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The Better Beginnings Guide is designed to support your center as you move through the certification process. The Better Beginnings Guide and the Better Beginnings Toolkit can help you document requirements you are already meeting and also help you develop policies and procedures to meet other requirements. The resources and examples in the Toolkit may be adapted for use in your program. Access the Toolkit online at http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit.

Some sections in this Guide list related resources to support your program in implementing Better Beginnings requirements. The Arkansas Child Care Resource Center has many of the listed resources available in its lending library for licensed child care centers. Contact the Resource Center at 501-682-9699 or 1-800-445-3316.

Resources may also be available from your education service cooperative, your regional Child Care Aware resource and referral agency, and/or a teacher center in your area.
Definitions

ADE. Arkansas Department of Education.

ADMINISTRATOR. The person on-site who is responsible for day-to-day operation of the program. This person’s title may be director, site manager, principal, lead teacher, or other.

APPROVED TRAINING. Training that is either 1) registered with the Professional Development Registry, 2) approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, or 3) for college credit, with a grade of “C” or better from a regionally accredited institution.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT. A program assessment using an approved environment rating tool.

ERS. Environment rating scales (ERS) are tools used to measure program quality: Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ITERS-R); Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ECERS-R); Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Revised (FCCERS-R); and the School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS).

PAS. The Program Administration Scale (PAS) is used in center-based and school-age programs to measure and improve the quality of administrative practices.

PROGRAM REVIEW. An on-site review of Better Beginnings requirements and the Program Administration Scale by a certified PAS assessor.

STAFF. Employees who work directly with children/youth, and those involved in the planning or implementing of services for children/youth.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REGISTRY. The Arkansas Professional Development Registry tracks training and professional credentials for early educators and out-of-school time staff. The Registry describes levels of professional development based on education and training. A copy of the current levels is in the Better Beginnings Toolkit (http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit).

TEACHING STAFF. Employees (full-time and part-time) who are regularly scheduled to work directly with children/youth. This includes job titles such as lead teacher, teacher, assistant teacher, and paraprofessional. Floaters whose primary role is to work in the classrooms or provide breaks are included as part of the teaching staff. Cooks, bus drivers, and custodians are not included in this category unless they regularly spend time in the classrooms working with children/youth.

YPQA and SAPQA. The Youth Program Quality Assessment and the School Age Program Quality Assessment are environment rating tools used to measure the quality of school-age/youth programs. This tool has two options: YPQA (generally suited for 4th-12th grade children) and the SAPQA (generally more suited for kindergarten – 6th grade children).
The Better Beginnings Certification Process

Overview of the Certification Process

Before your complete your Better Beginnings Application

Technical assistance (TA) is available at no cost to you for assistance with all aspects of Better Beginnings. We encourage you to request TA and to make any adjustments in your program that may result from the TA before you submit your Better Beginnings application.

The certification process consists of eight steps. Each step will be explained in more detail on pages 5-10 of this Guide.

1. Complete the Better Beginnings Application Checklist to find out which requirements you already meet and how you can meet additional requirements. When you are ready to submit your Better Beginnings application, update the Application Checklist so that it reflects all requirements your center has achieved.

2. If you are applying for Level 2 or Level 3, prepare for the environmental assessment and the program review. Review the environment rating tool(s) that applies to your center. Review the Better Beginnings requirements and the Program Administration Scale (PAS). You are encouraged to request technical assistance to support your center in meeting requirements of the environment rating scales, the YPQA/SAPQA, and/or the PAS.

When your Better Beginnings application is received by the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, the staff in the Better Beginnings Unit will notify the assessors that you are ready for an assessment. If needed, request technical assistance (TA) and make any adjustments before you submit your application.

3. Gather documentation for Better Beginnings requirements. This Guide provides information about documentation that you will need. Some documents will be attached to your application form. If your center is applying for Level 2 or Level 3, you will prepare a program portfolio that also includes documentation of PAS requirements. You are encouraged to request technical assistance prior to submitting your Better Beginnings application.

4. Submit your Better Beginnings application, along with the required supporting documents. If your center is applying for Level 2 or Level 3, you should be ready for the environmental assessment, and your program portfolio should be ready for the program review when you submit your application.
5. **Environmental assessment and program review.**
   - If your center is applying for Level 2 or Level 3, a consultant will call to notify you of the timeframe for your environmental assessment. A summary report will be emailed to you.
   - If your center is applying for Level 2 or Level 3, a PAS assessor will contact you to schedule an appointment for your program review. A summary report will be emailed to you.

