MARYLAND EXCELS

Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment

Family Child Care: 6 Weeks up to 36 Months Old

INSTRUCTIONS

Before conducting the self-assessment:

- Review the Family Child Care Self-Assessment and the types of teacher-child interactions listed with observable examples.
- Select a typical day to conduct the self-assessment. Best practice is to complete the self-assessment when at least 75% of enrolled children are in attendance.
- Plan to observe teacher-child interactions during a variety of activities and routines, including independent play, outdoor play, snack or meal times, and diapering/toileting.
- A thorough assessment could take around two hours, but can be conducted over the course of a day or week. Plan to spend at least 20 minutes observing each activity or routine.
- If there is more than one staff person and age groups are separated into distinct, separate areas, a self-assessment is conducted for each group.

Best practices during observations:

- Take notes that help you remember what you observed.
- If observing a co-provider or other teacher:
    - Follow the daily schedule and move around the room as activities change.
    - Position yourself where you can hear teacher-child interactions well, but are not directly in the teacher's line of sight.
    - Limit your interactions with children as much as possible.

Upon completion of the self-assessment:

- Enter points in each teacher-child interaction row.
    - Rarely: 1 point if you did not see a teacher-child interaction taking place, or saw it only once or twice during the observation.
    - Sometimes: 4 points if you saw teacher-child interactions three to five times during the observation.
    - Consistently: 7 points if you saw teacher-child interactions taking place throughout the observation.
- Enter the average scores on the Summary Score Sheet at the end of this document. If you downloaded a digital copy of the self-assessment and are completing it on your computer or phone, the scores will automatically fill in the Summary Score Sheet.
- Upload this self-assessment to ACR 2 in your program's Maryland EXCELS profile.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

Personal and Social development includes feelings about oneself and others, relating to adults and other children, increasing self-awareness, and building self-concept.

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Responds to a child with positive facial expressions, actions, and words. *Smiles, hugs, uses respectful words: please, thank you, etc.*	
Uses a soft tone of voice. *Uses calming words and a warm tone of voice. Never yells.*	
Plays with materials with a child. *Engages with children by describing the materials. Models taking turns with materials.*	
Follows a child's lead during play and routines. Plans alternative activities for children who finish early. *Lets the child decide what to use, what to do, and for how long during play.*	
Provides children with choices during play, routines, and chores. Provides a balance of teacher-directed and child-directed activities. *Lets the child decide where, with what, and how to play. Lets the child decide how to help during routines.*	
Acknowledges and labels feelings. Monitors children's understanding and facial expressions. *Uses feeling words: thrilled, sad, excited, frustrated, etc.*	

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Is clear and consistent about rules, limits, and expectations. Gives clear directions and explanations for completing activities, tasks, and transitions. Uses effective pacing with established routines and rules. *Communicates rules regularly using positive language. Uses rules consistently. Introduces activities with clear directions.*	
Reinforces and acknowledges positive behaviors. Provides positive guidance to support appropriate behavior. Provides time for children to practice self-regulation. *Uses phrases such as "I like how you are …" or "You did … very nicely." Allows children to choose from available materials or activities.*	
Gives reassurance when a child is upset. *Uses phrases such as "I know you are sad/ angry/ frustrated/ scared. Would you like to …?"*	
Helps a child feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. Speaks informally with a child to gain information about her/him. *Connects activities and conversations to a child's life.*	
Builds positive relationships with children and among children, and models respectful peer-to-peer relationships. *Lets children choose different groupings throughout the day.*	
Demonstrates enthusiasm, intensity, and humor. *Laughs with the children. Uses verbal and physical signs of enthusiasm.*	
Motivates children to feel competent and capable of completing a task/skill by providing feedback and encouragement specific to that task/skill. Uses effective and specific verbal feedback. *Gives praise specific to the skill or task: "Look how well you …," rather than only stating, "Good job!"*	

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Provides children with opportunities to choose to work/play individually, in small groups, or in a large group. *Lets children choose different groupings throughout the day.*	

Total Points (add points from rows 1-14)	0
Average Score (Total Points ÷ 14) Enter this score on the Summary Score Sheet.	0

Points Range Descriptions:
Rarely (once or twice) = 1 point
Sometimes (three to five times) = 4 points
Consistently (more than five times) = 7 points

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

Communication takes place with words, gestures, visual cues, and actions in the physical layout of the program environment. Language development includes understanding and communicating; early literacy (pre-reading and pre-writing); listening and speaking; expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions; and entering conversations.

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Engages in formal (to provide information) and informal (social) conversations throughout the day using clear, adult language. *Uses real vocabulary. Avoids using baby-talk. Uses a pleasant but normal tone of voice. Talks with children about their home activities, weekend activities, or children's favorite things.*	
Describes aloud what the children or you are doing. *Uses self-talk: "I am putting the red block on top of the blue block." or "I am wiping your bottom to keep it clean. The wipe is cold and wet."* *Uses parallel talk: "You are holding the red block!" or "You are holding your bottle!"*	
Imitates sounds or repeats what a child has said. *Responds to babbling using the correct pronunciation: "Ba, Ba? Oh, you want your bottle."*	
Expands upon what a child has said. *Repeats and then expands upon what a child says: "Ba, Ba! Yes, your bottle has milk in it."*	
Uses, labels, describes, adds, and explains new vocabulary words. *Talks about what the child is experiencing in the moment using new vocabulary.*	

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Connects examples and experiences to each child's everyday life. *Chats about what is happening in the child's life, at their home, with their family, etc.*	
Has "give and take" conversations with each child. Speaks to a child at her/his eye level. *Pauses after a child makes a sound before making the next sound. Repeats their sounds or adds words.*	
Redirects a child's behavior while at her/his eye level using a calm, positive tone. *Kneels or sits at child's eye level before speaking. Uses positive phrases: "You can use this one and please give that one back to your friend."*	
Uses effective and specific verbal feedback. *Gives praise specific to the skill or task: "Look how well you …," rather than only stating, "Good job!"*	

Total Points (add points from rows 1-9)	0
Average Score (Total Points ÷ 9) Enter this score on the Summary Score Sheet.	0

Points Range Descriptions:
Rarely (once or twice) = 1 point
Sometimes (three to five times) = 4 points
Consistently (more than five times) = 7 points

COGNITIVE TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

Cognitive development involves discovering and learning through mathematical, scientific, and social exploration. Encouraging children's exploration with materials and prompting questions fosters critical thinking and problem solving. An early childhood educator continuously promotes a responsive learning environment to support children's participation and skills development.

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Encourages each child to explore a variety of materials using multiple methods: verbal, visual, hands-on materials, etc. *Provides materials that engage different senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, smell. Lets children handle materials.*	
Uses guiding questions to extend experiences by asking children to explain, infer, compare, analyze, and evaluate information that has been presented. *Asks questions: "What should we do next?" or "What will happen if you mix a little blue paint into the red paint?"*	
Asks open-ended, high-level questions requiring more than a one-word response (why, how, what if, how do you know) that help children develop understanding of a concept or topic. *Asks questions that have more than one correct answer. Asks questions that require more than a one-word answer.*	
Introduces a topic to children by clearly stating objectives. *Introduces activities with clear directions.*	
Encourages each child to use self-help skills. *Instead of praising by making a general statement, like "Good job," gives specific feedback about the skill: "You pulled up your pants by yourself!" or "Thank you for putting the toys away."*	

COGNITIVE TEACHER CHILD INTERACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Encourages each child to try new activities and skills. *Gives feedback about the specific skill or activity rather than simply saying, "Good job!" For example: "Look how hard you're working on that puzzle! You matched the circles! What other shapes do you see?"*	
Has children complete a task that requires intellectual involvement such as experimenting, problem-solving, or decision-making. *Encourages children to conduct experiments and solve problems. Engages children with activities requiring thinking and decision-making.*	
Connects prior knowledge of the children with new information. Asks questions to make connections to a child's prior knowledge. *Asks "How did you know?" or "How did you figure that out?"*	
Provides time for children to digest and react when information is presented. *Waits after giving instructions and information.*	
Asks follow-up questions to encourage children to elaborate upon their responses. Waits enough time for the child to respond. *Asks open-ended questions. Asks follow-up questions based upon their answer: "How do you know?" or "How did you figure that out?"*	

Total Points (add points from rows 1-10)	0
Average Score (Total Points ÷ 10) Enter this score on the Summary Score Sheet.	0

Points Range Descriptions:
Rarely (once or twice) = 1 point
Sometimes (three to five times) = 4 points
Consistently (more than five times) = 7 points

PHYSICAL AND FEEDBACK TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

Physical development includes coordinating movements; coordinating and using large and small muscle groups; and building and improving self-help abilities. Feedback is specific to a child's demonstration of skills rather than simply a positive comment or praise.

Best Practices / Observables	Points
Assists a child while she/he learns new physical skills. States specific, concrete expectations for the skill being developed. For example: Provides step-by-step instructions, as needed. *Guides the child's hand to turn the pages of the book. Guides the child's arm when holding a spoon.*	
Encourages each child's independence while being patient with her/his efforts. *Lets the child make a few attempts before helping: "You can do it!"*	
Offers assistance if a child becomes frustrated. *Asks "May I help you?" or "Let's try it this way."*	
Praises a child's efforts to do things for her/himself. Provides children with in-the-moment, objective feedback that reinforces developing and proficient skills. *Uses supportive comments: "You tried for a long time!" or "That is hard to do. May I help you?" or "Wow, you went down the slide by yourself! I'm so proud of you for trying it again!"*	
Develops lessons that reflect children's interests and skills, and meet each child's developmental needs and abilities. *Asks children what they want to do. Provides choices of activities. Groups children by skills and interests.*	

Total Points (add points from rows 1-5)	0
Average Score (Total Points ÷ 5) Enter this score on the Summary Score Sheet.	0

Points Range Descriptions:
Rarely (once or twice) = 1 point
Sometimes (three to five times) = 4 points
Consistently (more than five times) = 7 points

MARYLAND EXCELS

Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment Summary Score Sheet

Family Child Care: 6 Weeks up to 36 Months Old

Upon completion, upload the completed self-assessment to ACR 2 in your program's Maryland EXCELS profile.

Teacher-Child Interactions	Average Scores
Personal and Social	0
Communication and Language	0
Cognitive	0
Physical and Feedback	0

Program name: _____

License/registration #: _____

Date of self-assessment: _____

Classroom: _____

Staff names (if anyone other than the provider was observed): _____

Number of children present: _____

Activities observed: _____

Name of observer (if other than provider): _____