



This handbook contains the latest developmentally appropriate and research-based program standards for early education centers.

Green Apple Early Education Center Accreditation Standards Manual

Green Apple Accreditation of
Children's Services

Green Apple Early Education Center
Accreditation Standards Manual

FAQs



What is accreditation?

Accreditation is the voluntary, ongoing process of self-evaluation and improvement. Accreditation requires a commitment to accountability, compliance, self-evaluation, and peer review.

What is the step-by-step process?

- Application
- Self-Study
- On-site Visit
- Final Determination
- Continual Accreditation
- Re-accreditation

For specific details on each Step in the Accreditation process, visit our website, www.gaacs.org to download the Green Apple PPM.

Is there a webinar or training program that will help prepare my school to successfully complete the accreditation process?

Yes, as a member school, you may undergo the Accreditation Orientation webinar. The AO webinar is provided once a week. Members may take the AO as many times as necessary to understanding the requirements for accreditation, How to Submit the Self-Study, What to Expect During the Onsite Visit, and the Next Steps in the Accreditation Process.

Green Apple Accreditation of Children's Services

Early Education Center Accreditation Standards Manual

Table of Contents	
Standards by Sections	
Standard 1.0	<u>Governance</u>
Standard 2.0	<u>Administration</u>
Standard 3.0	<u>Teachers</u>
Standard 4.0	<u>Nutrition and Food Services</u>
Standard 5.0	<u>Health, Safety, and Sanitation</u>
Standard 6.0	<u>Napping and Bedding</u>
Standard 7.0	<u>Ratio and Group Size</u>
Standard 8.0	<u>Curriculum</u>
Standard 9.0	<u>Relationships</u>
Standard 10.0	<u>Professional Development</u>
Standard 11.0	<u>Licensure, Exemption, and Regulation</u>
Standard 12.0	<u>Transportation</u>
Appendices	
Appendix A	<u>Director Survey</u>
Appendix B	<u>Family/Parent Survey</u>
Appendix C	<u>Teacher Survey</u>
Appendix D	<u>Green Apple PPM (Policies and Procedures Manual)</u>
Appendix E	<u>Self-Study Guide</u>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Standard 1.0 Governance
Strand: Board/Committee/School Head
<i>Topic/Sub-Topic: Board or Committee</i>
Program Standards
1.1.1 There is a board or committee (hereinafter referred to as “the board”) responsible for the general policies and the financial stability of the childcare. Provisions are made by the board to encourage good communication and mutual respect between itself, the administration, the faculty and staff, the parents, and the students.
1.1.2 The board conducts an annual evaluation of the childcare administrator/director (hereinafter referred to as “the director”). The board ensures there is fiscal responsibility and stability for the school to operate.
1.1.3 Clear admissions policies and procedures are stated in writing. Race, gender, disability, national origin, or ethnic background is not a factor in admissions policies.
1.1.4 There is a written statement of beliefs or core values.
1.1.5 When the program is governed by a board of directors, the program has written policies defining roles and responsibilities of board members and staff. The written policies and procedures include but are not limited to bylaws, minutes, conflict of interest, nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and non-compete policies.
1.1.6 The childcare program: • Fosters staff communication through staff meetings, a newsletter, written memoranda, suggestion boxes, etc. • Provides a written job description for each position and a policy in writing on nondiscrimination. • Provides staff with a staff lounge or separate break area and a staff bathroom. Staff have ways of taking breaks and finding relief at times of high stress. • Offers a benefits package for full-time staff that satisfactorily completes their introductory period of employment. • Has a teacher retention plan. • Has in place technology-based information management systems that collect and analyze data used to monitor program operation and to inform program improvement.

1.1.7 All components of program operation are guided by written policies that: • Articulate thorough plans, systems, and procedures. • Enable the program to run smoothly and effectively. • Guide the program toward achieving its goals. • Detail staff responsibilities, planning time, training, and resources, • Guide the appropriate use of specialized consultants to support the program's goals.
Philosophy and Policy making
1.2.0 The board has developed a written statement addressing matters of family lifestyles and biblical principles.
1.2.1 There is a written philosophy for the care and education of children.
1.2.2 Written minutes of board meetings are maintained on file.
1.2.3 The written philosophy of education is published in all school publications.
1.2.4 Each school will publish, implement, & display an appropriate statement of nondiscrimination of students & personnel in accordance with federal law & regulations.
1.2.5 The childcare has a published philosophy statement that demonstrates a clear written perspective on early childhood education.
1.2.6 A copy of the childcare's mission, vision, purpose, goals and objectives, beliefs and core values, Code of Ethics, and philosophy of education are posted on bulletin boards throughout the school. Each statement is listed in the Parent Handbook and/or Student Code of Conduct.
1.2.7 School-wide or general goals appropriate to a quality educational program should be developed by each school. These goals should reflect both affective and effective outcomes in student performance and continuous school improvement.
1.2.8 The school will have a mission and/or purpose statement that gives direction for its development.
Board/Committee or Head of School Responsibilities
1.3.1 The board or immediate supervisor reviews the director's self-evaluation and provides feedback on performance.
1.3.2 The board or immediate supervisor reviews the director's annual evaluation of the school and provides feedback on the overall school progress in meeting objectives.
1.3.3 There are sufficient financial resources to operate the childcare's programs, and its financial records are accurate and current. The budget is realistic and adequate for the attainment of the school's stated objectives, and expenditures are properly managed.
1.3.4 The board provides oversight and reviews the financial position of the childcare to assure its stability. Monthly reports of income and expenses and an annual budget are in use.
1.3.5 The board requires an annual review of the program's financial records.
1.3.6 The board maintains adequate liability and accident insurance, including insurance on any vehicle that transports children.

1.3.7 The board has retained a Certified Public Account for tax compliance. The program provides documentation of a certified financial review.
1.3.8 The board develops an annual salary and benefits schedule that provides adequately for needs of the staff salaries, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention are reviewed yearly by the board. Policies reflect an effort to appropriately compensate and retain quality staff. The schedule is reviewed and revised on an annual basis.
1.3.9 Each year the board conducts a written evaluation of the school that includes input from the director, staff, and parents.
1.3.10 The program has developed a continuous quality improvement plan using multiple sources, which is updated annually, shared with staff, families, and stakeholders. The plan includes goals, timelines, and outcomes.
1.3.11 The program has a current business plan and/or strategic plan, created or revised in the past 36 months.
1.3.12 The program has a current year operations budget and quarterly income and expense statements that show revenues, expenses, and budget compared to actual.
Additional Responsibilities
1.4.1 The childcare maintains information regarding staff, children, and parents in a confidential manner.
1.4.2 All personnel and student files are kept in a locked file cabinet. A written policy outlining procedures for reviewing student files is maintained on campus.
1.4.3 The school shall maintain an active Substitute Teacher list to replace Permanent teachers during Emergency and Scheduled absences.
1.4.4 Volunteers are utilized on a regular basis to ensure that staff/child ratio, are maintained during field trips and off campus events.
1.4.5 Financial policies and the procedures to implement them: • Provide evidence of sound fiscal accountability using standard accounting practices. • Are consistent with the program's vision, philosophy, mission, goals, and expected child outcomes. The program has resources to support the program's vision, philosophy, mission, goals, operation, and expected child outcomes. • Include an annual operating budget. • Include at least a quarterly reconciliation of expenses to budget. • Include a system exists to review or adjust the budget if circumstances change. • Include the person directly responsible for program implementation (administrator, site manager, program manager, or supervising teacher) in long-range fiscal planning and in operating budget preparation, reconciliation, and review. • Include a yearly audit. Fiscal records (such as revenue and expenditure statements, balance sheets, banking reconciliation, Two Year Projected Budget, Income and Expense Chart, Inventory, and Cash Flow Analysis, etc.) are kept as evidence of sound financial management.
1.4.6 non-administrative personnel participate in decision-making for hiring, curriculum development, program goal setting and/or annual planning.

Standard 2.0 Administration
Strand: Leadership
<i>Topic/Sub-Topic: Head of School</i>
Program Standards
2.1.1 There is a head of school herein referred to as the “director” of the childcare center.
2.1.2 The director must be physically on campus seventy-five percent of the time during the hours of operation.
2.1.3 There is an assistant director with the same qualifications, knowledge, and experience as the director, who is available to be on campus during the hours of operation; especially when/if the director is not present.
Head of School Responsibilities
2.2.1 The director submits to the board or immediate supervisor a yearly self-evaluation.
2.2.2 The director provides leadership to the staff and students in fulfilling the mission and purpose of the childcare
2.2.3 The director submits an annual evaluation of the school and assists the board in setting and prioritizing short and long-range goals for the center.
2.2.4 The director recruit’s quality staff members who are ethically and professionally qualified to carry out the mission/purpose of the childcare. New employees are formally evaluated following a training period that does not exceed six months. Staff/child interaction and job- related competencies/evaluations are considered before positions are confirmed.
2.2.5 The director creates an atmosphere of trust and appreciation, gives help, and lends support and encouragement, thus fostering the effectiveness and longevity of the staff.
2.2.6 The program has a formal merit evaluation program, and every staff person is formally reviewed by a supervisor at least once each year. An individual professional development plan is generated from the staff-evaluation process and is updated at least annually and ongoing as needed.
2.2.7 The director discusses the evaluations with each staff person in private and attempts to reconcile any differences in a positive manner. All conferences are confidential. The staff evaluation is used to develop the individual professional development plan.
2.2.8 The director builds strong relationships and communication between the staff and administration and encourages team spirit among the staff.

2.2.9 The director develops and implements a public relations plan for the childcare. The public relations plan informs the community regarding the childcare’s programs and services. A brochure describes the childcare programs, including its enrollment policy, its mission, and its statement of nondiscrimination.
2.3.0 The director oversees interaction between the staff and children, publishing the childcare’s discipline standards and procedures for parents and staff and taking appropriate measures to maintain discipline.
2.3.1 The director provides oversight of the maintenance of the buildings, grounds, and equipment.
2.3.2 The director provides instructional leadership to the teaching staff. The director encourages the staff to attend child development training programs, with an emphasis on those that support the childcare’s philosophy and mission.
2.3.3 The director has scheduled paid planning time for the staff and meets with them on a regular basis.
2.3.4 The director provides a current list of qualified substitutes and is responsible for maintaining appropriate staff-child ratios when any staff member is absent.
2.3.5 The director provides a staff schedule that allows for appropriate breaks (ten to fifteen minutes for each four hours of work is suggested).
2.3.6 The director ensures that complete records for each student are kept current and are available to authorized personnel.
2.3.7 Student records must be updated annually. These include, but not limited to parent consent forms, names, addresses, telephone numbers, emails, immunization records, progress reports, medical histories, developmental histories, parent conference reports, transportation permissions, injury and illness logs, and medication administration log.
2.3.8 Confidential personnel files, including applications with records of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a secure location. Information about children and families is held in strictest confidence by the program staff.
2.3.9 The program leadership: • Encourages staff and families to work together to participate in and support community improvement or advocacy projects. • Builds mutual relationships and communicates regularly with close neighbors, informing them about the program, seeking out their perspectives, involving them in the program as appropriate, and cooperating with them on neighborhood interests and needs. • Is knowledgeable about how policy changes at local, state, tribal, or national levels affect the services and resources available for children and their families.

Strand: Credential Requirement
<i>Topic/Sub-Topic: Administrator Certificate</i>
Program Standards
2.4.1 The Director must meet one of the following: • An undergraduate degree in one (1) of the following: Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Social Work, Early Childhood Special Education, Nursing, Child Care Management, or another child-related field, OR • A combination of coursework and experience that includes a minimum of four (4) college level courses in Early Childhood Education and Child Development, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Child Care Management; and • two (2) years of experience as a lead teacher or director serving the children of the age groups in care.
2.4.2 In addition to the requirements found in Standard 9.1.1., the Director must meet ONE of the following: a. at least 15 credit hours in early childhood education/child development and 9 credits in business/administration OR b. 0.8 in-service hours in early childhood education/child development and business/administration.
Age Requirement
2.5.1 Director must be at least 21 years old.
Director's Personnel File
2.6.1 Copies of the director's educational background, college degrees, high school diplomas, certificate of completion, DCF transcript, director's driver's license showing age, and CPR/First Aid certification must be kept in the employee file.
Director's Professional Development
2.7.1 The director and assistant director(s) must complete at least 24 hours of job-related professional development annually. Topics of professional development include childcare operations and management, administration, inclusion, personnel management, behavior management, first aid, medication administration, child abuse reporting and compliance, health, safety, child development, nutrition, evaluation, whole language, curriculum, parent involvement, and communication skills.