6. **Notification of Better Beginnings level assigned.** When the program review and environmental assessment have been completed, you will receive notification of the Better Beginnings level for which your center qualifies.

7. **Submit an updated Annual Staff Record Form.** This form must be submitted every 12 months. The form is available on the Better Beginnings website, [www.arbetterbeginnings.com](http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com).

8. **Recertification.** Your Better Beginnings level is valid for three years. Approximately 33 months after certification, an email notice will be sent to you outlining the requirements for continuing certification.
Explanation of the Certification Process

Step 1: Complete the Better Beginnings Application Checklist

The Application Checklist is available at http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/center-checklists. You will check yes or no to indicate whether or not your program meets each Better Beginnings requirement. The online Better Beginnings Toolkit contains resources to help you achieve requirements that were checked no.

Step 2: Prepare for the Environmental Assessment and Program Review (for Level 2 and Level 3)

If your center is applying for Level 2 or Level 3, review the environment rating tool(s) that applies to your program. In addition, review the Better Beginnings requirements and the Program Administration Scale. Technical assistance is available to answer any questions you have about Better Beginnings, the environment rating scales, YPQA, and the PAS.

Step 3: Gather Documentation

This Guide outlines documentation that you will need for each of the three Better Beginnings levels. Some documents will be attached to your Better Beginnings application, and others will be added to a program portfolio (see pages 6, 20, and 21 of this Guide).

You are encouraged to request technical assistance related to the Better Beginnings application, the environmental assessment, and/or the PAS before you finalize and submit your application packet.

Step 4: Application

To apply for Level 1, complete Forms A-G.
To apply for Level 2 or Level 3, complete Forms A-H.

You are encouraged to complete and submit your application online. http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers or email to Vicki.mathews@dhs.arkansas.gov.

After submitting the online application, you must email, fax, or mail all supporting documents. Include your center’s license number in the subject line of emails and on the fax cover sheet. Emailed, faxed, and/or mailed documents must be submitted the same day the online application is submitted. Fax number: 501-682-2317

If you choose to mail your application and/or required documentation, send it to:

Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Attn: Better Beginnings
PO Box 1437, Slot S150
Little Rock, AR  72203-1437
Include the following forms and supporting documents in your Better Beginnings application packet.

**Form A—Application.** Complete information about your center on the front and back, including the director’s signature and date. For new applicants or applicants requesting a new level be sure to mark the level for which you are applying on page 1.

**Form B—Application Checklist.** Mark each requirement yes or no according to whether or not the requirement has been met for each level you are applying. To be considered for a level, all requirements must be met and checked yes. To qualify for Level 2, all requirements for Levels 1 and 2 must be met and for Level 3, all requirements for Levels 1, 2, and 3 must be met.

**Form C—Annual Staff Record.** Include information for the director and all current employees who work directly with children. Attach documentation for any training not yet listed on the Professional Development Registry training transcript. Attach ADE transcripts (if applicable). List the date (month/year) for each training listed that the person has completed. Record the total number of training hours for each staff member for the last calendar year. If there are unusual situations, such as a staff member who was on an extended leave for several months during the past year, note that information on Form C.

**Form D—Written Daily Program Schedules and Plans.** Complete the form and attach a copy of a daily program schedule for each class or group. Also attach written daily plans for each age group. The written daily plans are to include a recent two-week sample of plans from a lesson plan, calendar, or similar planning method.

**Form E—Center Self-Evaluation.** Indicate which assessment tool(s) were used (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS, SACERS or SAPQA/YPQA). Note: If your center has had an ERS or SAPQA/YPQA assessment in the past 12 months, you may attach a copy of the cover sheet(s) from the report(s) to meet this requirement. Do not send the entire report.

**Form F—ARKids First, Child Health and Child Development.** Complete the form by listing ways your center has distributed ARKids First information to families. Also, list the titles of some of the articles, brochures, or websites on child development and child health that have been shared with families in the past 12 months. Do not send copies of the ARKids Brochure, Medical Home Brochure, Kindergarten Readiness Calendar, etc.

**Form G—Medical & Educational Care Plans.** Attach the written policy/procedure describing the methods your center uses for obtaining copies of plans and carrying out responsibilities within children’s special medical and/or educational plans. Do not include the children’s plans.

**Form H—Strengthening Families.** Required for Levels 2 and 3 only. After viewing the online Strengthening Families video on the Better Beginnings website and completing the webinar quiz, attach a copy of the verification of completion. For Level 3, attach a copy of the Action Plan form that is provided when completing the self-assessment on the Strengthening Families website (http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/resources).
Step 4 Additional Notes on Application Processing

Before processing your application, the Better Beginnings staff will verify that your center is in good standing with a regular or new provisional license issued by the DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and that your center is in good standing with other DHS programs. *In good standing* means that your center is not currently debarred, defunded, excluded, or under adverse licensing action.

