

## *Appendix D*

### Observation Checklists for Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs

As you complete these checklists, you may wish to take notes regarding the status of the characteristics you observe. Add the dates of your observations if that information will be helpful to you.

## 1. Environment Observation Checklist

Environmental characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. A family bulletin board / message center with current news about the program, photos of the children's activities, and samples of children's creations.			
2. Photographs of the children are prominently displayed in their cubbies and throughout the classroom.			
3. Centers are clearly defined with furnishings, flooring textures, tape, and exits to manage traffic flow.			
4. Noisy centers are separated from quiet ones.			
5. Messy activities like cooking, art, and sand/water play take place on washable flooring, while blocks, dramatic play, science, music, math and manipulatives, and literacy take place on carpeted floors.			
6. Quiet "be by myself" spaces are available where children can work/ play alone or with a friend.			
7. Spaces are available to accommodate several children playing together.			
8. Materials are displayed on low shelving labeled with pictures and words in both English and the children's home languages.			
9. Print appears in English and in all the home languages of the children. When multiple home languages are present, signage is color coded to signify particular home languages.			
10. Children's art, creations, and writing samples are prominently displayed at the children's eye level.			
11. Materials and displays represent the children's cultures and family structures.			
12. Landscape features are used in the layout of the outdoor space.			

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## 2. Preschool Toys, Materials, and Equipment Observation Checklist

Toys, materials, and equipment characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Learning centers include toys and other items that respond to and build on children's interests.			
2. Every learning center includes toys, materials, and equipment that support a wide range of developmental levels. Children use some toys, materials, and equipment that are familiar and some that offer slightly greater challenges than each child's skill level.			
3. There are sufficient toys and other materials available in each learning center to support the maximum number of children allowed to play there.			
4. The toys, materials, and equipment displayed in each learning center represent only a part of the available inventory for that center.			
5. Toys, materials, and equipment are rotated periodically as children grow tired of them, develop new interests, and gain new skills.			
6. Toys and materials that are used together are displayed and stored together.			
7. Teachers add new toys, materials, and equipment to support the curriculum.			
8. There are many open-ended play items children can use in a variety of ways.			
9. Homemade and natural items supplement the purchased inventory.			
10. Children use "real" tools and safety gear under close supervision.			
11. Teachers and children bring indoor toys and materials outside regularly.			
12. Books and writing materials are found in all learning centers—not just the literacy center.			

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### 3. Preschool Program Structure Observation Checklist

Program structure characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Time slots for daily activities match children’s developmental capabilities.			
2. Active and quiet times are alternated throughout the day.			
3. Children play outdoors at least once a day for at least an hour.			
4. Children spend at least an hour engaged in activities of their own choosing, including working on projects and interacting with teachers.			
5. Cleanup is ongoing, rather than being a separate item on the daily schedule.			
6. Children eat morning and afternoon snacks when they are hungry; snacks are part of child choice time rather than a separate item on the daily schedule.			
7. Children transition in small groups from being outdoors to getting ready to eat lunch.			
8. During mealtimes, adults and children pass bowls of food around the table and serve themselves family-style.			
9. Teachers and visiting family members eat a relaxed, nutritious lunch with small groups of children, engaging them in conversation.			
10. Children seamlessly transition from lunch to rest time as they finish eating.			
11. At rest time, children sleep according to their own time clocks for as long as is needed.			
12. Teachers give sufficient warning to children when a transition is about to take place.			

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#### 4. Preschool Curriculum Observation Checklist

Curriculum characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Children work independently on self-selected tasks and activities. Teachers ask open-ended questions and make comments and suggestions as appropriate.			
2. Children work in pairs or small groups on cooperative activities of their choosing. Teachers pose questions and make suggestions as needed.			
3. Children do project-related work. Teachers pose inspirational questions and document children's work with photos and notes.			
4. Teachers regularly observe children's interactions and activities, document what they see and hear, and maintain individual portfolios.			
5. Teachers model prosocial behaviors and support children's use of positive behaviors, such as sharing, friendship, and empathy.			
6. Children use their large muscles in various activities throughout the day.			
7. Children use the small muscles in their hands in various activities throughout the day.			
8. Children take part in conversations and view print and its uses in English and in their home language.			
9. Children solve problems, explore cause and effect, and apply old knowledge to new situations.			
10. Children express ideas and feelings through the creative arts.			
11. Teachers ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all children, including those with special needs.			
12. Family members share their skills and interests and play with, read to, and otherwise engage the children.			

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## 5. Preschool Supportive Interactions Observation Checklist

Supportive interaction characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Teachers engage with children one-on-one, in small groups, and as the entire class.			
2. Teachers respond quickly and positively to children's needs and questions, give comfort, and help them resolve problems.			
3. Teachers bend, kneel, or sit down to establish eye contact when talking with children.			
4. Teachers attend to children who are less verbal as well as to those who have a lot to say and seek attention.			
5. Teachers show respect for children's feelings and ideas, even if they disagree with them.			
6. Teachers plan activities that encourage children to cooperate, work together, help each other, and care for one another.			
7. Teachers and children listen to other points of view and accept individual differences.			
8. Teachers encourage and offer suggestions so children can solve problems on their own, make progress, complete challenges, and learn from mistakes.			
9. Teachers help children make friends and support their efforts to renegotiate friendships as necessary.			
10. Teachers and children play, smile, laugh, and have fun while learning together.			
11. Teachers support each other during the day through gestures, facial expressions, and words.			
12. Teachers and families give each other warm greetings and updates about children's experiences and progress.			

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## 6. Preschool Positive Guidance Observation Checklist

Positive guidance characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. The environment is safe, well planned, and developmentally appropriate.			
2. Teachers involve children in setting a few important, positively stated rules.			
3. Teachers acknowledge children's strong feelings, while guiding them to express those feelings through words or cope with them through another outlet.			
4. Teachers describe desired actions in positive terms that tell children what is expected.			
5. Teachers introduce a simple conflict resolution process and remind children to use it when disagreements arise.			
6. Teachers provide many opportunities for preschoolers to make choices throughout the day.			
7. Teachers include children in doing valued tasks that keep the environment safe and tidy.			
8. Teachers stop or adjust what they are doing to address the needs of a child who is distressed.			
9. Once a child is no longer acting out and has regained self-control, teachers have a private discussion with the child.			
10. Teachers consider the reasons underlying a child's behavior.			
11. Teachers involve families in helping a child replace challenging behaviors with appropriate ones.			
12. Teachers help children who use bullying behaviors as well as children who are bullied.			

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