Standard 3.0 Teachers	
Strand: Governance	
Code of Ethics	
3.1.1	The childcare program maintains a written Code of Ethics.
3.1.2	Program staff/administrators have reviewed and signed for a copy of the Code of Ethics.
Professionalism	
3.1.3	Childcare staff/administrators maintain a professional attitude when working with co-workers, administrators, family, children, state agencies, and Green Apple representatives.
Lead Teacher Credentials	
3.2.0	Lead Teachers must be at least 21 years old.
3.2.1	Lead Teachers must be certified in First Aid and Pediatric CPR, including management of a blocked airway, and rescue breathing.
3.2.2	Lead teachers must meet <u>ONE</u> of the following requirements: - An undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Social Work, Nursing, or other child-related field, and a minimum of one (1) year experience working in a childcare program serving children ages 0-5; OR - A national competency-based early childhood credential such as the CCP, CDA, or state equivalent (example, Florida Child Care Professional Credential), and two (2) years of experience as a teacher serving the children of the age-groups in care, OR - A combination of coursework and experience including: a high school diploma or GED, a minimum of four (4) college level courses in Early Childhood Education and Child Development, and a minimum of three (3) years, experience working in a childcare program serving children ages 0-5
3.2.3	The instructional staff is trained, at least annually, in the childcare's philosophy, mission and purpose, Code of Ethics, Discipline Policy, State Regulations, and Nondiscrimination policies.
3.2.4	The lead teacher may give guidance to more than one class.
3.2.5	The lead teacher of each class has a written professional development plan and has submitted it to the director.
Assistant Teachers	
3.3.0	Assistant teachers must have obtained at a minimum a state/nationally recognized competency credential (CDA credential or an equivalency) and a GED or high school diploma.
3.3.1	The staff is instructed, at least annually, on the childcare's employee policies.
3.3.2	All staff members have a copy of the employee handbook.

3.3.3 The employee handbook includes job descriptions and policies on paid holidays, sick leave, personal days or vacation, guidelines for increased compensation based on experience, job performance, and professional development, insurance or other benefits, resignation/termination procedures, and grievance procedures.
3.3.4 Full time staff benefit packages include paid leave, paid holidays, medical insurance, and retirement for eligible employees, employee child discount, and life insurance.
3.3.5 Associate/assistant teachers must be at least 18 years old.
Background Clearance/Age Requirements/Volunteers and Substitutes
3.3.6 All staff counted in the staff-to-child ratio must be at least 18 years old.
3.3.7 Volunteers or other staff must be always at least 16 years old, work under the direct supervision of a trained adult staff member and are not counted in the staff – child ratio.
3.3.8 All personnel, including volunteers and substitutes must have on file the appropriate level 2 screening and background clearances, and all personnel must be supervised by qualified staff.
3.3.9 Copies of State Department of Law Enforcement and Local Sheriff Department clearances must be maintained in the employee and volunteer/substitute files.
3.4.0 All teaching staff must clear a sexual predator check prior to interacting with children.
Support Staff
3.4.1 The number of clerical staff members to meet the needs of the school.
3.4.2 The number of custodial and maintenance staff is sufficient for the school's facilities and programs.
3.4.3 A new employee is not considered permanent until the director has assessed his/her mental and physical health and ability to work effectively with young children.
3.4.4 Hiring procedures ensure that all employees in the program (including bus drivers, bus monitors, custodians, cooks, clerical and other support staff) who come into contact with children in the program or who have responsibility for children: • Have passed a criminal-record check and are free from any history of substantiated child abuse or neglect. • Have cleared a sexual predator check. • Are at least 18 years old (except vehicle drivers, who must be at least 21). • Have completed high school or an equivalent diploma. • Have provided personal references and a current health assessment that attest to the prospective employee's ability to perform the tasks required to carry out the responsibilities of their position.
Hiring Practices
3.5.1 The childcare's hiring procedures include screening employees for history of abuse and/or criminal convictions.
3.5.2. A new employee is not considered permanent until the director has assessed his/her mental and physical health and ability to work effectively with young children.

Standard 4.0 Nutrition and Food Services
Strand: Managing Child Nutrition
Topic/Sub-Topic: Food Preparation
Program Standards
4.1.0 If food is prepared on the premises, the childcare must be in compliance with legal requirements for food storage, preparation, and service. Food may be prepared at an approved facility and transported to the childcare in approved containers and at approved temperatures.
4.1.1 The food provided meets the nutritional needs of the child. Appropriate quantities and food groups are offered for the age of the child.
4.1.2 Children are encouraged through conversation and curriculum to develop balanced nutritional awareness by including all food groups.
4.1.3 As part of the curriculum, children are led to discuss good health practices, which may include nutrition and visits with doctors, dentists, and nurses.
4.1.4 Parents are provided with written menus, which meet all state, county, and other agency nutritional requirements.
4.1.5 The program prepares written daily, weekly, and/or monthly menus that: • Are posted where families can see them. • Are made available to families. • Are kept on file for review by certified inspectors and/or the accrediting association. • Illustrate that meals and snacks are at regularly established times. • Illustrate that meals and snacks are at least two (2) hours apart but not more than three (3) hours apart.
4.1.6 A daily record of feeding times and amount consumed is provided to parents of infants and children with disabilities who have special feeding needs.
4.1.7 Food brought from home is stored appropriately until consumed and is refrigerated if necessary. - If formula is served, staff serve only formula that comes to the facility in factory- sealed containers (e.g., ready-to-feed powder or concentrate formulas and baby food jars) prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions. If solid food is served, parents may bring solid food prepared at home for use by their child or the program may prepare solid infant food in the facility. (This indicator only is an Emerging Practice.) - Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. - Staff discard after one hour any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed or is not refrigerated. - If staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than five minutes. No milk, including human milk, and no other infant foods are warmed in a microwave oven.
4.1.8 If parents are providing meals and snacks, they are given suggestions for items that meet the children's nutritional needs.

4.1.9 Parents providing meals or snacks are encouraged to include at least two food groups for each snack and four food groups for each lunch.
4.2.0 Mealtime is a pleasant social time when children can learn to acknowledge God's provision of food.
4.2.1 The childcare center provides age-appropriate nutritious meals.
4.2.2 Infants are held when bottle-fed.
4.2.3 Appropriate highchairs or toddler seats are used when children are spoon fed.
4.2.4 Tables and chairs used for snack and lunch times are suitable for the size of the children.
4.2.5 The children are encouraged to serve themselves and assist with cleanup in keeping with their level of ability.
4.2.6 Mealtime is relaxed and pleasant for children. Staff sit and eat with the children while modeling appropriate behavior and using mealtime as a learning experience.
4.2.7 The program participates in the United States Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA's CACFP), OR at least two (2) times a year, a registered dietitian or pediatric public health nutritionist evaluates the provider's menus for: • Nutritional content. • Portion sizes, and nationally recommended limits on juice, sugar, sodium, and saturated fats. • Food service operations. • Food safety (staff discard foods with expired dates, etc.). • Special feeding needs to be met by the program; and • Procedures used for food brought from home. The program documents compliance and any corrections it has made according to the recommendations of the program's health consultant, nutrition consultant, or a sanitarian that reflect consideration of federal and other applicable food safety standards.
4.2.8 Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day (infants who are fed only breast milk do not need to be offered water). When the water supply source is a well or other private source (i.e., not served by a public supply), on-site documentary evidence verifies that the local regulatory health authority has determined the water to be safe for human consumption.
4.2.9 Staff take steps and work with families to ensure that food and beverages brought from home: • Meet the United States Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA's CACFP) food guidelines. • Are labeled with the child's name and the date. • Are refrigerated, if required, and stays cold until served. • Are supplemented by food provided by the program, if necessary. • Must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers if food is intended to be shared.
4.3.0 For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs: • The child's health provider offers the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. • The program asks families of a child with food allergies to give consent for posting information about that child's food allergy and, if consent is given, then posts that information in the food preparation area and in the areas of the facility the child uses so it is a visual reminder to all who interact with the child during the program day.

4.3.1 Staff does not offer children younger than four (4) years the following foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas; hard pretzels; spoonful of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Staff cut foods into pieces no larger than 1/4-inch square for infants and 1/2-inch square for toddlers/2-year-olds, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability.
4.3.2 In regard to food safety: - Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. - Staff discards after one (1) hour any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed or is not refrigerated. - If staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than five minutes. - No milk, including breast milk, and no other infant foods are warmed in a microwave oven. - Except for breast milk, staff serve only formula and infant food that come to the facility in factory-sealed containers (e.g., ready-to-feed powder or concentrated formulas and baby food jars) and are prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions.
4.3.3 The program supports breastfeeding by: - Accepting, storing, and serving expressed milk for feedings. - Accepting milk in ready-to-feed sanitary containers labeled with the infant's name and date and storing it in a refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than three months. - Ensuring that staff gently mix, not shake, the milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in breast milk; and - Providing a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinating feedings with the infant's mother.
4.3.4 In regard to infants and toddlers: - The program does not feed cow's milk to infants younger than 12 months, and it serves only whole milk to children of ages 12 months to 24 months. - If the program provides food to infants, staff work with families (who are informed by their child's health care provider) to ensure that the food is based on each infant's individual nutritional needs and developmental stage. - Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. - Teaching staff offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup. - Teaching staff do not offer solid foods and fruit juices to infants younger than six months of age, unless that practice is recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by families. - Sweetened beverages are avoided. If juice (only 100% fruit juice is recommended) is served, the amount is limited to no more than four ounces per child daily.
4.3.5 Infants and toddlers (to age two) do not have bottles while in a crib or bed and do not eat from propped bottles at any time. They also do not carry bottles, sippy cups, or regular cups with them while crawling or walking.
4.3.6 Teaching staff who are familiar with the infant feed him or her whenever the infant seems hungry. Feeding is not used in lieu of other forms of comfort.
4.3.7 Mealtime is relaxed and pleasant for children.
4.3.8 For all infants, and children with disabilities who have special feeding needs, a daily record is kept and documents the type and quantity of food a child consumes and provides families with that information.

Standard 5.0 Health, Safety, and Sanitation
Strand: Health and Safety of Children
Topic/Sub-Topic Commitment to the physical health and safety of the children
5.1.0 The administration acts promptly to address identified areas of needed improvement in health and safety by allocating resources for training, equipment, materials and/or furnishings as recommended.
5.1.1 The staff consistently implements policies and procedures and actively participates in creating a safe and healthy culture that protects and promotes children's health.
5.1.2 The board, the director, and all other childcare personnel demonstrate a commitment to the physical health and safety of the children in their charge.
5.1.3 One person is designated as responsible for health and safety issues.
5.1.4 The administrative team/director research current information regarding all areas of operation related to illness, injury, and health, and he or she uses the information to assess staff practice, develop policies for management, and ensure effective procedures.
Child Abuse and Neglect
5.2.0 The staff and director are trained to recognize signs of child abuse and neglect and know the laws and procedures for reporting to the appropriate agency.
5.2.1 All incidents that might indicate child abuse are reported, with reports maintained in a confidential file.
5.2.2 All communications with authorities are documented and placed in a confidential file.
5.2.3 The program has written procedures to be followed if a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect of a child in the program that protect the rights of the accused staff person as well as protect the children in the program. Employees and volunteers receive an instruction sheet about child abuse reporting that contains a summary of the state child abuse reporting statute, instructions on reporting and the chain of command, and a statement that they will not be discharged solely because they have made a child abuse report. Suspected incidents of child abuse/neglect are reported to the Florida Abuse Hotline and appropriate local agencies.
Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
5.3.0 The childcare has developed written policies that comply with the laws and regulations for administering and storing medications and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect.

Strand: Emergency Management
5.4.0 The program's emergency medical care plan includes a source of emergency medical care or consultant has been previously informed of this role.
5.4.1 The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.
First Aid
5.4.1 All staff members must be trained on pediatric first aid and have an appropriate CPR certification.
5.4.2 The childcare maintains adequate first aid supplies in each classroom.
First Aid Certified Personnel
5.5.0 All staff members must be trained on pediatric first aid and appropriate CPR certification.
5.5.1 The staff has continuing training in preventative health practices, emergency first aid, and special medical needs in order to be alert and prepared for emergencies.
Fire Escape Routes
5.6.0 The fire escape route and procedures are posted in a conspicuous place in each room.
5.6.1 Staff members are familiar with fire escape routes and procedures, and they can operate fire extinguishers.
Fire Drills
5.7.0 Fire drills are held monthly, and a fire drill log is maintained including the date, time, evacuation time, and number of children.
Fire Extinguishers and Smoke Detectors
5.8.0 Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are provided and checked periodically.
5.8.1 An inspection report of the fire extinguishers is maintained on campus and the tag on the fire extinguishers is current.
5.8.2 Fully working fire extinguishers and fire alarms are installed in each classroom and are tagged and serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly, and a written log of annual service and testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available.
Emergency Phone Numbers
5.9.0 Emergency phone numbers or 911 is posted by the telephone for quick reference in securing the fire department, police department, poison control, and rescue squad.

Notifying Parents/Guardians in Case of Emergency
5.10.0 A plan is in place to contact parents in case of an emergency closing or situation. Parents know the plan.