When documentation does not meet the requirement or is not included, the center may not be eligible for that level. Centers will be considered for a lower level.

If you have staff members who are not members of the Professional Development Registry, call the Registry office, 1-888-429-1585. For information about the Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Shoebox registry, go to [http://www.escweb.net/ar_esc](http://www.escweb.net/ar_esc).

Refer to pages 11-40 of this Guide for suggestions on documentation of Better Beginnings requirements.

If you believe your center meets the requirements for Level 2 or Level 3:

Before submitting your application, you should be ready for the program review and environmental assessment. Your program portfolio should be ready for review at the time you submit your application.

Does your center have national accreditation?

Child care centers that are accredited through the organizations listed below are eligible to be considered for reciprocation for Better Beginnings. Centers with such accreditations will submit a Better Beginnings Application Form A, Form C, and verification of the national accreditation. Additional documentation of Better Beginnings requirements or reviews may be required to determine the level of Better Beginnings certification.

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Afterschool Association (NAA)
- Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth Services Standards (CARF)

### Building Block System

Arkansas Better Beginnings is a building block system, with each level building on the previous level.

- Level 1 is achieved when all requirements for that level are documented.
- Level 2 is achieved when all requirements for Levels 1 and 2 are documented.
- Level 3 is achieved when all requirements for Levels 1, 2, and 3 are documented.
Step 5: Environmental Assessment and Program Review

Environmental assessment (ERS and/or SAPQA/YPQA)

- An ERS/SAPQA/YPQA consultant will contact you and give you a time frame for the environmental assessment (60-day window). You will not know in advance the exact date on which the consultant will visit your program. If you have dates that your program will be closed or you have special events scheduled, tell the consultant when he/she contacts you.

- Review the items and indicators in the environment rating scale(s) or SAPQA/YPQA that will be used for your program. This Guide provides more information on the environmental assessment (see pages 29 and 38).

- The environment rating scale assessor(s) generally will review 1/3 of your classrooms at each age level (1/3 of infant/toddler rooms, 1/3 of preschool rooms, and 1/3 of school-age rooms). The observation usually takes about 3-5 hours.

- After the observation, the assessor will interview the teacher(s) to obtain additional information.

- About three weeks after your environmental assessment, you will receive a summary report via email that lists your program’s scores, areas of strength, and opportunities for growth.

- Your center’s ERS and/or SAPQA/YPQA scores will be reviewed by the Better Beginnings staff at the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education.

Program Review (PAS assessment) for Level 2 and Level 3

Your PAS assessor will score your center on PAS items 1-21. Items 5 and 6 will be scored, but the scores will not be included when determining your average PAS score. Items 22-25 will not be scored.

For Level 2, there is no minimum score required for the PAS. However, administrators are expected to gather as much of the requested documentation as possible so that their program can receive the maximum benefit from the PAS assessment. The information you receive in your summary report will help you identify ways to enhance your program and will help you prepare to meet the required score at Level 3.

A PAS assessor will call you to schedule a date and time for the program review using the Program Administration Scale, Second Edition. The PAS program review requires about five hours. The program review is outlined on the next page.
- You will provide a brief tour of your center for your assessor, including indoor and outdoor spaces used by children and spaces designated for families and staff.

- Your assessor will interview you to obtain information about how your center meets PAS indicators. You should arrange for a quiet area, free of interruptions for the interview. The PAS interview takes about two hours.

- Your assessor reviews your Better Beginnings program portfolio to verify that you have documentation for PAS indicators.

- Your assessor will review children’s portfolios.

- Your assessor will ask you to provide any additional information that may be needed.

- Your program review must be scheduled during a time period when classrooms/program spaces are set up for children/youth. This is required because your PAS assessor will be observing your learning centers and other program features, and reviewing children’s portfolios. For example, if your program closes for the summer, a program review could not be completed during the summer.

Documentation for the program review must be current. **Most items will document policies, procedures, and activities within the past 12 months.** Refer to the *Program Administration Scale* for additional information.

Following the program review, a summary report will be emailed to you, highlighting areas of strength and opportunities for growth. The Better Beginnings staff at the DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will review your center’s scores.

**Preparing for the Program Review**

The purpose of the PAS is to help you consider strategies for enhancing the administrative practices in your center. Rarely will centers have documentation for every PAS indicator. You are not expected to meet every indicator in the PAS. The PAS can help you set goals for continued development. Be sure you are using the 2011 second edition of the PAS.

