

**LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTER  
LEVEL 3 STANDARDS READINESS CHECKLIST**

**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**

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

<b>1. All requirements for Levels 1 and 2 are met.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> All requirements for Level 1 are met.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> All requirements for Level 2 are met.
<b>2. Program has been in operation for a minimum of one year.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> The center has been in operation for a minimum of one year.
<i>Documentation: Documentation demonstrating center has been in operation for a minimum of one year.</i>

**3. At a minimum, the Lead Teacher receives paid planning time.**

*Documentation: Evidence of paid planning time for the lead teacher.*

**4. 50% of teaching staff have either a CDA or equivalent certificate, OR an 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.**

- Yes**    **No**   50% of teaching staff have achieved and possess a current CDA or equivalent certificate;  
OR  
50% of teaching staff have achieved an early childhood degree or equivalent degree;  
OR  
50% of teaching staff have completed 60 clock hours of educational training leading to an early childhood/child development degree or CDA credential.

*Documentation: Child Development Associate credential or equivalent certificate available for review, with current expiration date;*

*OR*

*Transcript for early childhood degree or equivalent degree;*

*OR*

*Education and Training Summary Form (or equivalent form) completed and in the staff files, documenting attendance of 60 clock hours of training. Transcripts, curriculum schedule, certificates, or other written documentation from an agency or organization with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation that meets the requirements set by the Council for Professional Recognition.*

**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.**

**Yes**    **No**   At least 50% of the teaching staff, including the Director, have participated in a minimum of 20 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood.

*Documentation: Education and Training Summary Form (or equivalent form) with supporting documentation such as certificates, transcripts, curriculum schedule from ECE/CD degree program or other appropriate evidence for teaching staff that demonstrates participation by 50% of total teaching staff, including the director, in a minimum of 20 clock hours of educational or in-service training focused on topics relevant to early childhood. Round up to determine number of staff required when calculating percentage. For teaching staff employed less than one year, in-service hours should be prorated based on the number of months since the date hired.*

**6. Program evaluation is completed annually by families and staff.**

**Yes**    **No**   Program evaluation is completed annually by families and teaching staff.

*Documentation: Evaluation completed by families and teaching staff.*

*Interview: Describe or show your system for conducting annual program evaluations by families and teaching staff.*

**7. A strategic plan is completed and includes annual evaluation/goal setting and long range planning/goal setting.**

*Documentation: Evidence of strategic plan that 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:**

- Yes**    **No**   1. Provides for children’s physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and social-emotional development. It includes goals for children that are consistent with the *FOUNDATIONS to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Child From Birth to Age 5*.

Documentation: *View the written curriculum plan. The curriculum should allow for the children’s physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and social-emotional development. School-age only program should build upon the FOUNDATIONS.*

- Yes**    **No**   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.

Documentation: *Evidence of one of the above examples describing the curriculum to families.*

- Yes**    **No**   3. Staff members are oriented to the curriculum. Lead teachers plan daily activities with staff members so that the curriculum can be implemented effectively to provide support for children in their active learning experiences.

Documentation: *View Education and Training Summary Form (or equivalent form) for teaching staff for evidence of an initial overview and introduction to basic aspects of the curriculum.*

Interview: *Explain your process for planning daily activities.*

- Yes**    **No**   4. The curriculum and goals for children are reflected in everyday practice, including through daily, weekly, or monthly written lesson plans.

Documentation: *Evidence of a detailed description of activities and experiences provided by teaching staff on a daily basis to support individual development and learning. A sample lesson plan will be viewed to ensure that the lesson plan reflects the curriculum goals and philosophy.*

Observation: *Curriculum goals and philosophy are reflected in everyday practice.*

**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 (*indicators continued*):**

- Yes**    **No**   5. Assessment is appropriate to the curriculum and focuses on children's strengths. It may include portfolios, conversations, anecdotal notes, and developmental notes.

Interview: How do you assess/evaluate your curriculum?

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

- Yes**    **No**   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.

Documentation: The daily schedule or lesson plan will be viewed to ensure these opportunities occur.

Observation: Interaction between the teaching staff and children indicates intentional communication to foster communication skills.

- Yes**    **No**   2. Many opportunities throughout the day for reading.

Documentation: The daily schedule or lesson plan will be viewed to ensure opportunities are provided throughout the day for reading activities.

Observation: Children will be observed participating in reading activities.

- Yes**    **No**   3. Every day children have many experiences and materials available to encourage imagination and creativity.

Observation: Children will be observed at play. Open-ended activities are made available to children.

**9a. Children’s physical, cognitive, language, literacy, math, and creative development is supported. (indicators continued)**

- Yes**    **No**   4. Children’s thinking is stimulated through experimentation, exploration, and access to interesting materials and adult support.

Documentation: *The daily schedule or lesson plan will be viewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

Observation: *Children are actively engaged with materials provided.*

- Yes**    **No**   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.

Observation: *Children’s art work is displayed at children’s eye level.*

*Most of the art work reflects children’s individual preference in the use of color, materials, tools, and style.*

- Yes**    **No**   6. Teachers encourage language and literacy development through interactions which might include books, songs, puppet play, and writing/drawing opportunities.

Documentation: *The daily schedule or lesson plan will be reviewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

Observation: *Teaching staff is observed encouraging language and literacy development through interactions with children, which might include books, songs, puppet play, and writing and drawing opportunities.*

- Yes**    **No**   7. Math experiences are a part of everyday activities and routines.