Proper Chemical Labeling and Storage
5.11.0 The childcare has stored all potentially dangerous products in a locked cabinet.
5.11.1 There is a plot plan of the childcare property that identifies the location of all materials that are “dangerous if swallowed” and other hazardous materials.
5.11.2 All chemicals, medicines, and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in their original containers and stored in a locked closet.
5.11.3 Cleaning materials, detergents, aerosol cans, health and beauty aids, and other toxic materials are stored in their original labeled containers and used according to the manufacturer’s instructions and purpose. All art and craft materials used in the program are non-toxic. No paint containing lead in excess of 0.06% is used in areas accessible to children.

Disaster Preparedness Plan
5.12.0 The program has a general disaster plan and/or an Emergency Crisis Manual that includes evacuation procedures and inside actions in the event of a disaster or crisis (e.g., snowstorm, tornado, lightning, flooding, fire, bomb threat, violence, and hostage situation). The plan includes directions for disasters common to the geographic area.
5.12.1 Staff members are familiar with routes and procedures, which are posted in each classroom, and staff regularly practice drills with the children.
5.12.2 Such plan should be reviewed periodically by the local law enforcement, emergency personnel, and conform to that recommended by the Office of Homeland Security.
5.12.3 The childcare has a plan for general building evacuation and personal medical emergencies; The plan is well known to the staff.

Change of Clothing
5.13.0 Children are provided with a change of clothing or a generic outfit in case of an emergency.
5.13.1 Soiled clothing must be immediately removed from children, wrapped in a bag, and sent home daily.
5.13.2 Parents of children two and under are required to provide a daily change of clothing.
5.13. 3 To protect against cold, heat, sun injury, and insect-borne disease, parents are required to provide their children with at least one change of clothing suitable for daily outdoor play.

Emergency Plans
5.14.0 Individualized Health/Emergency Plans are provided for children with special health needs.

5.14.1 Current emergency information is maintained for each child enrolled in the program, including expected attendance, parent/guardian contact information, people authorized to take the child off the premises, allergies, and other important health information.
Supervision
5.15.0 The childcare provides for the supervision of children at all times by appropriately trained adults who are paid employees of the childcare. These employees meet all local and state standards.
5.15.1 Supervision of children is maintained by sight. No child shall be left unattended at any time.
5.15.2 The physical layout of the facility is arranged so that all areas can be viewed by at least one other adult in addition to the caregiver.
5.15.3 Staff is capable of viewing all the children on the entire playground.
5.15.4 Attendance is taken when children arrive at the program. The program has in place a system for parents/guardians to sign their children in and out on a daily basis.
5.15.5 Staff maintain supervision of children at all times. a. The physical layout of facilities is arranged so that all areas can be viewed by at least one (1) other adult in addition to the caregiver. b. Teachers, assistant teachers, or teacher aides are aware of and positioned so they can hear and see any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, especially when they are actively engaged with children who are awake. c. Children are carefully supervised on field trips.
5.15.6 Parents are notified in advance of the field trip destination, time of departure, anticipated time of arrival, and time of return. Signed, written permission for individual field trips or blanket written permission is kept on file for each child taking part in a field trip.
Arrival/Departure
5.15.7 The childcare's arrival/departure procedures include: Photo ID, sign in/out, and secret code.
5.15.8 The arrival/departure procedures are carefully observed by parents, children, and staff.
Incident and Accident Reports
5.16.0 Incident and accident reports are recorded as needed. Staff members provide parents with a copy of incident and accident reports within 24 hours of each occurrence.

Stand: Emergency, Medication, and Illness Procedures formerly Administering Medication and Storing Medications

- 5.17.0 A written policy that complies with the requirements of civil authorities for administering and storing medications has been developed and made available to the parents/guardians of the children in the program.
- 5.17.1 Medication is administered to children only when a written order has been submitted by a parent and the medication is consistently administered by a designed staff member.
- 5.17.2 The program has written policies on the routine health care of children and the health practices of the program to promote wellness and safeguard the health and safety of children and adults. The program has a system for daily health screenings along with a record of the staff person's observations of each child during the screening.
- 5.17.3 The program has a written plan for reporting and managing any incident of unusual occurrence that is threatening to the health, safety, or welfare of the children or staff. The program has procedures for staff training on the emergency plan, and the plan is posted in each classroom.
- 5.17.4 The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.
- 5.17.5 Staff maintain areas used by staff or children who have allergies or any other special environmental health needs according to the recommendations of health professionals. Areas used by staff or children who have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishings or supplies are maintained by the program according to the recommendations of health professionals.
- 5.17.6 There is a separate area to care for children who are too ill to receive care in the regular group. A program that allows ill children or staff to remain in the program implements plans that have been reviewed by a health professional about (a) what level and types of illness require exclusion; (b) how care is provided for those who are ill but who are not excluded; and (c) when it is necessary to require consultation and documentation from a health care provider for an ill child or staff member.
- 5.17.7 The program provides regular vision, speech and language, hearing, and developmental screenings for children either on-site or through referral to a community health agency. The program documents annual screenings for each child.
- 5.17.8 Complete records for children are updated annually including: Names, addresses, and phone numbers of parents or guardians; emergency contact information; medical treatment authorizations; medical histories; developmental histories; immunization records; progress reports; parent conference reports; transportation permissions; injury and illness logs; and medication administration logs.
- 5.17.9 The program maintains a log of all illnesses and parents are notified immediately when a child's behavior indicates illness.
- 5.17.10 Evacuation drills are practiced at least monthly from all exit locations at varied times of the day. The program has an emergency exit plan showing escape routes from each area.
- 5.17.11 At least one (1) person on-site is designated as responsible for health and safety issues.
- 5.17.12 All staff are certified in pediatric CPR. At least one (1) certified staff person is always present with each group of children. Written verification of CPR certification is kept on file at all times. All of the staff involved in the provision of direct childcare are certified in pediatric first aid.
- 5.17.13 There is a health/medical consultant available to the program for questions and advice. The health consultant observes program practices and reviews and makes recommendations about the program's practices and written health policies to ensure health promotion and prevention of infection and injury. The consultation addresses physical, social-emotional, nutritional, and oral health, including the care and exclusion of ill children.
- 5.17.14 There is a fully stocked, readily accessible first aid kit in the facility.
- 5.17.15 Medication is administered to children only when a written order has been submitted by a parent, and the medication is consistently administered by a designated staff member that is educated in proper medication administration. A log is kept and filed of all medication administered.

5.17.16 Classroom pets or visiting animals appear to be in good health. Pets or visiting animals have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that animals are suitable for contact with children. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Program staff make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk for salmonella infection.
Medication Log
5.18.0 A detailed medical log is maintained that includes the child's name, a record of all medications given and the person administering any medication.
5.18.1 Complete records for children are updated annually including: Names, addresses, and phone numbers of parents or guardians; emergency contact information; medical treatment authorizations; medical histories; developmental histories; immunization records; progress reports; parent conference reports; transportation permissions; injury and illness logs; and medication administration logs.
Policies regarding illnesses
5.19.0 A written policy regarding the attendance of children who are ill, have been diagnosed with a contagious disease, or have been found to have a communicable condition has been developed and made available to parents/guardians.
5.19.1 The childcare provides an area where sick or contagious children are isolated while waiting for someone to take them home.
5.19.2 The childcare alerts the appropriate staff to the health conditions of the children.
5.19.3 The program maintains a log of all illnesses and parents are notified immediately when a child's behavior indicates illness.
Blood-Borne Pathogen
5.20.0 The program has developed policies and procedures to protect the staff and children from blood-borne pathogens.
5.20.1 The childcare has a written Blood-borne Exposure Control Plan
5.20.2 Annual in-service is conducted on blood-borne pathogens and protective procedures.
5.20.3 All employees practice universal precautions when encountering children's bodily fluids.
Special Health Needs of Children
5.21.0 Staff are alerted to special health conditions of children and are equipped, when applicable, to handle such concerns.
5.21.1 Staff maintain areas used by staff or children who have allergies or any other special environmental health needs according to the recommendations of health professionals. Areas used by staff or children who have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishings or supplies are maintained by the program according to the recommendations of health professionals.
Health Screenings
5.22.0 Health screening assessments are given to the children, with the consent of their parent or guardian, at least annually. These may include: visual, auditory, speech, language development, physical development, cognitive development, and other health screening assessments when available.
5.22.1 The program has implemented a health and wellness program.
5.22.2 All children receive a developmental screening and results are shared with the families. The program makes referral or provides referral information to the family for any child for whom a developmental concern has been identified.

5.22.3 The program makes referral or provides referral information to the family for any child for whom a developmental concern has been identified.
Children's Health Records
5.23.0 Up-to-date, complete, and confidential health records for each child enrolled in the program are maintained in a safe and secure area and are available to authorized personnel. These files may include such information as the child's life history, developmental milestones, screening or assessment results, typical behaviors, and interests.
5.23.1 Individual health records are reviewed and updated according to child health schedule or physician recommendations.
5.23.2 Children in attendance are in compliance with the state and local health regulations regarding immunizations, physical examinations, and communicable diseases.
5.23.3 Student enrollment records must be updated annually. These include, but not limited to parent consent forms, names, addresses, telephone numbers, emails, immunization records, progress reports, medical histories, developmental histories, parent conference reports, transportation permissions, injury and illness logs, and medication administration log must be updated annually.
Staff Health Records
5.24.0 Staff health records include copies of periodic physicals, TB test records, and emergency contact information.

Strand: Child Care Operations and Management

Child Care Facility

5.25.0 The childcare facilities meet the required legal standards for fire protection and state or local licensing standards for safety, sanitation, and health. They are suitable for the size and program of the childcare and are clean and well-maintained.

5.25.1 The physical environment stimulates learning. The indoor and outdoor space communicates a sense of order and is aesthetically pleasing.

5.25.2 Space is arranged to accommodate large and small groups of children.

Individual Space

All Age Groups	Infants	Toddlers	Preschool	School-Age
5.26.0 Individual spaces, such as cubbies, are provided for the children. work and personal belongings.	a. Infants have a protected space for crawling and playing.	b. Toddlers and twos have a book corner as well as space arranged to provide for a variety of activities using such items as blocks, art supplies, and manipulative, involving music, movement, and water play.	c. Childcare space is arranged to provide for activities such as art projects, music, science, and math, including a library corner, manipulative, blocks, and materials for home and community role- plays and for sand and water play.	d. Before- and after-child care programs provide space for older children separate from the younger ones. Opportunities for both active and quiet work and play are offered.

5.26.1 Staff has access to buildings and prepares the learning environment before the arrival of the children.

Personal Hygiene and Best practices formerly Restrooms and Sinks

5.27.0 Restrooms used by children are cleaned daily. The diapering area is sanitized after each use, and soiled diapers are stored in a sealed container.

5.27.1 Sinks are located in the area near the toilets, with soap and paper towels provided.

5.27.2 Children and adults wash their hands after toileting, before eating or handling food, and as necessary to prevent the spread of disease.

5.27.3 Drinking water fountains, sinks, and toilets are readily accessible to children. Platforms or safe steps are provided as necessary.

5.27.4 Toilets, drinking water facilities, and hand-washing facilities are within forty (40) feet of the indoor areas that children use. The hand-washing sinks are accessible to staff and children (step stools are available if needed).

5.27.5 Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children, and universal precautions are practiced at all times: • Children and adults wash their hands after diapering or using the toilet, handling body fluids, playing in fluid play areas, and before meals and snacks. • Adults wash their hands before and after feeding a child, administering medication and after assisting a child with toileting and handling garbage or cleaning. • Staff and children wash their hands at specified times during the day.
5.27.6 Staff members and children developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored. Children wash either independently or with staff assistance as needed to successfully complete the task.
5.27.7 Staff clean and sanitize toilet seats, toilet handles, toilet bowls, doorknobs, or cubicle handles and floors either daily or immediately if visibly soiled. Staff clean and sanitize potty chairs, if in use, after each child's use. In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food. Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material.
5.27.8 Bathrooms have barriers to prevent entry by unattended infants and toddlers to 2-years-old.
Physical/Learning Environment
5.28.0 The physical environment includes appropriate furnishings.
5.28.1 The physical environment includes adequate outdoor space developed to accommodate various play activities.
5.28.2 The physical environment includes adequate indoor space arranged to accommodate children's various activities.
5.28.3 Teachers create classroom displays of children's recent work that help children reflect on and extend their learning. Displays are at children's eye level.
Lighting and Ventilation
5.29.0 The physical environment of the program provides adequate lighting, good ventilation, and a comfortable temperature in every room. Natural light is available in some of the indoor areas occupied by children during the course of the day.
Electrical Outlets
5.30.0 Electrical outlets are covered to prevent children from being shocked by electricity.
Cleanliness of Facility
5.31.0 The facilities are cleaned on a daily basis, including sanitizing the bathrooms and removing trash.
5.31.1 The facilities are free of mold and offensive odors.
5.31.2 Classrooms are clean and well maintained.
5.31.3 A cleaning schedule is posted and followed daily.
5.31.4 Paper and other trash is placed in containers, tables are washed, and floors are swept after meals.
5.31.5 The center director or designated individual posts and practices evidence-based sanitation procedures.
5.31.6 Daily cleaning tasks are conducted to ensure a healthy and safe environment and include the following: general classroom areas, bathrooms, dining areas, and all equipment.
5.31.7 Toys are washed weekly, except mouthed toys, which must be cleaned and sanitized immediately or prior to another child's use.