Refer to pages 20-21 of this Guide for instructions on how to assemble documentation for review by your PAS assessor.

**Step 6: Notification of Better Beginnings Level**

The Better Beginnings Unit at the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will review all aspects of your application.

- Application and supporting documentation
- Summary Report from the program review
- Summary Report from the environmental assessment

The Better Beginnings Unit will verify the level for which your center qualifies and will notify you of the level attained.
**Step 7: Submit an Annual Staff Record Form**

The Annual Staff Record Form (Better Beginnings Form C) lists information about each employee. This form must be submitted every 12 months. The form is available on the Better Beginnings website, [www.arbetterbeginnings.com](http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com).

**Step 8: Reports and Recertification**

Your Better Beginnings level is valid for three years. When it is time for your program to recertify, you will receive an email notification from your Better Beginnings Specialist. The notification will include the Staff Record Form C to be completed with information about the director and all current teaching staff.

The Professional Development Registry training transcripts for the director and all teaching staff must be available for the Better Beginnings Specialists review to ensure that the required number of training hours for your level have been obtained for the past year. Staff members should login to their personal data pages and give permission for DCCECE Better Beginnings staff to view their training transcripts.

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Questions?

For more information about Better Beginnings and the certification process:  
Better Beginnings Helpline, 501-682-9699, 1-800-445-3316

For more information about the program review and the PAS:  
Nichole Parks, nparks@astate.edu

For more information about the environmental assessment or the environment rating scales:  
Technical Assistance Coordinator, ta@astate.edu, 870-972-3055, 1-888-429-1585  
Or  
Your regional technical assistance coordinator. To obtain the name of and contact information for your regional coordinator, call ASU Childhood Services, 1-888-429-1585.

For more information about the SAPQA/YPQA external assessment:  
Call ASU Childhood Services, 888-429-1585, 870-972-3055
1.A. Administration

1.A.1 PAS Basics training

For Better Beginnings Level 1, the site administrator attends PAS Basics. This workshop introduces the Program Administration Scale and the Better Beginnings certification process. PAS Basics is required the first time a center applies for Better Beginnings certification. If there is a change in the center’s administrator, the new person must attend PAS Basics.

You can meet this requirement in two ways.

1. Attend a PAS Basics workshop (4 clock hours). Copies of the PAS are available at no charge for workshop participants who do not have copies.
2. Complete PAS Basics Direct online (4 clock hours). Prior to the beginning of the course, a copy of the PAS is mailed to any participant who does not have a copy.

Use the Professional Development Registry Training Opportunities page to find the schedule of PAS Basics workshops. A link to the Registry can be found on the Better Beginnings website, www.ARbetterbeginnings.com.

Tip for administrators: If you are a new administrator, it is recommended that you complete New Directors Orientation (DO) before attending a PAS Basics workshop. Directors Orientation will answer many of your questions, and you will be ready to focus on Better Beginnings during PAS Basics.

If you have questions about PAS Basics, contact Nichole Parks, nparks@astate.edu.
1.B. Administrator and Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

1.B.1 Registry membership

The administrator and teaching staff in Level 1 centers are members of a professional registry.

Membership in the Professional Development Registry or the Arkansas Department of Education Registry is an element of professionalism. These two registries record members’ professional development on an individual training transcript.

Each member of the Professional Development Registry is assigned an ID number. Practitioner ID numbers are valid for one year, at which time they must be renewed. Trainer Registry membership is renewed every three years. Specialized trainers renew membership every year.

Renewal reminders are mailed to Registry members.

If staff are not members of the Registry, they may complete an online application or a paper application. Allow four to six weeks after submitting the application to receive your membership card. For assistance, contact the Registry office, 1-888-429-1585.

If a Registry membership card is needed quickly, contact the Registry office, 1-888-429-1585.

Shoebox Registry: For information about the Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Shoebox registry, go to http://www.escweb.net/ar_esc.

1.B.2 Administrator qualifications

Level 1 administrators meet requirements for Foundation 3 or higher, including 21 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.

Professional Development Registry members are assigned a level, based on their education and training. The levels are Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced.

Requirements for Foundation 3 can be reviewed in the Better Beginnings Toolkit, http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit.

Effective administrators have knowledge and skills in both management and early childhood/youth development. Better Beginnings administrator qualifications require evidence of training in both areas.

