE

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PRIORITY AREA 4.C: Follow a planned schedule that includes a balanced variety of different types of learning materials and activities.

Family Child Care Educators	One way this can look	How this looks in my program
Offer learning activities that can be done independently or in various-sized groups.	<i>Setting up activity choices that offer open-ended participation such as reading a book independently or with a partner, or building a block tower alone or with a small group.</i>	
Provide both indoor and outdoor learning activities.	<i>Displaying and adhering to a visual schedule for children that shows indoor learning time and outdoor learning time every day.</i>	
Offer a balance of both quiet and active learning activities.	<i>Creating quiet areas such as a reading corner, separate from active zones such as a gross motor climbing structure.</i>	

Additional Notes:



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