Sanitizing Toys and Equipment
5.32.0 The program has an established plan of sanitizing toys and equipment regularly (infants: daily, toddlers: semiweekly, preschoolers: weekly—with all three groups of toys and equipment receiving more frequent sanitization as needed to maintain a healthy environment for the children).
Preventing Chocking Hazards
5.33.0 Toys and toy parts for infants and toddlers are large enough to prevent swallowing. Soft furniture does not pose a choking hazard.
5.33.1 Program staff identify choking hazards and remove them from the proximity and reach of children.
Hot Water Conditions
5.34.0 Hot water heaters are set for 110° F or less if the heated water is accessible to children.
Indoor Space/Environment
5.35.0 The classrooms are suitable for the age and activities of the children in the program.
5.35.1 Floor space meets or exceeds a minimum of thirty-five (35) square feet of usable space per child in each primary indoor activity area.
5.35.2 Each room contains carpet and/or other sound-absorbing materials.
5.35.3 The classroom areas are made comfortable with the use of soft furniture, pillows, rugs, etc. Staff organizes and groups materials on low, open shelves to encourage use by children.
5.35.4 The building is well-maintained: • Walls, floors, furnishings, and equipment are kept in good repair and are safe, with no sharp edges, splinters, protruding or rusty nails, or missing parts. • All indoor areas are free from trash, sharp or hazardous items, and are in a clean condition. • Toys and equipment are in good working order, clean, and free from peeling paint and pinch points. • Staff takes steps to correct or avoid unsafe conditions. • Smoking is not permitted in or around facility.
5.35.5 The following furnishings are available: • Equipment and furnishings for diaper-changing and changing soiled underwear or other clothing that are located away from food preparation areas. • Hand-washing sinks within arm's length of diaper-changing tables. • Chairs with a back and a seating height that allows the child to sit with his or her feet on the floor or ground (for each child over the age of one year). • Tables at a height that allows a child to sit comfortably with the table between underarm and waist. • Adaptations that allow children with disabilities and other special needs to fully participate in the program's activities; and • A solid barrier or at least three-foot spacing that separates sleeping children from one another.
5.35.6 Indoor equipment for large-motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.
5.35.7 Each room provides separate learning “areas” that offer a variety of experiences and learning opportunities. Space may be arranged so children can work individually, in small groups, or in a large group. Classroom areas are set up so that traffic patterns do not interfere with activities. The program has taken measures in all rooms occupied by children to control noise levels so normal conversation can be heard without raising one's voice.
5.35.8 Adults have a comfortable place to sit, hold, and feed infants. Staff place rocking chairs and glider chairs in locations that will avoid injury to children who may be on the floor.
5.35.9 Before walking on surfaces that infants use specifically for play, adults and children remove, replace, or cover with clean foot coverings any shoes they have worn outside that play area. If children or staff are barefoot in such areas, their feet are visibly clean.

Strand: Outdoor Facilities	
Outdoor Space/Environment	
5.36.0	Outdoor storage is available for equipment not secured to the ground unless indoor storage space is available.
5.36.1	The center director or designated individual conducts daily inspection of the playground area and the playground inspection log is maintained at all times to reflect daily playground inspections.
5.36.2	Outdoor play areas are of sufficient size and are safe for the children to play.
5.36.3	At least 75 square feet of outside play space is provided for each child playing outside at any one time. The total amount of required play space is based on a maximum of one-third of the total center enrollment being outside at one time.
5.36.4	When climbers, climbing gyms, slides, and other play units are part of the outdoor environment, the program provides safety surfacing that is rated and installed in the fall zone as recommended by the manufacturer for the fall height of the play equipment. Furnishings such as lofts are constructed to prevent falls (e.g., with appropriate barriers), or safety surfacing is installed in the fall zone.
5.36.5	Sandboxes that are part of a program facility are constructed to allow for drainage, are covered when not in use, and are cleaned of foreign matter on a regular basis. Staff replaces sand as often as necessary.
5.36.6	Any body of water, including swimming pools, built-in wading pools, ponds, and irrigation ditches, is enclosed by a fence at least four (4) feet in height, with any gates childproofed to prevent entry by unattended children. To prevent drowning accidents, staff directly supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, pails, and water tables.
5.36.7	Children of all ages have daily opportunities for outdoor play (when weather, air quality, or environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). When outdoor opportunities for large-motor activities are not possible because of conditions, the program provides similar activities inside.
Playground Supervision	
5.37.0	Children are supervised at all times, and the adult-child ratio is maintained while on the playground.
5.37.1	When playing outside, children wear clothing appropriate for the activity and the weather.
5.37.2	The staff are capable of viewing all of the children on the entire playground.
Playground Equipment	
5.38.0	There are adequate instructional equipment and supplies at the appropriate age level and in the quality and amount required for achieving the childcare's philosophical and educational objectives. Included are both outdoor and indoor equipment.
5.38.1	The childcare has age-appropriate play equipment that is safe for use by children. The equipment is inspected on a regular basis.
5.38.2	Playground equipment is varied and sufficient for the number of children on the playground at the same time. Examples: climbing apparatus, swings, slides, riding toys, equipment for sand and water play, playhouse, and outside easel.
5.38.3	The program has a certified playground inspection and results are incorporated into the program's quality improvement plan. Program progress is monitored annually.
5.38.4	Outdoor play areas are designed with equipment that is age and developmentally appropriate, and located in clearly defined spaces with semi- private areas where children can play alone or in small groups. Outdoor play areas will accommodate or facilitate:

- Motor experiences such as running, climbing, balancing, riding, jumping, crawling, scooting, or swinging. - Activities such as dramatic play, block building, manipulative play, or art activities. - Exploration of the natural environment, including a variety of natural and manufactured surfaces, and areas with natural materials such as nonpoisonous plants, shrubs, and trees.				
5.38.5 Outdoor play equipment is of safe design and in good repair: a. All pieces of playground equipment are designed to match the body dimensions of children. b. Anchored equipment is not placed closer than six (6) feet from any hard, non-resilient surface, including fencing or another piece of play equipment. c. All elevated pieces of playground equipment are surrounded by a perimeter of resilient surface of an acceptable depth. d. All pieces of playground equipment are free of sharp edges, protruding parts, weaknesses, and flaws in material construction.				
Playground Safety, Security, and Protection				
5.39.0 The playground provides areas of sun and shade.				
Playground Surfaces				
5.40.0 Wood chips, sand, and other cushioning materials of recommended depths are used under equipment such as swings and climbing apparatus, as recommended by civil authorities or national playground safety standards.				
Fence				
All Age Groups	Infants	Toddlers	Preschool	School-Age
5.41.0 The childcare provides adequate protection for the play area, including fencing for play areas of children under kindergarten age.	a. The childcare facility fence is a minimum of six foot high.	b. There is a gate or barrier that can be locked to prevent outsiders for entering the playground and school facility.	c. All staff have a key to unlock the gate in cases of emergency.	d. A fence is not required for school age children kindergarten and older.
Inspections and Repairs				
5.42.0 Through routine inspections and resulting timely repairs, the outdoor play area is well maintained to prevent children from being injured by broken equipment, sharp edges, and rusty parts.				
Maintenance of Buildings and Grounds				
5.43.0 There is a written process in place that ensures proper maintenance of the buildings, grounds, and equipment.				
Strand: Staff Space				
Director's Office				
5.44.0 The childcare provides appropriate office space for the administration.				
Staff Meeting Room				
5.45.0 Areas are provided for staff meetings and breaks.				

Storage Space
5.46.0 The facility includes adequate and well-maintained storage space. Storage space includes provision for resources that are rotated to maintain interest.
Pets and Visiting Animals
5.47.0 Classroom pets or visiting animals appear to be in good health. - Pets or visiting animals have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. - Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. - Program staff make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. - Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk for salmonella infection.
Pesticides and Harmful Animals
5.47.1 The program maintains facilities, so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants: - Poisonous or potentially harmful plants are not in areas accessible to children. - Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. - The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), so the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.
Teeth and Gums
5.48.0 At least once daily, in a program where children older than one (1) year receive two (2) or more meals, teaching staff provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum-cleaning to remove food and plaque. (The use of toothpaste is not required.) After each feeding, infant's teeth and gums are wiped with a disposable tissue (or clean, soft cloth used only for one child and laundered daily) to remove liquid that coats the teeth and gums.
Air pollution
5.49.0 The program has written procedures to protect children and adults from environmental hazards, lead, asbestos, and exposure to high levels of air pollution from smog or heavy traffic by limiting outdoor and physical activity as a precaution during smog or other air pollution alerts.
Water Supply
5.50.0 When the water supply source is a well or other private source (i.e., not served by a public supply), onsite documentary evidence verifies that the local regulatory health authority has determined the water to be safe for human consumption.
Lead/Radon/Asbestos
5.51.0 Documentary evidence, available on site, indicates that the building has been assessed for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, or any other hazard from friable material. Evidence exists that the program has taken remedial or containment action to prevent exposure to children and adults if warranted by the assessment.

Standard 6.0 Napping and Bedding				
Strand: Bedding and linens				
Topic/Sub-Topic: Appropriate bedding for infants and toddlers				
All Age Groups	Infants	Toddlers	Preschool	School-Age
6.1.1 Each facility must include a designated area where each child can sit quietly or lie down to rest or nap. When not in use, napping space and usable indoor floor space may be used interchangeably.	a. Children up to one year of age must be in an individual crib, port-a crib, or playpen with sides. Crib sides must be raised and secured while an infant is in the crib and bar spacing may not exceed two and three eighths' inches.	b. Sleep bedding includes beds, cribs, or mattresses (excluding an air mattress or a foam mattress). Nap bedding includes sleep bedding, cots, playpens, or floor mats.	c. Sleep bedding includes beds, cribs, or mattresses (excluding an air mattress or a foam mattress). Nap Bedding includes sleep bedding, cots, playpens, or floor mats.	6.1.2 Nap bedding is not required for school-age children; however, the program or facility shall provide an area as described in paragraph 61.1, above for those children choosing to rest.
6.1.3 A minimum distance of 18 inches must be maintained around individual napping and sleeping spaces, except a maximum of two sides of a napping or sleeping space may be against a solid barrier, such as a wall. The solid side of a crib does not meet the requirement of a solid barrier.	a. Cribs must meet the construction regulations as outlined in Title 16, Parts 1508 & 1509, Code of Federal Regulations, and January 2009, which is incorporated by reference.	b. Floor mats must be at least one inch thick and covered with an impermeable surface cleaned and sanitized or disinfected after each use.	c. Bedding must be appropriate for the child's size.	
6.1.4 Napping and sleeping spaces shall not be under furniture or against furniture that may create a hazard.	a. No double or multideck cribs, cots or beds may be used.	b. Napping and sleeping spaces shall not be under furniture or against furniture that may create a hazard.	c. Napping and sleeping spaces shall not be under furniture or against furniture that may create a hazard.	

All Age Groups	Infants	Toddlers	Preschool	School-Age
6.1.5 Napping and sleeping spaces shall not interfere with exit areas, which must remain clear in accordance with fire safety regulations.	a. To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS): ▪ Infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. (This indicator is required of all programs with infants.) ▪ Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft items are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for Infants younger than twelve months. ▪ If a blanket is used, the infant is placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant's chest. ▪ The infant's head remains uncovered during sleep. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can	b. When napping or sleeping, ample space is provided so that children can sleep without interruption.	c. When napping or sleeping, ample space is provided so that children can sleep without interruption.	d. Nap bedding is not required for school-age children; however, the program or facility shall provide an area as described in paragraph 61.1, above for those children choosing to rest.

	easily turn themselves from the back position. The documentation shall be maintained in the child's record.			
Cots, mats, cribs, sheets, and blankets are marked with individual children's names and washed at least once a week.	Cribs are inspected to ensure security. Drop-side cribs are not used.			
	Diaper/Changing area: a. Never located near food preparation areas. b. Changing tables are sanitized after each use. c. If non-absorbent paper liners are used, they must be large enough to cover the changing surface. d. Staff check diapers regularly and change soiled or wet diapers/clothing immediately. e. A closable, foot pedal-operated, plastic-lined trash receptacle is provided in every diaper-changing area. f. Diaper changing procedures are posted at each changing table.			

Bedding and Linens

6.2.1 Each child in care must be provided safe and sanitary bedding to be used when napping or sleeping. Clean linens, pillows, and blankets must be available.

6.2.2 Linens, if used, must be laundered at least once each week and more often if soiled or dirty.

6.2.3 Linens, if used for more than one child shall be laundered between usages.

Linens, Toys, and Furnishings – Cleaning/Disinfecting

6.3.1 Linens, when not in use, must be stored in a sanitary manner which prevents the spread of germs or lice from other linens.

6.3.2 A childcare facility shall make available toys, equipment, and furnishings suitable to each child's age and development and of a quantity for each child to be involved in activities.