The administrator must have 21 clock hours or more of training in the Key Content Areas of Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership. You can view and download a copy of the AR Key Content Areas and Core Competencies on the Better Beginnings website, www.ARbetterbeginnings.com.
Examples of professional development topics that meet these requirements are listed below. [Topics below have been identified as relevant for administrators by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Planning/Management</th>
<th>Early Childhood or Child/Youth Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director’s Orientation</td>
<td>Historical and philosophical foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program operations and centers management</td>
<td>Child growth and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff management and human relations</td>
<td>Child observation and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support</td>
<td>Curriculum and instructional methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational programming</td>
<td>Children with special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and fiscal management</td>
<td>Family and community relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management</td>
<td>Health, safety, and nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisal</td>
<td>Individual and group guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and public relations</td>
<td>Learning environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and advocacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.B.3 Staff qualifications

Within the first year of employment all staff in Level 1 centers meet requirements for Foundation 1 or higher.

Professional Development Registry members are assigned a level, based on their education and training. The levels are Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced. Requirements for Foundation 1 can be reviewed in the Better Beginnings Toolkit, http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit.

New employees who do not meet the Better Beginnings administrator/staff qualifications requirements will be allowed 12 months from their date of hire to meet the required qualifications.

Access to Training Transcript

Staff members should login to their personal data pages and give permission for DCCECE Better Beginnings staff to view their training transcripts. Contact the Registry office for more information, 1-888-429-1585.

1.B.4 Administrator completes ERS training.

The environment rating tools (ERS and SAPQA/YPQA) are used to assess program quality (see Better Beginnings requirements 1.D.1, 2.D.1, and 3.D.1.) The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ECERS-R) is used in classrooms serving children ages 2½ years through 5 years old. The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ITERS-R) is used in classrooms serving children birth to 30 months old. The School-Age Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) is used by centers serving school-age children.
Participation in ERS training prior to Better Beginnings enrollment meets this requirement. However, if it has been several years since you attended this workshop, you are encouraged to attend an ERS workshop to insure that you have current information.

The School Age Program Quality Assessment is available for grades K-6 and the Youth Program Quality Assessment for grades 4-12; centers should use the PQA that best matches the ages served. Centers serving school-age children may choose either the SACERS or the SAPQA/YPQA.

If your center chooses to use the SAPQA or YPQA for its school-age classes, the administrator should also attend Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) training. For more information on SAPQA and YPQA, contact the School Age Coordinator at ASU Childhood Services, 1-888-429-1585.

1.B.5 Developmentally appropriate physical activities

The administrator of a Level 1 center completes training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.

Training on developmentally appropriate physical activities is available in workshops throughout the state and also online. Participation in training prior to Better Beginnings enrollment meets this requirement. However, if it has been several years since you completed this training, you are encouraged to attend a workshop or enroll in an online course as a refresher.
1.C. Learning Environment

1.C.1 Daily schedule

In a Level 1 center, a developmentally appropriate daily schedule is posted in each classroom.

A predictable routine is essential to children’s optimal growth and development. An age appropriate daily schedule is the foundation for a predictable routine.

Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers (section 400) states that the daily schedule must include the following minimal components.

- Offer alternating periods of active play and quiet times throughout the day.
- Include an opportunity for a supervised rest period of at least one hour but not more than two hours.
- Include at least one hour per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Include at least one hour of outdoor play in suitable weather.

Note: Refer to Minimum Licensing Requirements for part-time and other program variations.

Developmentally appropriate activities

- allow children to explore a variety of materials through first-hand, meaningful experiences.
- include all areas of development: physical, cognitive, language and literacy, and social and emotional;
- allow children to make choices and pursue their interests. Activity plans are based on children’s ages, developmental needs, and interests; and
- balance child-initiated activities and adult guidance and support.

Resources


All About the ECERS-R, chapter 34

All About the ITERS-R, chapter 29


1.C.2 Written daily activity plans for each group

The Better Beginnings Level 1 center develops and uses written daily activity plans for each class or group of children. Here are some important things to remember about written daily activity plans.

- This includes all age levels: infants, toddlers, preschool, and school age.
- The written plans should cover all hours that the center is open for children.
- Written daily plans should take into consideration the children’s interests and developmental needs.
- The purpose of the written plan is to guide teachers as they work with children through the day.
- Sometimes there are special circumstances that cause teachers to do something that is not in the written plan. Be sure to make a note of these changes on your written plan.

By following written plans each day, staff are able to provide materials and equipment that will support optimal growth and learning for each child. Basic written plans don’t have to be lengthy or complicated. Examples of learning experiences and activities are found in the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework Handbook and in the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care. Information on activities for school-age children/youth is in the Better Beginnings Toolkit.

