



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

Pursue Personal and Professional Growth

National Accreditation for Family Child Care Providers

In Hawai'i, the majority of infants and toddlers of working families are cared for in home-based settings, including Family Child Care (FCC). Many families choose this type of care for:

- its home-like environment,
- smaller number of children, and
- having a consistent caregiver that their child may have for several years.

Families also expect a healthy and safe environment and hope that the setting is of high quality; ensuring positive outcomes for their child.

Being able to achieve and maintain high quality takes a commitment to on-going professional development. It means going beyond the minimum criteria for State licensure and engaging in quality improvement that increases your knowledge and skills related to early childhood through on-going:

- self-assessment,
- education, and
- trainings.

One way in which FCC providers can pursue continuous quality improvement is by going through the accreditation process under the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). The NAFCC is the only national accreditation system designed specifically for family child care providers. Through this accreditation, providers are recognized for achieving a high level of quality by examining all aspects of their family child program.

In this newsletter, we will provide the following information about NAFCC accreditation:

- Purpose
- Philosophy
- Content Areas of the Quality Standards
- Self-Assessment Process



NAFCC Accreditation

Purpose

The purpose of NAFCC accreditation is to:

- Ensure the availability of quality family child care programs through the use of standards and rigorous evaluation criteria
- Stimulate FCC providers toward continuous quality improvement and efficiency, and
- Provide a system for public trust and accountability and serve as a form of consumer education.

Philosophy

Because NAFCC recognizes that every FCC provider has his/her own unique setting, skills, and approach, they promote “MANY RIGHT WAYS” in meeting the Quality Standards.

Content Areas of the Quality Standards

The 310 NAFCC Quality Standards are divided into 5 content areas—all heavily weighted toward relationships as a critical component in providing high quality care. These areas measure how well the provider meets the needs of the children and families served while still tending to his/her own needs. The content areas are:

- Relationships
- The Environment
- Developmental Learning Activities
- Safety and Health
- Professional and Business Practices



Self-Assessment Process

Providers seeking accreditation are asked to do a periodic self-assessment using the Quality Standards as a guide. This practice is something all providers, not only the ones pursuing accreditation, can do to ensure continuous quality improvement. The self-assessment process gives concrete information about what your current practices are and can help you develop a plan for moving toward higher quality care. Here are some standards to try:

Relationships:

- The provider cares about, respects, and is committed to helping each child develop to his or her full potential.
- The provider keeps parents informed about how their children are spending their time in care. This happens daily for infants and toddlers and at least weekly for older children.

The Environment

- The provider's home is welcoming and comfortable, with enough materials and equipment to engage children's interest in a variety of ways, supporting their activities across all domains of development.

Developmental Learning Activities:

- The provider supports and extends children's self-directed play as well as offering learning experiences that are appropriate for the abilities and interests of the children.
- Children of all ages have access to age appropriate books every day. The provider encourages children to look at or read books on their own. The provider teaches children to take care of books as needed.

Safety and Health:

- Children's physical well-being is assured through careful supervision, preparation for emergencies, minimizing the spread of disease, and serving of nutritious food.
- Heavy furniture, climbing equipment, swings, and slides are stable or securely anchored.

Professional and Business Practices

- The provider is ethical and caring in relations with children and families; reflective and intentional about his/her work; abides by legal requirements and makes use of resources in the community.
- The provider seeks continuing training and education and is open to new ideas about family child care.



As you read each standard, ask yourself the following questions:

- What does the standard mean?
- Do I do this all (or nearly all) of the time?
- How do I know I do this all the time?
- How will someone else know that I meet this standard?
- Can I explain to someone how I meet this standard?

It's important to be honest with yourself as you evaluate whether you "fully met" the standard or "not yet." For the standards that are "not yet," think about how you could meet them. For example, if children do not have access to books every day, make a plan to gather age-appropriate books that you have in your home or borrow from the local library. Put them in a basket next to a mat or area rug that children can sit on with a few throw pillows. Rotate the titles each month, depending on the children's interests.

In a few months, review your progress. Celebrate the achievements you made in fully meeting standards that you didn't meet before and plan ways to work on the standards that are still "not met." Through on-going intentional evaluation of your practices, using research-based best practices, you are on your way to high quality!

To see all of the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation, see citation on Page 4.

For a list of low-cost (\$5) on-line training, see enclosed brochure from Penn State Better Kid Care: Online Modules for Family Child Care Professionals



Citations:

Benchmarks to Quality: Using the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation to Measure Provider Progress and Identify Recognition Milestones (2008). National Association for Family Child Care, Salt Lake City, UT

Provider Guide to Achieving NAFCC Accreditation (2013). National Association for Family Child Care, Salt Lake City, UT

Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation. Fifth Edition With 2017 Updates. (2017). The National Association for Family Child Care Foundation, Salt Lake City, UT.
<https://www.nafcc.org/file/03c2da02-3a4b-42d7-91f8-f65ade0293b6>

Reflection Sheet, Award Book, and Training Certificates

- Providers who fill out the caregiver's reflection sheet and return it by the posted deadline to the Learning to Grow Program are *guaranteed* a children's book in return. A postage-paid envelop is provided.
- Providers who thoughtfully complete the reflection sheet **question #5** can be awarded a certificate indicating one hour of training completed. Training hours will align with the topic areas required to meet DHS requirements.
- Reflection sheets do not need to be returned by the due date in order to earn the certificate. However, the supply of award books is limited and after the due date, award books will be sent only as available.
- Indicate on Question #8 if you would like to receive free technical assistance or support related to a child care issue.

REMINDER: Registered QCC participants can use their participation in the program to fulfill the relicensing requirement of "increased knowledge." Ask your DHS Licensing Social Worker about the requirements today.



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