6.3.3 Toys, equipment, and furnishings must be safe and maintained in a sanitary condition and shall be cleaned and sanitized or disinfected immediately if exposed to bodily fluids, such as saliva, mucus, or blood.

Standard 7.0 Ratio and Group Size			
Strand: Ratio and Group Size			
Topic/Sub-Topic: Staff/Child Ratio			
Program Standards			
	Age	Group	Size
7.1.0	Birth - 24 months	1:3-4	6-8
7.1.1	25 - 34 months	1:4-6	8-12
7.1.2	3 years	1:6-9	12-18
7.1.3	4 years/5 years	1:8-10	16-20
7.1.4	Kindergarten	1:9-12	18-24
7.1.5	6 - 8 years	1:10-12	20-24
7.1.6	9 - 12 years	1:12-15	24-30
7.1.7 The provider maintains the GAACS staff/child ratios at all times. Substitutes are used to ensure that the above staff-to-child ratios are met at all times of operation.			
7.1.8 The school maintains an active substitute teacher list to replace permanent teachers during emergency and scheduled absences.			
7.1.9 Volunteers are utilized on a regular basis to ensure that staff/child ratio are maintained during field trips and off campus events.			
7.20 The provider uses the following group size ratios: - Groups of children may be limited to one (1) age or may include multiple ages. - A group or classroom consists of the children assigned to a teacher or a team of teaching staff for most of the day and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area.			

Standard 8.0 Curriculum
Strand: Curriculum Implementation
8.1.0 The program has a written implementation plan for curriculum selection, training instructional staff on how to implement the curriculum, child assessment, and performance standards. All stakeholders (director/parents/teachers) are included in the review of the implementation plan.
Strategic and Curriculum Planning
8.1.1 The program uses a strategic planning process to implement and to achieve desired outcomes for the children in its care.
8.1.2 The program uses written curriculum plans based on knowledge of appropriate practice(s); assessment of individual needs and interests; cultural sensitivity; progress reports and assessment; and the social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and language development of individual.
8.1.3 Teaching staff have clearly defined goals for individual children that guide their curriculum planning.
8.1.4 Teachers use curriculum in all content and developmental areas as a flexible framework for teaching and to support the development of daily plans and learning experiences.
8.1.5 The instructional program meets the intellectual, spiritual, and educational needs of the children (including children with special needs). The program is appropriate to the age of the children and encourages their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth.
8.1.6 The instructional program is periodically evaluated and revised as needed.
8.1.7 Modifications in program and facilities are made for children with special needs. Facility example: Wheelchair ramps, audio/visual aids, accessible bathrooms, and playgrounds, etc.
Inclusion and Diversity
8.2.0 The program is designed to be inclusive of all children in keeping with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and including children with identified disabilities and special learning and developmental needs.
8.2.1 Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum should accommodate children's special needs.
8.2.2 When children with special needs enroll, each child has an individual program plan; each child is professionally evaluated; the program has access to a referral system; and reviews of each child's progress are done using a team concept.
8.2.3 Staff is aware of children that are diagnosed with special needs, works with parents to implement individual education plans, and is trained to follow through with intervention strategies.

Cultural Diversity

8.2.4 The curriculum reflects acknowledgment of differences in children and shows God's love for people of each race, color, and gender.

Language Diversity

8.2.5 Teachers gain information about the ways families define their own race, religion, home language, culture, and family structure.

8.2.6 Staff members are sensitive to the culture, language, religion, and special needs of the children and their families.

8.2.7 The program provides documentation or written policy of the use of interpreters, or other resources for help with other languages of enrolled families.

Daily Class Schedules

8.3.0 The program's daily schedule provides a balance of activities in consideration of the child's total daily experience. This includes:

- All age groups (including infants)
- Daily outside play and opportunities for gross motor development
- Daily quiet and active play
- Activities that incorporate large and small muscle groups
- Daily group activities
- Child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities
- Age-appropriate learning activities
- Activity that provides choices
- Activity that allows for spontaneity

8.3.1 The daily schedule is planned to include a balance and variety of curriculum activities.

8.3.2 Periods of activity for children three years old and older include large-group activities, small-group activities, and individual choice.

8.3.3 The length of group times is appropriate for the age and development of the class.

8.3.4 Active and quiet periods are alternated throughout the day.

8.3.5 Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available for all ages enrolled in the childcare.

8.3.6 Routine procedures such as diapering, eating, napping, and transitions are handled in a relaxed manner for children under three years old.

8.3.7 Routines for children under three, such as sleeping and feeding schedules, are tailored to their individual needs and rhythms.

8.3.8 Use of electronic media (videos, computer games, etc.) is limited to educational content suitable for the developmental level of the child and only on an occasional or intermittent basis, and not used at all for children under 2 years old.

Lesson Plans and Implementation

8.4.0 Teachers use:

- The needs and interests of infants to influence schedules, routines, and learning experiences. Infants who show interest or pleasure in an activity are encouraged and supported in prolonging that activity.
- Children's interest in and curiosity about the world is used to engage them with new content and developmental skills, including self-help activities that promote competency and mastery.
- Staff knowledge of individual children is used to modify strategies and materials to enhance children's learning.
- The children's routine includes tasks for which the children take responsibility, according to their ability, to give children a sense of self-reliance.
- Environmental design/modifications, schedules and activity modifications, adult or peer support, effective transitions, engaging activities, and other teaching strategies are used to prevent challenging or disruptive behaviors and support the child's appropriate behavior

8.4.1 Teachers demonstrate and use their knowledge of content and developmental areas, and of children's social relationships, interests, ideas, and skills, in their lesson plans:

- Creating experiences that engage children in purposeful and meaningful learning related to key curriculum concepts.
- Posing problems and asking questions that stimulate children's thinking.
- Guiding children in acquiring specific skills and explicitly teaching those skills to promote children's engagement and learning.
- Helping children express their ideas and build on the meaning of their experiences.
- Helping children identify and use prior knowledge, and providing experiences that extend and challenge children's current understandings.
- Having and using a variety of teaching strategies that include a broad range of approaches and responses.
- Tailoring learning opportunities for groups and individuals.
- Incorporating indoor and outdoor activities.
- Planning for children to revisit experiences and materials over periods of days, weeks, and months, and adjusting challenges as children gain competence and understanding, learn and acquire new skills.

8.4.2 Teachers' lesson plans are reviewed weekly by the director and/or administration.

8.4.3 Written goals and objectives reflect the progressive developmental sequence of various age groups, and lesson plans reflect these goals and objectives.

8.4.4 Parents of infants and toddlers are given daily written communication about the child's day, including info on eating and toileting.

8.4.5 Teachers create classroom displays of children's recent work that help children reflect on and extend their learning. Displays are at children's eye level.

Child Assessment
8.5.0 Teachers use multiple sources to informally and formally create learning opportunities. The ongoing assessment process should be used to: • Identify what children have learned. • Identify any possible learning hindrances and disabilities. • Adapt curriculum and teaching to meet children's needs and interests. • Foster each child's curiosity, extend the child's engagement, and support self-initiated learning. • Communicate each child's progress to parents, including both in and out of teacher/parent conferences.
8.5.1 Observations of children are written and used in developing appropriate lesson plans.
8.5.2 Children's progress and development are monitored through the use of observations, trends, checklists, anecdotal notes, or other forms of documentation, such as portfolios or commercial instruments.
8.5.3 The provider gets written permission from parents before assessing children.
8.5.4 The results of assessment are discussed with and provided to parents. The provider uses a formal assessment tool to record, monitor, and measure children's progress.
8.5.5 Children's assessments give a clear picture of which lessons (concepts) the teacher must plan for in the future.
8.5.6 The teacher uses observation and assessment tools to measure where the child is developmentally and what the child's individual needs are developmentally.
8.5.7 Developmentally appropriate child assessments (e.g., observation data, portfolios, work samples) are conducted within 90 calendar days after enrollment and two other times within a year. Results are shared during parent/teacher conferences in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.
8.5.8 Staff has been trained on the use of an approved assessment system.
8.5.9 The program has a child assessment system that has been aligned with state regulations.
Curriculum and Teaching Materials
8.6.0 The program demonstrates sufficient materials and equipment that are rich in variety to sustain curriculum plans.
8.6.1 Materials and equipment used facilitate focused individual and peer play/learning.
8.6.2 Materials and equipment reflect, and respect society's diversity and the cultures of the families being served.
8.6.3 Staff rotate and adapt materials on a reasonable basis to promote learning and extend children's play opportunities.
8.6.4 Teachers foster cognitive learning by providing opportunities and materials to encourage infants/toddlers to discover how they can make things happen and to solve simple problems. Children are provided equipment to engage in varied opportunities for fine and large motor development.
8.6.5 All children are provided materials to experience varied opportunities of the key principles of the following: • Art, music, dramatic play, and dance in ways that reflect cultural diversity. • The principles of math, such as: building understanding of numbers; number names; the relationship of numbers to object quantities and to symbols; using numerical symbols; exploring operations on quantities, such as adding, subtraction, and dividing into equal and unequal subsets.

• Science. The physical characteristics of their local environment, and how people positively and negatively affect their environment.
8.6.6 Materials and equipment are available in sufficient quantities to occupy each child in activities that meet his or her interests.
Curriculum Components
8.7.0 The curriculum is designed to meet individual needs by allowing teachers flexibility to adapt lesson plans.
8.7.1 Curriculum plans for each age group reflect a developmental sequence. • Soft toys large enough to prevent choking are available for infants. • Kindergartners: Activities include the same ones as in childcare plus patterning experiences with such manipulative objects as cubes, pegs, and beads.
8.7.2 The curriculum is designed to meet the intellectual needs of each child.
8.7.3 Receptive and expressive language experiences appropriate to development of children are provided throughout the day.
8.7.4 Opportunities are provided for supervised exploration and experimentation that develop cognitive skills.
8.7.5 The media programs used are appropriate to age and attention span and enhance the concepts and values of the center. Media programs are always previewed by the staff for overall content and age appropriateness. Media programs serve as special events rather than a significant part of the daily curriculum.
8.7.6 The curriculum addresses the physical needs of each child.
8.7.7 The curriculum is designed to meet the emotional needs of each child.
8.7.8 The curriculum includes activities for eye-hand coordination, and gross and fine motor skills.
8.7.9 Curriculum plans for each age group reflect a developmental sequence.
Social Development
8.8.0 Children have varied opportunities to recognize and name their own and other's feelings and are given varied opportunities to learn the skills needed to regulate their emotions, behavior, and attention. Children have varied opportunities to learn to understand, empathize with, and take into account other people's perspectives.
8.8.1 Children have varied opportunities to develop skills for entering into social groups by interacting positively, respectfully, and cooperatively with others; developing friendships; learning to help and learning from and with one another; resolving conflicts in constructive ways and other pro-social behavior.
8.8.2 Children are provided opportunities and materials to foster positive identity and an emerging sense of self and others by learning about the community in which they live, and engaging in discussions about fairness, friendship, responsibility, authority, and differences.
8.8.3 Children have varied opportunities to engage throughout the day with teaching staff who are attentive and responsive to them, facilitate their social competence, and facilitate their ability to learn through interacting with others.
8.8.4 The curriculum addresses the social needs of each child.
8.8.5 Pro-social techniques such as sharing, cooperation, helping, taking turns, and problem solving are encouraged.
8.8.6 Children have opportunities to engage in classroom experiences with members of their families.

Scope and Sequence
8.9.0 The school shall present a scope and sequence for each grade level and age group offered in the program. The Scope and Sequence shall identify the curriculum components, learning objectives, textbooks, and one sample lesson plan for each subject area.
Literacy Support
8.9.1 Children’s language development is promoted through songs, stories, books, and games. Children have varied opportunities to be read to regularly in individualized ways including one-to-one or in small groups (2-6 children).
8.9.2 Children have varied opportunities to develop competence in verbal and nonverbal communication by responding to questions; communicating needs, thoughts, and experiences; and describing things and events.
8.9.3 Children have multiple and varied opportunities to write, to develop phonological awareness, and to understand spoken language by the utilization of pictures, familiar objects, body language, and physical cues.
8.9.4 The curriculum standard addresses the provision of appropriate receptive and expressive language experiences throughout the day through interest centers, listening to stories read aloud, exploring books, and response to conversations about elements of the story to predict outcomes, to retell the sequence of the story, to connect happenings to the story with prior experiences, and develop phonological awareness.
Books
8.10.0 Children’s books should be available and accessible.
8.10.1 Children are generally comfortable, relaxed, and happy while involved in learning experiences.
8.10.2 Books may include teacher and class made books.
8.10.3 All books will be age appropriate and in good repair.
8.10.4 Books are varied, and include topics about real people including multicultural, varying abilities, religious books; and subject related books including math, science, real animals; nature books; and books that support the curriculum components.
8.10.5 There are books related to the theme or to the lesson plan in the room.
8.10.6 Age-appropriate books are accessible and attractively displayed on low shelves in all classrooms, library, and within the learning centers.
8.10.7 The book section is never used for time out.
8.10.8 The childcare maintains an inventory of books and updates the list as needed.
8.10.9 Books must be replaced and purchased as needed.
8.10.10 Materials and displays in the classroom should reflect a variety of cultures, religions, races, ages, and abilities.
8.10.11 Each childcare classroom has a minimum of 15 books per child.
8.10.12The provider may utilize neighborhood library, online (electronic) books, etc., to comply with this standard.