Refer to the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environment section) for sample daily plans.
http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

By following written plans each day, staff are able to provide materials and equipment that will support optimal growth and learning for each child. Basic written plans don’t have to be lengthy or complicated. Examples of learning experiences and activities are found in the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework Handbook and in the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care. Information on activities for school-age children/youth is in the Better Beginnings Toolkit.

Refer to the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environment section) for sample daily plans.
http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit
1.D. Environmental Assessment

Environment Rating Tools
Better Beginnings uses environment rating tools designed for different types of centers.

- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ages 2 ½ through 5 years)
- Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ages birth through 30 months)
- School-Age Environment Rating Scale (ages 5 through 12 years)
- Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Revised (all ages in family child care)
- School Age Program Quality Assessment (for programs serving youth in grades K-6)
- Youth Program Quality Assessment (for programs serving youth in grades 4-12)

The environment rating scales define environment in a broad sense and guide the observer to assess the arrangement of space both indoors and outdoors, the materials and activities offered to the children, the supervision and interactions (including language) that occur in the classroom, and the schedule of the day (including routines and activities). The support offered to parents and staff is also included. The scales are suitable for use in inclusive and culturally diverse programs. For more information, go to http://ers.fpg.unc.edu.

The Program Quality Assessment tools (SAPQA and YPQA) evaluate the quality of youth experiences as youth attend workshops and classes, complete group projects, and participate in meetings and regular program activities. The assessment looks at a safe and supportive environment, interactions, engagement, youth-centered policies and practices, expectations for youth and staff, and access. For more information, go to http://www.cypq.org/assessment.

1.D.1 Sample strategies for self-evaluation
Level 1 centers complete a self-evaluation using applicable tools (ERS, SAPQA, YPQA).

- If your center has had an environmental assessment in the past six months, you may use the cover sheet from the report as evidence of a self-assessment.

- Request technical assistance. A consultant will review the environment rating scales with you. Contact ASU Childhood Services, 1-888-429-1585 or 870-972-3055. [This is a good option. You get lots of practical information, and it’s free!]

- Review the instructions for using the environment rating scale (found at the beginning of each scale). Be sure each staff member understands the format of the scale. Meet with staff to discuss self-evaluations. Set one or two goals for each classroom/group and one or two goals for the center. Share ideas that are working, discuss challenges and brainstorm solutions. You might choose to use the subscale self-evaluation form in the Better Beginnings Toolkit. http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

Use All About the ECERS-R and/or All About the ITERS-R for more ideas on how to meet indicators. These books may be checked out from the Arkansas Child Care Resource Center. Call 1-800-445-3316, or 501-682-9699, or request a copy online, http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/resource.html
1.E. Child Health and Development

1.E.1 ARKids First

Level 1 centers distribute ARKids First information to families of uninsured children.

ARKids First health insurance provides coverage for more than 70,000 Arkansas children who otherwise might have been uninsured. The information that families provide on the simple application form determines the level of coverage for which their children are eligible.

ARKids First information is available by calling toll-free, 1-888-474-8275, and from the ARKids First website, http://www.arkidsfirst.com.

Information could be given to families during the enrollment process; it could be included in your family handbook; or it could be distributed with a newsletter or handouts on children’s health.

To document distribution of ARKids First information, you will need a written policy or procedure describing the method(s) your center uses to distribute the information to families.

1.E.2 Information on child/youth development and child health

Level 1 centers share with families information on child development and children’s health.

Many families look to you to provide information on a variety of topics related to children. Children’s programs are in a unique position to help families learn about child/youth development and about issues related to children’s health.

Look for opportunities to share with families what you have learned. When more of us know more about children, we all benefit. See the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Child Health and Development section) for examples of information you might share with families. http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

Information about child/youth development helps families understand why their children do and say the things they do. This understanding helps families set reasonable expectations and limits for each child.

Related Resources


1.E.3 Medical and educational care plans

If children have written medical and education care plans, Level 1 centers ensure the confidentiality of the information in the plan and document implementation of the plans.

Medical and/or educational care plans for children are most effective when families and professionals work together.

Your program should have procedures for obtaining copies of medical and educational care plans and for carrying out your responsibilities within the plans. As you develop policies and procedures, be sure to build in safeguards that will maintain confidentiality of all information about children and families.

The following questions may help you think about the information you need to include in your procedures.

- How does the administrator find out whether or not a child has a medical or educational care plan in place?

- In addition to the administrator, what other staff members need to know this information?

- Who is responsible for making sure the center does its part in implementing the medical or educational care plan?

- How does the center maintain two-way communication with families regarding the child and the medical or educational care plan?
2.A. Administration

2.A.1 PAS program review

A certified PAS assessor completes a program review for Level 2 centers. Information about the program review is on pages 8-9 of this Guide.

