

Eight Components of High Quality Early Learning

JWB has identified Eight Components of High Quality Early Learning that are central to the success of children in early learning environments:

1 - Licensed Facility

2 - National Accreditation

Accreditation by National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC); Gold Seal; or other nationally-recognized accrediting body.

3 - Staff Qualifications

Each classroom or group of children must be led by bachelor's degree level staff and supported by assistants with a Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent certification. Both lead teacher and assistants should have specific coursework in child development and/or emerging literacy.

4 - Ratios and Group Size

Consistent with recommendations of Zero to Three and NAEYC:

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|-------------|-----|--------------------------|
| Infants | 1:3 | Maximum group size of 6 |
| Toddlers | 1:4 | Maximum group size of 8 |
| 2 year olds | 1:5 | Maximum group size of 10 |
| 3 year olds | 1:8 | Maximum group size of 16 |
| 4 year olds | 1:9 | Maximum group size of 18 |

5 - Family Engagement

Research studies indicate when parents become effective partners in their child's education, performance in school improves. Family engagement is building a positive working relationship between the parent(s) and the childcare staff and is more extensive than hosting events. Centers will commit to provide evidence-based curricula and best practices for family engagement.

6 - Evidence-Based Curriculum

Sites must implement an evidence-based curriculum that is thoughtfully planned, challenging and engaging and that is developmentally appropriate, comprehensive and likely to promote positive outcomes for children and youth. The curriculum is organized around child development and learning principles. Children should be actively engaged. Curriculum goals should be clearly defined, shared and understood by all. The curriculum, related activities and teaching strategies are designed to help achieve these goals in a unified coherent way. Content is learned through investigation, play and focused, intentional teaching and programming. Curriculum builds on prior learning and experiences and intentionally aligns with school instruction to help children who are failing or falling behind. Curriculum is comprehensive, encompassing critical development areas including children's physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language development, approaches to learning, cognition and general knowledge of subject matter areas such as science, mathematics, language, literacy, social studies and the arts. A purposeful curriculum will benefit children and achieve a wide range of outcomes including school readiness and school success.

7 - Quality Environments

An effectively designed classroom and/or setting (including an outside learning environment) has the potential to positively influence all areas of child development: physical, social-emotional and cognitive. The environment can support the development of behaviors that are valued in our society, such as cooperation and persistence.

8 - Cultural Competence

Staff should be trained in the specific issues that arise when working with at-risk and minority populations including English language learners. Using the basic principles of self-awareness, respect for diversity, and sensitivity in communication as a premise for cultural competency, professional development should not just include racial and ethnic considerations, but also the vulnerabilities of children growing up in generational poverty and children with disabilities and special needs.