Child Care Centers with a Faith-Based Component	
8.11.0	Christian moral and spiritual values are taught in the curriculum and are interwoven throughout each day's activities in an age-appropriate manner.
8.11.1	The curriculum addresses the spiritual needs of each child.
8.11.2	Worship songs, prayer, and Scripture verses are woven into the daily routines and activities.
8.11.3	Bible stories are presented as truth and are taught in ways appropriate to the children's developmental level.
8.11.4	Spiritual Enrichment activities include: Bible stories, coloring books, songs, puppetry, plays, bowl, chapel service, etc.
8.11.5	Age-appropriate spiritual books such as bibles, bible stories, posters, and puppets are readily accessible and attractively displayed in all classrooms.
Curriculum Subject Areas	
8.12.0	The early learning curriculum includes written lessons plans and concepts that promote social, emotional, and cognitive development through: • Conceptualizing: Color, Shape, Number, Space, Measurement, Size, Motion, Position, Time, Texture, Smell, Emotions, and Relationships. • Thinking/Reasoning: Observing, Recalling, Noticing, Differences, Similarities, Ordering, Grouping, Classifying, Generalizing, Choices, Questioning. • Sensory/Motor: Visual, Auditory, Motor-Movement, Gross-Fine. • Language Use: Oral, Vocabulary, Written, Receptive, Expressive. • Music: Rhythmic, Activities, Musical Games, Rhythm Band. • Psycho-Social: Orienting, Self-Care, Self-Expression, Impulse Control, Achievement Motivation, Perseverance, Values • Cooperative: Seeking/Giving Help, Sharing Rules, Express-Feelings, Role Taking, Dramatic Play • Art: Arts and Crafts, Easels, Paints, Finger Painting, Chalk, Paste, Etc. • Science: Some evidence of "hands on" science program, i.e., Shell, Insects, Plants, Experiments, relating to seasons, weather, etc.
8.12.1	The program has a curriculum that is age specific to the children the program serves to include: 1. physical development and health. 2. social and emotional development. 3. language and literacy development. 4. cognitive development. 5. literacy knowledge and skills. 6. logic and reasoning. 7. mathematics knowledge and skills. 8. science knowledge and skills. 9. social studies knowledge and skills. 10. creative arts expression.
8.12.2	The average facility score of all classrooms/age groups through an ERS must be a minimum of 4.75.
8.12.3	The program provides documentation that 75% of educational staff participates in annual training on use of the selected curriculum.

Standard 9.0 Relationships
Strand: Stakeholder Interactions
Topic/Sub-Topic: Staff Interactions
9.1.1 Staff who shares the primary responsibility of a group of children communicates with one another to ensure smooth operation of the program.
9.1.2 Staff show respect, courtesy, professionalism, and work as a cohesive team.
9.1.3 Teachers are provided weekly paid planning time away from responsibility of children to create lesson plans and prepare progress reports.
9.1.4 Staff and administrators meet weekly to consult about the overall school program, children, and families. Staff is required to meet weekly as a team to plan activities, lessons, training, etc.
9.1.5 Weekly staff meetings are held for all staff including: full time, part time, interns, and volunteers.
9.1.6 Program staff: • Develop partnerships and professional relationships with agencies, consultants, and organizations in the community that further the program's capacity to meet the needs and interests of the children and families that they serve. • Are familiar with family support services and specialized consultants who are able to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services. They use this knowledge to suggest and guide families to these services as appropriate. • Encourage continuity of services for children by communicating with other agencies and programs to achieve mutually desired outcomes for children and to guide collaborative work. • Identify and establish relationships with specialized consultants who can assist all children's and families' full participation in the program. • This assistance includes support for children with disabilities, behavioral challenges, or other special needs. • Advocate for the program and its families by creating awareness of the program's needs among community councils, service agencies, and local governmental entities. • Use their knowledge of the community and the families they serve as an integral part of the curriculum and children's learning experiences. • Connect with and use their community's urban, suburban, rural, or tribal cultural resources. • Inform families about community events sponsored by local organizations, such as museum exhibits, concerts, storytelling, and theater intended for children. • Invite members of the performing and visual arts community, such as musical performers, coordinators of traveling museum exhibits, local artists, and community residents, to share their interests and talents with the children. • Engage with other community organizations and groups to cosponsor or participate in cultural events to enrich the experience of children and families in the program. Are encouraged to participate in local, state, or national early childhood education organizations by joining and attending meetings and conferences. Program staff are also encouraged to participate regularly in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities related to early care and education.

- Are encouraged and given the opportunity to participate in community or statewide interagency councils or service integration efforts.

9.1.7 Program staff:

- Arrange the environment to be welcoming and accessible.
- Make an effort to speak daily with each child's parents in order to briefly discuss the child's day and to report any unusual occurrence or special success.
- Communicate with family members on an ongoing basis to learn about children's individual needs and ensure a smooth transition between home and program.
- Share information with families about classroom rules, expectations, and routines not only at enrollment but also as needed throughout the year.
- Hold parent-teacher conferences at least twice a year and at other times, as needed, to discuss individual children's needs, progress, and accomplishments.
- Inform parents about the program and the curriculum, and about policy or regulatory changes and other critical issues that could potentially affect the program.
- Provide parents with information regarding social services within the community, including health care services, assistance with basic and emergency family needs, and tuition payment alternatives.
- Establish intentional practices designed to foster strong reciprocal relationships with families from the first contact and maintain them over time.
- Ensure that all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language are included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities.
- Use a variety of formal and informal methods to communicate with families about the program philosophy and curriculum objectives, including educational goals and effective strategies that can be used by families to promote their children's learning.
- Facilitate opportunities for families to meet with one another on a formal and informal basis, work together on projects to support the program, and learn from and provide support for each other.
- Work together with families to plan events. Families' schedules and availability are considered as part of this planning.
- Use a variety of mechanisms such as family conferences or home visits to promote dialogue with families. The program staff ask adults to translate or interpret communications as needed.
- Inform families about the program's systems for formally and informally assessing children's progress. This information includes the purposes of the assessment, the procedures used for assessment, procedures for gathering family input and information, the timing of assessments, the way assessment results, or information will be shared with families, and ways the program will use the information.
Communicate with families on a daily basis regarding infants' and toddlers'/2-year-olds' activities and developmental milestones, shared care giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being and development of their children. Where in-person communication is not possible, program staff communicate through established alternative means.
- Encourage families to raise concerns and work collaboratively with them to find mutually satisfying solutions that staff then incorporate into classroom practice.
- Encourage and support families to make the primary decisions about services that their children need and encourage families to advocate to obtain needed services.
- Use a variety of techniques to negotiate difficulties that arise in their interactions with family members. Program staff make arrangements to use these techniques in a language the family can understand.

• Provide basic general information on enrollment procedures and practices, visiting opportunities, and program options to help families with their transitions to other programs or schools.
Teacher–Child Interactions formerly Relationships with Children
9.2.1 Staff members love and respect each child and interact often with children by showing interest, warmth, consideration, and affection. Staff members speak to children in a courteous tone.
9.2.2 Staff are available to individual children and responsive to their needs.
9.2.3 Staff respond promptly in developmentally appropriate ways to children’s: positive initiations, • negative emotions, • feelings of hurt and • fear by providing comfort, support, and assistance.
9.2.4 Staff encourage an age-appropriate degree of independence in children.
9.2.5 Staff are available to individual children and responsive to their needs.
9.2.6 Teaching staff provide one-to-one attention to infants when engaging in caregiver routines. Caregiver routines include feeding (bottle or solids), diaper changing, changing clothes, and cleaning the infant.
9.2.7 Staff encourage the initiation of skill development through exploration and use of classroom materials, free play, unstructured activities, etc., by recognizing the work, accomplishments, and interests of children.
9.2.8 Teaching staff engage infants in frequent face-to-face social interactions each day. These include both: a. verbal behaviors (e.g., talking, cooing, repeating infant sounds, singing), and b. non-verbal behaviors (e.g., smiling, touching, holding).
9.2.9 Staff members vary their interactions to be sensitive and responsive to: • differing abilities, • temperaments, • activity levels, • cognitive, and • social development.

9.3.0 Staff members intentionally prepare and maintain an emotionally healthy environment that includes the following: • Personal and peer, • Expressions of emotions with words (both positive and negative), • Predictable routines, reactions, and responses, • Introduction and support of conflict resolution, • Immediate intervention for bullying and/or physical aggression, • Introduction, development, and support of social skills (friendships, manners, and other social interactions), and • Encouragement of self-competence
9.3.1 To better understand the cultural backgrounds of children, families, and the community, program staff (as a part of program activities or as individuals): • Participate in community cultural events, concerts, storytelling activities, or other events and performances designed for children and their families. • Use a variety of formal and informal strategies (including conversations) to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure; their preferred child-rearing practices; and information families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. • Actively use information about families to adapt the program environment, curriculum, and teaching methods to the families they serve.
9.3.2 Every attempt is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children: • The program is organized and staffed to minimize the number of groups, teaching staff, and classroom transitions experienced by an individual child during the day and program year. • Policies prescribe that each group of children be assigned teaching staff who have primary responsibility for working with that group. • Policies encourage keeping infants and toddlers to age two (2) together with their teaching staff for nine (9) months or longer.
9.3.4 Teachers observe children who have challenging behavior and respond quickly and calmly to prevent children from hurting each other while showing understanding of the children's needs and feelings. Teaching staff assist children in resolving conflicts by helping them identify feelings, describe problems, try alternative solutions, and identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that predict challenging behavior and may contribute to the behavior.
9.3.5 Staff promote pro-social behavior and create a climate of mutual respect for children and their families by treating them with respect and dignity. No adult or child is treated differently because of a disability, or because of his/her race, religion, ethnic origin, or physical appearance.
9.3.6 Teaching staff quickly respond to infants' and toddlers'/2-year-olds' cries or other signs of distress by providing physical comfort and needed care. The teaching staff are sensitive to infants' and toddlers'/2-year-olds' various signals and learn to read their individual cries. Teaching staff facilitate an infant's social interaction when he or she is interested in looking at, touching, or vocalizing to others.
9.3.7 Teachers provide children opportunities to develop the classroom community through participation in decision-making about classroom rules, plans, and activities.
9.3.8 Teaching staff's daily interactions: a. Demonstrate their knowledge of the children they teach, their families, and the social, linguistic, and cultural context in which the children live.

- b. Support and challenge children's learning during interactions or activities that are teacher-initiated and child initiated.
- c. Are available and responsive to children; encourage children to share experiences, ideas, and feelings
- d. Engage in collaborative inquiry with individual children and small groups of children.
- e. Include listening to children attentively and with respect; teachers speak to each child frequently (by name), make eye contact, and use clear, correct language patterns, and affectionate, supportive words.
- f. Encourage and recognize children's work and accomplishments.

9.3.9 Teachers manage behavior by:

- a. Helping individual children learn socially appropriate behavior by providing guidance that is consistent with the child's level of development.
 - b. Implementing classroom rules and expectations in a manner that is consistent and predictable.
 - c. Responding to challenging, unpredictable, or unusual behavior with their knowledge of children's homes and classroom life.
 - d. Observing patterns in children's challenging behaviors to provide thoughtful, consistent, and individualized responses.
 - e. Convening families and professionals to develop individualized plans to address behavior.
 - f. Using positive behavior support strategies.
 - g. Behavior management includes positive guidance, redirection, and the setting of clear limits that foster the child's ability to become self-disciplined.
- Teaching staff anticipate and take steps to prevent potential behavior problems.

9.3.10 Teachers make a concerted effort to understand what children are trying to communicate and respond sensitively when children are frustrated or angry. Teaching staff actively seek to understand infants' needs and desires by recognizing and responding to their nonverbal cues and by using simple language.

9.3.11 Teaching staff are consistent and predictable in their physical and emotional care of all children. Corporal punishment; withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities; and any form of emotional abuse are prohibited.

9.3.12 Teaching staff evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. Teaching staff vary their interactions to be sensitive and responsive to differing abilities, temperaments, activity levels, and cognitive and social development. Teaching staff adjust their interactions to infants' and toddlers'/2-year-olds' various states and levels of arousal.

9.3.13 Teaching staff support children's development of friendships and provide opportunities for children to play with and learn from each other. Teaching staff facilitate positive peer interaction for children who are socially reserved or withdrawn and for those who are bullied or excluded.