Documentation: *The daily schedule or lesson plan will be reviewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

Observation: *Children are observed engaging in math experiences as part of their everyday activities and routines.*

- Yes**    **No**   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.

Documentation: *The daily schedule or lesson plan will be reviewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

Observation: *Children are observed experiencing music daily, which might include singing, creative movement, and use of a variety of musical and rhythmic instruments.*

**9a. Children’s physical, cognitive, language, literacy, math, and creative development is supported. (indicators continued)**

- Yes**    **No**   9. Science exploration is part of daily activities (examples may include collections of natural objects, living things to care for, cooking, and simple experiments).

Documentation: *The daily schedule or lesson plan will be reviewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

Observation: *Children are engaged in activities which encourage science exploration. Children have access to materials that encourage science exploration, which might include collections of natural objects, living things that are to be cared for, cooking activities, and simple experiments. Developmentally appropriate science exploration for infants and toddlers might include knobbed puzzles of animals, realistic plastic fruits and vegetables, or an aquarium with live fish.*

- Yes**    **No**   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.

Documentation: *The daily schedule is reviewed to see that above activities are included.*

Observation: *The children are engaged in a variety of balanced activities.*

Interview (infants only program): *How is the daily schedule adapted for infants?*

- Yes**    **No**   11. Large group activities are not excessive for any part of the daily routine.

Documentation: *The daily schedule is reviewed to ensure that large group activities are not the majority of the daily routine.*

**9b. Specific Infant/Toddler indicators must include:**       N/A

**Yes**    **No**   1. Infants and toddlers are not expected to function as a large group.

*Observation: Infants and toddlers are observed engaged in safe, supervised activities. If infants and toddlers choose to participate as part of a large group, they are actively engaged and the activity is developmentally appropriate.*

*Interview: What do you do if an infant or toddler chooses not to participate as part of a large group?*

**Yes**    **No**   2. Infants and toddlers are offered a variety of sensory experiences each day.

*Documentation: The daily schedule or lesson plan will be viewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

*Observation: Infants and toddlers are provided with a variety of sensory experiences such as soft, hard, rough, and smooth.*

*Interview: What are specific examples of ways in which you provide infants and toddlers with a variety of sensory experiences each day?*

**Yes**    **No**   3. Toddlers are offered opportunities for writing experiences each day.

*Documentation: The daily schedule or lesson plan will be viewed to ensure these opportunities occur.*

*Observation: Toddlers have opportunity to explore with different types of writing utensils such as large crayons, markers, chalk, paint, and finger paint.*

*Interview: What are specific examples of ways in which you provide toddlers with a variety of writing experiences each day?*

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

- Yes**    **No**   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 time and includes indoor and outdoor play.

*Documentation: The daily schedule or lesson plan will be viewed to ensure these opportunities occur at least one-third of the program day.*

*Observation: Children will be observed actively engaged making choices about activities and materials.*

*Interview (infants only program): How is the daily schedule adapted for infants?*

- Yes**    **No**   2. The teacher supports children's development by gathering information through child observations that is used to guide lesson planning.

*Interview: Describe your process for observing children. How do you analyze and use the information gathered throughout the observation process?*

- Yes**    **No**   3. The teacher supports children's play by providing additional materials and experiences that expand on children's interests and skills.

*Interview: What are examples in the past that you have added materials and experiences that have expanded upon children's interests and skills?*

- Yes**    **No**   4. The teacher extends learning for children by talking about what they are doing and asking open-ended questions that promote critical thinking skills.

*Observation: Teaching staff is observed during individual and small group activities talking to children about what they are doing and asking open-ended questions that promote critical thinking skills such as reasoning, reflecting, observation, and problem solving.*

*Interview: What types of activities do you provide to stimulate a child's critical thinking skills?*

**10. Children are actively engaged throughout the day in making choices about activities and materials.  
(indicators continued)**

- Yes**    **No**   5. The teacher finds ways to help children learn skills when it is developmentally appropriate and when the child shows an interest.

*Observation: Children are observed engaging in activities designed to teach skills which are developmentally appropriate.*

*Interview: How do you find ways to help children learn skills when it is developmentally appropriate and/or when the child shows an interest?*

- Yes**    **No**   6. The teacher takes advantage of the many natural learning experiences associated with daily life and makes those “teachable moments” opportunities for learning.

*Observation: Teaching staff is observed using everyday activities as opportunities for learning.*

*Interview: Explain in a given day how you take advantage of the many natural learning experiences and make them opportunities for everyday learning. How do you use “teachable moments”?*

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

**Yes**    **No**   1. A written plan is in place for effectively caring for children with special needs.

*Documentation: A written plan is reviewed to demonstrate program can effectively care for children with special needs. Even if the child care center has no children with special needs enrolled, a written plan is still in place.*

**Yes**    **No**   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.

*Observation: Children are observed in the space to ensure all children have access to materials and opportunities to engage in play and projects without limitation or interference from one another.*

**Yes**    **No**   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.

*Observation: All children are observed with access to and using materials which are appropriate for their age and ability. Evidence is observed that safe, appropriate adaptation of materials and equipment has occurred.  
Interview: Describe how you adapt materials and activities to ensure all children have age and skill appropriate materials.*

**Yes**    **No**   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.

*Observation: The teaching staff is observed including children in developmentally appropriate self-help activities.*

**Yes**    **No**   5. The teachers answer children’s questions about differences in a respectful and factual way.

**N/A** (Infants only program)

*Observation: Teaching staff is observed responding to questions about differences in a respectful and factual way.  
Interview: Describe how you respond to children’s questions as they relate to individual differences between children.*