During the program review, your PAS assessor will review the documentation you have compiled in your Better Beginnings Program Portfolio. After completing PAS Basics training, the administrator should begin compiling documentation for the program portfolio.

Be sure you are using the Program Administration Scale, Second Edition (2011) and the current version of the PAS Additional Notes. Download and print the Additional Notes before you begin compiling documentation. http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/tag/pas-assessor-resources/

Your Better Beginnings Level 2 program portfolio contains documentation of the PAS indicators.

An optional PAS Documentation List is available from the following website. http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/documentation-list-long-version/

You may find this helpful in thinking about how you might document the PAS indicators. The list suggests documents you might use for each item in the PAS.


Organization of the program portfolio

Please organize your program portfolio documentation in a three-ring binder or a file box.

Label each portfolio entry with the number of the PAS item and indicator.

If the needed documentation is contained within a larger document, such as an employee manual or a policies and procedures notebook, please highlight or underline relevant portions and write the PAS item and indicator in the margin. It is also helpful to tab the appropriate page.

When photographs are used as documentation, please date the photograph and attach an explanation of how the photograph relates to PAS indicator.
**Be concise.** If one item sufficiently documents a PAS indicator or Better Beginnings requirement, avoid the temptation to include three items. The PAS assessor will ask you for additional documentation if it is needed for any requirement.

**Be thorough.** Provide adequate documentation so that the PAS assessor can understand how your program’s policies, procedures, and systems support the indicator. For some PAS items, you will need to include several documents.

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**Electronic Program Portfolio**

You may choose to prepare an electronic portfolio. The electronic portfolio must be provided to the assessor on a flash drive that contains only the program portfolio documents. The assessor will not access Internet pages to review documentation, and there should be no other files or documents on the flash drive.

On the flash drive, you should set up a separate folder for each PAS item. Documents within the folder should be labeled with the item number and indicator number(s), such as “Item 7, 3.2 and 5.2.”

You should extract or copy and paste pages from larger documents into the appropriate item folders. For example, for item 3, Staff Development, you would include in the Item 3 folder only the page from the staff handbook that states the annual training requirements. You would not include the entire staff handbook in the folder.

See the information below regarding highlighting specific sections within a larger document or on a page.

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**Sequence of documents in your program portfolio**

Insert documentation for PAS items in numerical order, 1-21. (School-age programs will not include PAS items 10 and 11.) Remember that PAS indicators read across the page. In item 1, for example, documents should be placed in this order: 3.1, 5.1, 7.1, 3.2, 52., 7.2, 5.3, 7.3.

Larger documents, such as an employee manual or handbook for families, may be placed at the front of the program portfolio. If the document is too large to include in the program portfolio, provide the document for the PAS assessor along with the program portfolio. *Be sure that all requirements are highlighted, labeled, and tabbed within the larger document.*

If there are PAS items/indicators for which you do not have documentation, go to the next item/indicator.
**Preparing for the Program Review (PAS Assessment)**

Be sure that your Better Beginnings program portfolio is ready for your PAS assessor to review.

- Are all items labeled with the PAS item and indicator?
- Are items in numbered sequence (see previous section)?
- Are all items explained and/or highlighted, clearly showing how they relate to the indicator?
- Have you removed all non-essential materials from your program portfolio?
- Are children’s learning/developmental portfolios ready for review?

See pages 8-9 of this Guide for more information about the program review.

**Using the PAS for Program Improvement**

Additional training is available to help you develop policies, procedures and systems that align with the best practices described in the PAS. For information about upcoming trainings, go to the Professional Development Registry Training Opportunities page.

**2.A.2  Strengthening Families webinar**

Find out about the Strengthening Families Initiative by reviewing the Strengthening Families website. Next, view the Strengthening Families webinar video on the Better Beginnings website and complete the webinar quiz. You may also participate in a Strengthening Families workshop. Documentation for this requirement will be a verification of completion from the webinar, or a training certificate.


2.B. Administrator/Staff Qualifications/Professional Development

2.B.1 Registry Membership

The Administrator and teaching staff of a Level 2 center maintain membership in the Professional Development Registry and/or the ADE Registry (Shoebox Registry).

Membership in the Professional Development Registry or the Arkansas Department of Education Registry is an element of professionalism. These two registries record members’ professional development on an individual training transcript.

Each member of the Professional Development Registry is assigned an ID number. Practitioner ID numbers are valid for one year, at which time they must be renewed. Trainer Registry membership is renewed every three years. Specialized trainers renew membership every year.