Standard: Family Interactions
Strand: Program and Family Partnership
Communication with Parents
9.4.0 The program has written policies and procedures that are updated at least annually and: • Demonstrate how the program prepares for, orients, and welcomes children and families. • Are shared verbally and in writing with families of enrolled children. • Are available in languages that families use and understand. • Include parent conflict resolution procedures. • Include program operations, such as tuition and fee schedules, payment and refunds, and attendance and vacation.
9.4.1 Family involvement standards include provision of a written handbook of program policies, objectives, and goals; regular means of communication; conferences at least once a year and at other times as needed; and goal-setting opportunities for their child. Parents are provided education on how the childcare functions on a day-to-day basis, including the philosophy statement as well as the policies regarding holidays, illnesses, hours, fees, refunds, enrollment, termination, grievance policy, and complaint policy.
9.4.2 When program staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner and is provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment. For children with persistent, serious, challenging behavior, teachers, families, and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
9.4.3 Weekly or monthly memoranda are sent to parents as a regular means of communication.
9.4.4 Families may visit any area of the facility at any time during the program's regular hours of operation as specified by the procedures of the facility. Nursing mothers have a place to breast-feed their children that meets their needs for comfort and privacy.
9.4.5 Conferences with each child's parent(s) are held at least twice a year and at other times as needed to discuss the child's progress, care, and education. Parents are encouraged to participate in the goal-setting process for their child.
9.4.6. The program offers a parent display/bulletin board which covers, at a minimum, program description, policy statements, philosophy, schedules, and menus. The program compiles and provides program information to families in a language the family can understand. This information includes program policies and operating procedures.
9.4.7 The director oversees reporting to parents about their children and about the childcare. The director plans and implements regularly scheduled parent education programs that assist in fulfilling the childcare's philosophy of education.
9.4.8 The director assists the staff with methods of recording their observation of children. Observation records are used for curriculum planning and parent conferences. Child observation forms are used for scheduled observations and parent conferences

9.4.9 Parents are provided information regarding the childcare’s philosophy of child development and discipline techniques in order to minimize potential conflicts and confusion for the children.
9.5.0 Significant changes in a child’s physical or emotional state are reported to parents immediately documented and placed in child’s file.
Resource/Referral
9.5.1 The director is familiar with community services and resources and can direct parents or children with specific needs to an appropriate agency. The director and teachers work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information, as needed.
9.5.2 Program posts/distributes information as noted above to all families.
9.5.3 The program has a written plan describing procedures to refer and connect families to appropriate community agencies (e.g., mental health, health, developmental services, and educational services).
9.5.4 Information is provided in languages that represent the population served as well as the surrounding community.
9.5.5 The program coordinates and/or collaborates with community service providers, families, school district personnel, etc. in order to design learning activities that aid in meeting outcomes/goals of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP), Individual Education Programs (IEP), School Readiness Plans, Individual Learning Plans, and/or other individual plans.
9.5.6 Program hosts parent events and provides a calendar of events at least quarterly.
9.5.7 Parents have an opportunity for volunteering in the program.
9.5.8 Program documents hours of volunteers.
9.5.9 Program staff maintain a current list of child and family support services available in the community based on the pattern of needs they observe among families and based on what families’ request (e.g., health, mental health, oral health, nutrition, child welfare, parenting programs, early intervention-special education screening and assessment services, and basic needs such as housing and childcare subsidies). They share the list with families and assist them in locating, contacting, and using community resources that support children's and families' well-being and development.
9.6.0 There is a health/medical consultant available to the program for questions and advice. The health consultant observes program practices and reviews and makes recommendations about the program's practices and written health policies to ensure health promotion and prevention of infection and injury. The consultation addresses physical, social-emotional, nutritional, and oral health, including the care and exclusion of ill children.
Parent Involvement
9.6.1 Policies concerning parental involvement (e.g., visiting, observing, and volunteering) are in place to ensure that the partnership between home and childcare is maintained.
9.6.2 Opportunities for parent and child orientation exist in the form of Open House, Campus Tours, and One-on-One interviews. Parents are permitted to schedule a private tour of the facility and bring children for a visit. During the visit the parent is provided education on the program including but not limited to academic, discipline, tuition and fees, grievance, and complaint policies.
9.6.3 Written policies and procedures are established that describe family interactions. Parents are welcome to visit the program and invited to

volunteer in the classroom, on field trips, and during chapel services, if desired.
9.6.4 The program offers annual educational information sessions on child development and learning
9.6.5 Family members act in leadership positions on program and/or advisory boards and are provided with a training and/or orientation on their role.
9.6.6 All teaching staff evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflection and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. They add to their knowledge and increase their ability to put knowledge into practice. They develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.
Child(ren) Transitions
9.7.1 Teachers and families communicate to ensure children experience smooth transitions from one program to another during the day. Positive reinforcement including speaking in soft tones is used to re-direct child behavior, calm children suffering from anxiety separation, and create a warm, family environment.
9.7.2 Written policies and procedures are established that describe the communication between staff and families. Every effort is made to ensure families feel comfortable participating in the program activities as a vital part of the learning process. Communication between staff and families is built on trust and mutual respect.
9.7.3 The program has a procedure for transitioning children to another program or elementary school. This process includes reviewing children's specific needs, a family needs assessment, and a mechanism to share summary information. An informed consent form will be signed by the parent that identifies specifically what will be shared.
9.7.4 The program offers information sessions and/or individual family meetings specific to child transitions (e.g., what to expect in terms of transitions from one classroom to another; from program or elementary school; from home to a classroom, to another setting, connecting families with schools for children transitioning into school).
Grievances
9.8.1 Parents are given an opportunity to resolve the issue with the teacher first.
9.8.2 If the matter remains unresolved then the parent may contact the director/assistant director to request a conference.
9.8.3 If the matter is still unresolved then the parent may contact the accrediting agency and applicable state/local licensing agency. The program is required to post the name, telephone, fax, email address, and mailing address for the accrediting agency and state/local licensing agency in its publications including websites, parent handbook, employee handbooks, and in a conspicuous place on campus.
9.8.4 In addition to the requirements found in standard 9.8.3, parents shall be provided the current contact information for Green Apple Accreditation of Children's Services (the accrediting agency) and state licensing authority upon written or verbal request within 24 hours.

Standard: Surveys
Strand: Stakeholder Surveys
Topic: Your Opinion Matters
Director/Administrator Survey
9.9.1 All early care and education program stakeholders are given the opportunity to complete a survey in which they are asked to evaluate the quality of program administration. A survey form is sent along with a letter that explains the purpose of the survey as an integral part of the program and solicits full participation. The letter also instructs the stakeholders to return the completed survey sealed in an enclosed, pre-stamped and addressed envelope. The sealed surveys are opened and processed by a designated validator the day of the site visit. Responses from the Survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration and governance with a summary included in the final evaluation report.
Teacher Survey
9.9.2 All early care and education program stakeholders are given the opportunity to complete a survey in which they are asked to evaluate the quality of program administration. A survey form is sent along with a letter that explains the purpose of the survey as an integral part of the program and solicits full participation. The letter also instructs the stakeholders to return the completed survey sealed in an enclosed, pre-stamped and addressed envelope. The sealed surveys are opened and processed by a designated validator the day of the site visit. Responses from the Survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration and governance with a summary included in the final evaluation report.
Parent/Family Survey
9.9.3 All parents/legal guardians of children enrolled in the early care and education program are given the opportunity to complete a survey in which they are asked to evaluate the quality of the program. A survey form is sent along with a letter that explains the purpose of the survey as an integral part of the program and solicits full participation. The letter also instructs the parents/guardian to return the completed survey sealed in an enclosed, pre-stamped and addressed envelope. The sealed surveys are opened and processed by a designated validator the day of the site visit and responses of the Survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration and staff with a summary included in the final evaluation report.
9.9.4 The results of the family survey are shared with administrators and program staff.
9.9.5 The program documents changes made because of the surveys.

Standard 10.0 Professional Development
Strand: Pre-Service Training
Topic/Sub-Topic: Professional Development
10.1.0 All teaching staff (including Lead Teachers, assistants, and volunteers) must complete job-related professional development during the first year of employment relevant. Training must be specific to the age(s), or the special circumstances/specific needs of the children staff teach. Topics to include behavior management; inclusion; medication administration; child abuse reporting and compliance; health; safety; child development; nutrition; evaluation; whole language; curriculum; parent involvement; communication skills; and diverse races, cultures, and languages.
10.1.1 The childcare director has adequate professional training to carry out the work of a director. The director has received additional training in administrative leadership or has obtained director certification.
10.1.2 At least annually, directors, parents, program staff and other ancillary professionals collaborate on a written evaluation of the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, parents, and program modification. Staff and families have the opportunity to assist in making decisions to improve the program. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities, as well as to improve operations and policies.
Child Care Training
10.1.3 Childcare personnel must have completed training by commencing coursework, obtaining an educational exemption, or by completing a competency exam. All Introductory Training must be completed prior to employment.
10.1.4 All staff must complete the required CPR/First Aid Certification and blood borne pathogen training prior to working with children.
Child Care Employee
10.1.5 Must complete or have already completed: 1. 40-clock-hour Introductory Child Care Training comprised of Part I and Part II courses prior to working with children 2. 5-clock-hour (or .5 Continue Education Units) Early Literacy and Language Development, within 1 year of employment
10.1.6 Child Care Pre-Service Training for 40 Hours Introductory Course includes: All childcare personnel are required to have completed the following training which are divided into five training courses: 1. Child Care Facility Rules and Regulations (6 hours) 2. Health, Safety, and Nutrition (8 hours) 3. Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (4 hours) 4. Child Growth and Development (6 hours) 5. Behavioral Observation and Screening (6 hours)

Introductory Training for Child Care Personnel Serving School-Age Children

10.1.7 Childcare personnel working in facilities serving school-age children only or who are working exclusively with school-age children in a facility serving children of different ages can meet the Part I and Part II Introductory Child Care Training requirement by completing the following training as evidenced by successful completion of competency examinations:

1. Child Care Facility Rules and Regulations (6 hours).
2. Health, Safety, and Nutrition (8 hours).
3. Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (4 hours).
4. School Age-Appropriate Practices (10 hours); and
5. The remaining 12 hours must be met by completing training identified in either a. or b. below. Successful completion of competency examinations for the following courses:
 - a. Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs (8 hours online),
 - b. Quality Self-Assessment and Improvement for Afterschool Programs (4 hours online), Completion of specialized school-age training, provided by a national organization or affiliates of a national organization, that requires demonstration of competencies through passage of examination(s), or completion and assessment of a Professional Resource File (portfolio of materials that demonstrate competency).

Child Care Director

10.1.8 The director must meet ONE of the following and be at least 21 years of age:

1. a minimum of an A.A., A.S., B.A. or B.S. in early childhood education, child development, another related field from an accredited institution.
2. a Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC).
3. a Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) from another state.
4. a National CDA; OR
5. an equivalency competency-based credential with two years of experience working with young children in a supervisory capacity.

Staff Orientation

10.1.9 Orientation for new staff members, substitutes, and volunteers is thorough and is conducted before new staff work with students. The staff orientation includes but is not limited to:

1. the childcare's philosophy,
2. mission and purpose,
3. program and employee policies and procedures,
4. health, safety, and emergency procedures,
5. accepted guidance and classroom management,
6. observing experienced teachers, assessment,
7. observing experienced teachers, and
8. accreditation policies and procedures.

