



# Applying

## WHAT WE Know /

## Signs of Developmentally Appropriate Early Childhood Programs



### PROGRAM CHARACTERISTIC

### SIGNS OF QUALITY

#### Physical setting

Indoor environment is clean, in good repair, and well ventilated. Classroom space is divided into richly equipped activity areas, including make-believe play, blocks, science, math, games and puzzles, books, art, and music. Fenced outdoor play space is equipped with swings, climbing equipment, tricycles, and sandbox.

#### Group size

In preschools and child-care centers, group size is no greater than 18 to 20 children with 2 teachers.

#### Caregiver–child ratio

In child-care centers, teacher is responsible for no more than 8 to 10 children. In child-care homes, caregiver is responsible for no more than 6 children.

#### Daily activities

Most of the time, children work individually or in small groups. Children select many of their own activities and learn through experiences relevant to their own lives. Teachers facilitate children's involvement, accept individual differences, and adjust expectations to children's developing capacities.

#### Interactions between adults and children

Teachers move among groups and individuals, asking questions, offering suggestions, and adding more complex ideas. Teachers use positive guidance techniques, such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior and redirecting children to more acceptable activities.

#### Teacher qualifications

Teachers have college-level specialized preparation in early childhood development, early childhood education, or a related field.

#### Relationships with parents

Parents are encouraged to observe and participate. Teachers talk frequently with parents about children's behavior and development.

#### Licensing and accreditation

Child-care setting, whether a center or a home, is licensed by the state or province. In the United States, voluntary accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, [www.naeyc.org/accreditation](http://www.naeyc.org/accreditation), or the National Association for Family Child Care, [www.nafcc.org](http://www.nafcc.org), is evidence of an especially high-quality program. Canada is working on a voluntary accreditation system, under the leadership of the Canadian Child Care Federation, [www.cccf-fcsge.ca](http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca).