

Appendix B

Observation Checklists for Ensuring Quality in Infant Programs

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

1. Infant Environment Observation Checklist

Environmental characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Cozy, homelike touches and items specific to the children's cultures and home languages.			
2. Safety mirrors and photos of enrolled infants and their families displayed at children's eye level.			
3. Soft (carpeted), protected areas in the indoor environment for children to sit, creep, crawl, walk, and push wheeled toys and cars.			
4. Areas with easy-to-clean flooring where messy activities take place.			
5. An inviting family greeting space where teachers welcome children and families and exchange information about the children.			
6. An easily sanitized diapering area well stocked with supplies and a foot-operated trash can lined with a plastic bag.			
7. Cribs for each child located in an open area where they are visible to teachers.			
8. Comfortable adult-size chairs or gliders available in a private spot for nursing mothers and teachers to bottle-feed infants.			
9. Sturdy furniture and equipment that infants can use indoors and outdoors to pull themselves up.			
10. Culturally and developmentally appropriate toys and other learning materials displayed on low, open shelving.			
11. Outdoor play space for infants adjacent to but separate from where toddlers play. The space for young infants is protected from older, mobile children.			
12. Storage spaces and furniture available for adults.			

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2. Infant Toys, Materials, and Equipment Observation Checklist

Toys, materials, and equipment characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Items available that infants can explore with all of their senses.			
2. Toys and other available materials have bright colors, interesting shapes, and noisy parts.			
3. Items available indoors encourage mobile infants to move and gain gross-motor and fine-motor skills.			
4. Household items available for use in play.			
5. Open-ended toys, materials, and equipment available for play.			
6. Natural materials available for infants to explore and manipulate.			
7. Materials available that encourage pretending and taking on roles.			
8. Washable books with simple pictures of familiar things, repetitive language, rhymes, or no words, in English and home languages, available to children.			
9. Materials available that encourage problem solving and other cognitive skills.			
10. Materials available that promote the visual arts and music.			
11. Unbreakable, child-size plates, bowls, cups, forks, and spoons available to mobile infants for meals.			
12. Equipment and materials available outdoors that promote gross-motor activity and interaction with nature.			

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3. Infant Program Structure Observation Checklist

Program structure characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Teachers and infants follow a flexible schedule of simple and consistent routines that are tailored to meet the needs of individual children.			
2. Activities are scheduled between routines.			
3. Teachers follow infants' cues as to when a routine or activity begins and ends.			
4. Teachers take advantage of "teachable moments."			
5. Family members and teachers exchange information about an infant's day or evening, progress in gaining skills, and just to touch base.			
6. Teachers take infants outside daily.			
7. Infants play with one or two other children during the day.			
8. Teachers talk to and interact with infants in a relaxed manner during repeated routines.			
9. Mobile infants actively participate in routines, doing as much as they can for themselves.			
10. Teachers take infants from their cribs as soon as they notice the child is awake.			
11. Mobile infants eat lunch together at child-size tables with two to three other children.			
12. Teachers invite mobile infants to get out of their chairs after eating and move on to another activity.			

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4. Infant Curriculum Observation Checklist

Curriculum characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Teachers promptly respond when infants communicate through verbal and nonverbal cues that they are tired, are hungry, or need a clean and dry diaper.			
2. Teachers introduce and reinforce skills based on what they observe children doing and learning.			
3. Teachers use routines as opportunities to promote learning.			
4. Children play with toys and materials they have selected for themselves.			
5. Teachers regularly observe children's interactions and activities, document what they see and hear, and maintain individual portfolios.			
6. Children use their large muscles in various activities throughout the day.			
7. Children use the small muscles in their hands in various activities throughout the day.			
8. Teachers engage both verbal and nonverbal infants in conversation during the day's routines and activities.			
9. Children solve problems, explore cause and effect, and apply old knowledge to new situations throughout the day.			
10. Children express themselves through the creative arts each day.			
11. Teachers ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all children, including those with special needs.			
12. Family members share their skills and interests and play with, read to, and otherwise engage the children.			

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5. Infant Supportive Interactions Observation Checklist

Supportive interaction characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. Teachers sit on the floor with infants reading books, singing songs, talking, and playing with toys.			
2. Teachers comfort a child who is frightened when a new person enters the room.			
3. Teachers show pleasure and encouragement when a child attempts and achieves a goal.			
4. Teachers respond to infants' cries, gestures, coos, gurgles, and first words by interpreting the communication and talking back to the child.			
5. Teachers encourage mobile infants' use of self-help skills as soon as they are developmentally ready to do so.			
6. Teachers accept spills and messes as a natural part of learning for mobile infants.			
7. Teachers give attention to several infants at the same time.			
8. Teachers model pretend behaviors and join in children's pretend play.			
9. Teachers use information shared by a child's family when talking with the child.			
10. Teachers vary tone of voice, nonverbal responses, and interactions to fit an infant's temperament.			
11. Teachers learn and use a few important words and phrases in the child's home language.			
12. Mobile infants begin to play alongside each other and show beginning signs of empathy.			

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6. Infant Positive Guidance Observation Checklist

Positive guidance characteristic	Observed		
	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
1. A safe, well-planned, and developmentally appropriate environment that supports adults and infants.			
2. Teachers respond consistently and promptly to infants who are crying; teachers hold and cuddle infants until they have calmed.			
3. Teachers hold young infants close, look at their faces, smile, and talk; infants respond with coos and gurgles.			
4. Teachers redirect babies from potentially frustrating or dangerous situations by physically moving them or offering an interesting play material.			
5. Teachers wait to see whether infants can solve problems on their own before stepping in to help.			
6. Teachers offer interesting alternatives when two children want to play with the same toy.			
7. Teachers model caring behaviors, such as stroking hair instead of pulling it.			
8. Teachers say no only when necessary to keep a child safe.			
9. Teachers frequently offer choices to older infants and then accept children's decisions.			
10. Teachers acknowledge infants' communications and activities using names and verbal and nonverbal responses.			
11. Teachers invite mobile infants to help do real jobs.			
12. Teachers demonstrate respect for children's families and cultures.			

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