Background Screening
10.2.0 All personnel, including full time/part time paid staff, interns, volunteers, and substitutes must have on file the appropriate level 2 background screening, local sheriff department, and child abuse checks, prior to employment.
Credentials and Renewal
10.3.0 The introductory childcare training courses are only offered through the Department of Children and Families. Child Care personnel may complete the required credentials, credentials renewal, and/or in-service training hours through the Green Apple's online childcare training program. To register for a Credential, Credentials Renewal, or In-Service Training Course simply visit our website at www.gaacs.org/training or call the office for more information.
10.3.1 Our training courses are designed to help early childhood professionals complete annual training requirements and acquire required training hours for those seeking a Preschool Associate Credential (PAC), PAC/CDA credential renewal or in-service training. Our courses provide a variety of engaging topics designed specifically for the professional early childhood educator. The credential courses offered include: 1. Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) 2. Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training 3. Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training - Infant/Toddler 4. Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training - Spanish Version
Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)
10.3.2 Our Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) certificate focuses on the competencies required by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) for early childhood professionals seeking a Florida staff credential. The program addresses the skills and knowledge early childhood professionals should strive for when working with young children. The program is composed of 120 hours of online coursework; personal and professional written reflections; a classroom observation to document teaching proficiency; a professional resources portfolio; and a comprehensive exam.
FCCPC Process
10.3.3 Our Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) process is for individuals who have already completed the required 120 hours of professional development. This program focuses on the competencies required by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) for early childhood professionals seeking a Florida staff credential. The process addresses the skills and knowledge early childhood professionals should strive for when working with young children. The process includes personal and professional written reflections; a classroom observation to document teaching proficiency; a professional resources portfolio; and a comprehensive exam.
Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training
10.3.4 The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training program is designed for those individuals who are seeking a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential in the Preschool or Family Child Care setting. This program is designed to fulfill the 120 hours of professional development required by the Council for Professional Recognition. It consists of six instructional units aligned to the competencies and content areas required to obtain the National Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. This program also meets the training requirements for the Florida Child Care Professional Credential.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training - Infant/Toddler
10.3.5 The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training - Infant/Toddler program is designed for those individuals who are seeking a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential in the Infant/Toddler setting. This program is designed to fulfill the 120 hours of professional development required by the Council for Professional Recognition. It consists of six instructional units aligned to the competencies and content areas required to obtain the National Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. This program also meets the training requirements for the Florida Child Care Professional Credential.
Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training - Spanish Version
10.3.6 The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training program is designed for those individuals who are seeking a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. This program is designed to fulfill the 120 hours of professional development required by the Council for Professional Recognition in the Preschool or Family Child Care setting. It consists of six instructional units aligned to the competencies and content areas required to obtain the National Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. This program meets the training requirements for the Florida Child Care Professional Credential.
Credentials Renewal
10.3.7 Our training courses are designed to help early childhood professionals complete annual training requirements and acquire required training hours for those seeking a FCCPC, CDA, or FCCPC/CDA credential renewal. Our courses provide a variety of engaging topics designed specifically for the professional early childhood educator. The credentials renewal courses offered include: 1. CDA/FCCPC Credential Renewal Training 2. School-age FCCPC Renewal Training (45 Hours/4.5 CEUs) 3. Director's Credential Renewal Training 4. CDA/FCCPC Credential Renewal Training (SPANISH) 5. Director's Credential Renewal Training (SPANISH)
CDA/FCCPC Credential Renewal Training
10.3.8 45 hours (4.5 CEUs) online self-paced training designed to meet the requirements for renewal of a Florida Child Care Professional or CDA credential. View course catalog: www.smarthorizons.org/landing/gaac/
School-age FCCPC Renewal Training (45 Hours/4.5 CEUs)
10.3.9 45 hours (4.5 CEUs) certified online self-paced training. View course catalog: www.smarthorizons.org/landing/gaac/
Director's Credential Renewal Training
10.3.10 45 hours (4.5 CEUs) online self-paced training designed to meet the requirements for renewal of a Florida Director credential. View course catalog: www.smarthorizons.org/landing/gaac/
CDA/FCCPC Credential Renewal Training (SPANISH)
10.3.11 45 hours (4.5 CEUs) online self-paced training designed to meet the requirements for renewal of a Florida Child Care Professional or CDA credential. View course catalog: www.smarthorizons.org/landing/gaac/

Director's Credential Renewal Training (SPANISH)

10.3.12 45 hours (4.5 CEUs) online self-paced training designed to meet the requirements for renewal of a Florida Director credential. View course catalog: www.smarthorizons.org/landing/gaac/

In-Service Training

Annual Conference

10.4.0 The administrator/director and all personnel attend the GAACS Annual Conference. The Annual Conference is a mandatory professional development event/meeting for all member organizations, director/administrators, full time, and part time staff.

Green Apple Training Portal

10.4.1 Child Care personnel may complete the required credentials, credentials renewal, and/or in-service training hours through the Green Apple Training Portal. Once registered for a course, login to the Green Apple Training Portal to complete the coursework and assignments.

In-Service Hours and Training Topics

10.4.2 All teaching staff (including Lead Teachers, assistants, and volunteers) must complete at least at least 30 clock hours of job-related continuing education in the first year of employment and 24 clock hours of job-related professional development annually, following the first year of employment. Training must be specific to the age(s), or the special circumstances/specific needs of the children staff teach. Topics to include behavior management; inclusion; medication administration; child abuse reporting and compliance; health; safety; child development; nutrition; evaluation; whole language; curriculum; parent involvement; communication skills; and diverse races, cultures, and languages.

Training Exemptions

10.5.0 Child Care Personnel may claim eligibility for training exemptions. If eligible for training exemptions, then the childcare personnel have submitted the required documentation to the department for review, and written approval or verification of exemption is maintained in the personnel file.

10.5.1 All teaching staff who supervise or mentor other staff must document completion of specialized college-level course work or professional development training and preparation in adult supervision, mentoring, and leadership development.

Additional Requirement

10.5.2 Staff is required to continue education to obtain an AA or BS degree in Early Childhood/Child Development.

10.5.3 Each staff member has a written professional development plan that has been reviewed and signed by the administrator.

10.5.4 Participate annually in continuing education and professional development that relates to topics specific to early education. The topics include Children's Behavioral Health, childcare operations and management, administration, inclusion, personnel management, behavior management, first aid, medication administration, child abuse reporting and compliance, health, safety, sanitation, child development, nutrition, evaluation, whole language, curriculum, assessment, parent involvement, communication skills, and accreditation standards.

10.5.5 Professional development experiences must be credit bearing and obtained from an accredited college or university (whenever possible) OR a program offering CEUs if available.

Standard 11.0 Licensure, Exemption, and Regulations
Strand: Licensure and Regulation
Topic/Sub-Topic: Valid License/License Exemption
Program Standards
11.1.0 The childcare center must hold a valid license issued by the department or local licensing agency unless the center is verified exempt from licensure. The childcare center license/license exemption must be in good standing. Good standing means the childcare center is not <u>currently</u> under investigation or in violation of the following offenses: Child Abuse and Neglect, a Class I violation, and/or Health and Safety Standards.
11.1.1 License exempt childcare centers must comply with their state licensing requirements and submit documentation as following: a. The program is voluntarily in compliance with the state’s licensing requirements. b. The program must provide a copy of the most recent inspection report from its respective accrediting agency, if applicable. c. The program must provide a copy of the exempt approval certificate from an accrediting agency approved by the department. d. Upon registration of children in the program, families are provided with a copy of the state licensing requirements and are informed that the program is exempt from state licensure, but its standards meet or exceed state licensing requirements. e. The program has documentation of fire and health inspections. f. The program has completed a criminal background check on all staff (paid, volunteers, and interns) and has complied with state and federal law concerning background checks. g. The program employs no individual convicted of a crime involving sexual abuse, child abuse, or neglect.
Inspections
11.2.0 Both licensed and licensed exempt childcare centers must voluntarily permit the department or local licensing agency, Early Learning Coalition, and Green Apple to conduct announced or unannounced inspections to verify compliance with Health and Safety Standards. Failure to permit the agency announced or unannounced inspections will result in an automatic suspension of accreditation pending revocation.
Health and Safety Violations
11.3.0 The childcare center is in compliance with health and safety standards, policies and procedures, and accreditation standards as set forth by Green Apple Accreditation of Children’s Services, the department, and/or the local licensing agency. In cases where there is a conflict, the stricter rule applies.

Displaying License/License Exempt Certificate	
11.4.0	The center must display a copy of the current license or license exempt approval certificate in a conspicuous place on campus.
11.4.1	Both licensed and religious exempt childcares must display a copy of the most recent inspection report in a conspicuous place on campus.
11.4.2	Licensed and license exempt centers must include the DCF phone number in Parent handbooks and advertisements.
11.4.3	License Exempt Centers must include the name of the Accrediting Agency and a written statement that it is operating exempt from licensure pursuant to s 402.316 or the applicable state/federal statute in the Parent Handbook.
License Exempt Statement (may be modified “somewhat”)	
11.5.0	“ABC Child Care is an integral part of a church or parochial school. ABC Child Care received license exempt approval from Green Apple Accreditation of Children’s Services and operates as an exempt childcare.”
11.5.1	The childcare has a license or permit to operate if it is required by city, county, or state law.
Validation Process	
11.6.0	The program will be subject to visit(s) by validator(s) representing the accrediting agency. The program will be evaluated based on standards outlined above. The program must receive a satisfactory evaluation. Onsite visits, excluding the initial visit, are unannounced visits: • Program personnel records will be monitored for compliance with training requirements. • Program files, surveys, and other information used to complete the self-study must be available during time of visit. • Program environment will be monitored, both indoor and outdoor classroom settings.
Renewal Process	
11.7.0	The program must apply for accreditation renewal a minimum of six months prior to the expiration date of the current accreditation to ensure that a lapse does not occur. • Program must provide an annual report every year with exception to the year of accreditation renewal – Continual Accreditation. • Provider must provide licensing inspections, including administrative actions as a result of noncompliance for the last two years.

Standard 12.0 Transportation	
Strand: Transportation Requirements	
Topic/Sub-Topic: Meeting Federal, State, and Local Codes	
Documentation	
12.1.1	There is current documentation that any childcare vehicles and their drivers meet all local, state, and federal transportation requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and must always be attended by an adult.
12.1.2	If transportation is provided for children, there should be: a. Written requirements for drivers. b. A regular maintenance schedule for vehicles and a maintenance log for each vehicle. c. A written pick-up/drop-off routine, including a procedure for accounting for each child. e. Transportation logs, vehicle insurance, liability insurance, and adequate supervision for children being transported. d. Identifying and emergency information for each child available on each vehicle. e. The use of appropriate restraint systems for each child. f. A first aid kit properly equipped for each vehicle. g. Adequate liability and accident insurance coverage for staff and children and vehicle insurance for any owned or leased vehicles. h. Vehicle alarms are installed in vehicles used to transport children. i. Transportation training for all staff participating in the transport of children.
12.1.3	Written procedures address all aspects of the arrival, departure, and transportation of children. The procedures: a. Facilitate family-staff interaction. b. Ensure that all children transported during the program day are accounted for before, during, and after transport. c. Ensure the safety of all children as pedestrians and as passengers. d. Address specific procedures for children with disabilities. e. Address special circumstances in picking up children at the end of the day.
Local, State and Federal Codes	
12.2.1	All transportation provided by the childcare facility must meet local, state, and federal codes for both vehicles and drivers.
12.2.2	Regular mechanical inspections should be made of all vehicles used to transport children and should be documented in facility files and on the vehicle.
12.2.3	Transportation logs must be kept indicating the name of each child, times of departure and arrival, and signatures of the driver and second adult checker.
12.2.4	Drivers must make a visual check of the bus for any students left inside the vehicle after each completed trip.
12.2.5	Drivers must verify by signature that the inspection has taken place and all students are accounted for.
12.2.6	The adult checker (second staff member) must verify with their signature that the log is accurate and that they have also conducted a physical inspection of the vehicle verifying that all children are accounted for.

Cellular Phones
12.3.1 When children are transported, staff in each vehicle must have a functioning cellular telephone or other two-way voice communication device with them for use in an emergency. Cellular telephones may not otherwise be used while the vehicle is transporting children.
Ratios While Transporting Children
12.4.1 Childcare programs must maintain appropriate staff-child ratios on any vehicle used to transport children.
12.4.2 When children are being transported, the same staff-child ratios required for a childcare program applies.
12.4.3 Ratios for the youngest child in the vehicle must be maintained at all times.
12.4.4 When three or more children under the age of two years are being transported, the driver cannot be counted in the staff -child ratio
12.4.5 Written transportation agreement between parent and the center regarding daily transportation between the home and the center and the center and the school. If parents have a third-party transportation arrangement, verification and details of the arrangement shall be maintained in the child's file.
Field Trips
12.5.1 Parents receive written notification of field trips including permission slips, times/dates, and locations.
In-service
12.6.1 The provider has in-service training in the operation of a childcare facility which includes local and state standards for the health, safety, sanitation, nutrition, record keeping, and transportation needs of children.
12.6.2 Transportation training for all staff participating in the transport of children.
Transportation Logs
12.7.1 A transportation log shall be kept in accordance with GAACS Standards, as identified below: a. The transportation log must record the time of pick up and drop off for each student rider. b. The transportation log must record the name of each student rider. c. The transportation log must be signed daily by the driver and assistant driver. d. The transportation log must record the date. e. The transportation log must be reviewed daily by the school director. f. The transportation log must be recorded in legible print and scanned into a computer for safe record keeping. g. The transportation log must be always maintained on the school bus or van, except when the school administrator conducts a daily review of the log.
12. 7.2 Identifying and emergency information for each child available on each vehicle. (Such as a picture of the child, name and telephone number for the child's emergency contacts, medical alerts, and procedures for drop off/pick up).
Annual Inspection and Seatbelt Usage
12.8.1 Children are appropriately belted into vehicles or transported by regulation childcare buses that have passed an annual inspection.

Child Safety Alarm

12.8.1 If transportation is provided, then the childcare center is required to install a child safety alarm in vehicles used to transport children to and from the childcare facility. This provision includes any vehicle that is owned or leased by the childcare center or contracted by the childcare center to transport children to and from the childcare facility.

12.8.2 Individuals and childcare center personnel must check the vehicle before turning off the child safety alarm.

12.8.3 Employees/staff using their own vehicles during the hours of operation are required to have a child safety alarm if their vehicle is used to transport children to and from the childcare facility.

12.8.4 A child safety alarm is an alarm system that prompts the driver or driver's assistant to check the vehicle for children before exiting the childcare vehicle.

Types of Child Safety Alarms

12.9.1 Only alarm systems that are hardwired into the vehicle's electrical system and activated when ignition is turned on (when installed and used properly) will meet the intent of this standard.

12.9.2 The following types of child safety alarms are NOT acceptable:

- a. Wireless devices
- b. Reminder systems
- c. Child sensing or tracking systems