Renewal reminders are mailed to Registry members.

If staff are not members of the Registry, they may complete an online application or a paper application. Allow four to six weeks after submitting the application to receive your membership card. For assistance, contact the Registry office, 1-888-429-1585.

If a Registry membership card is needed quickly, contact the Registry office, 1-888-429-1585.

Shoebox Registry: For information about the Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Shoebox registry, go to http://www.escweb.net/ar_esc.

2.B.2 Administrator qualifications

Administrators in Level 2 centers meet requirements for Intermediate 1 or higher, including 30 clock hours of training in Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership.

Professional Development Registry members are assigned a level, based on their education and training. The levels are Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced.


Effective administrators have knowledge and skills in both management and early childhood/youth development. Better Beginnings administrator qualifications require evidence of training in both areas.

The administrator must have 30 clock hours or more of training in the Key Content Areas of Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership. You can view and download a copy of the Arkansas Key Content Areas and Core Competencies on the Better Beginnings website, www.ARbetterbeginnings.com.
2.B.3 Staff qualifications

Within the first year of employment, all staff in Level 2 centers meet requirements for Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for Foundation 2 or higher.

Professional Development Registry members are assigned a level, based on their education and training. The levels are Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced.

Requirements for Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 can be reviewed in the Better Beginnings Toolkit, http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit.

New employees who do not meet the Better Beginnings administrator/staff qualifications requirements will be allowed 12 months from their date of hire to meet the required qualifications.

Access to Training Transcript

Staff members should login to their personal data pages and give permission for DCCECE Better Beginnings staff to view their training transcripts. Contact the Registry office for more information, 1-888-429-1585.

2.B.4 Administrator and staff annual professional development

All administrators and teaching staff in Level 2 centers participate annually in 20 clock hours of approved professional development; for administrators, at least 3 clock hours must be in Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership.

All annual professional development must be approved training, registered with the Professional Development Registry or approved by the Arkansas Department of Education. CPR and first aid training can count for up to four hours of professional development annually, if it is approved training.

At least 3 of the 20 clock hours for administrators must be in the Key Content Areas of Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership. You can view and download a copy of the Arkansas Key Content Areas and Core Competencies on the Better Beginnings website, www.ARbetterbeginnings.com.
Examples of professional development topics that meet these requirements are listed below.

[Topics below have been identified as relevant for administrators by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Planning/Management</th>
<th>Early Childhood or Child/Youth Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director's Orientation</td>
<td>Historical and philosophical foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program operations and centers management</td>
<td>Child growth and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff management and human relations</td>
<td>Child observation and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family support</td>
<td>Curriculum and instructional methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational programming</td>
<td>Children with special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and fiscal management</td>
<td>Family and community relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management</td>
<td>Health, safety, and nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisal</td>
<td>Individual and group guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and public relations</td>
<td>Learning environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and advocacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.B.5 Framework Basics training and Developmental Assets training

In Level 2 centers, at least 50% of teaching staff complete Framework Basics training. School-age staff complete Developmental Assets training.

- **Framework Basics—Preschool (90 minutes).** This training is designed for those working with children ages 3-5. Framework Basics—Preschool Direct is offered online monthly (except June and December). Several face-to-face workshops are scheduled during the year. Completion of Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework Handbook training (30-45 clock hours) or Pre-K Framework Handbook training (30 clock hours) meets this requirement.

- **Framework Basics—Infant and Toddler (90 minutes).** This training is designed for those working with children birth to three years old. Framework Basics—Infant and Toddler Direct is offered online monthly (except June and December). Several face-to-face workshops are scheduled during the year. Completion of Infant/Toddler Framework training (16 clock hours) or Wrapping Up Quality (16 clock hours) meets this requirement.

- Registered trainers may contact the Better Beginnings Helpline to request a copy of the facilitator's guide for Framework Basics—Infant and Toddler and/or Framework Basics—Preschool.

- **Developmental Assets Basics (2 clock hours).** This training is designed for those working with children/youth in grades K-12. Developmental Assets Basics is available online and in workshops.

Go to the Professional Development Registry Training Opportunities page to register for these workshops.
2.B.6 Environment rating tool training

In Level 2 centers, all administrators and at least 50% of teaching staff complete an environment rating scale training. If the facility is using the SAPQA or YPQA, school age staff should complete YPQA training.

The environment rating tools (ERS and SAPQA/YPQA) are used to assess program quality (see Better Beginnings requirements 1.D.1, 2.D.1, and 3.D.1.) The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ECERS-R) is used in classrooms serving children ages 2½ years through 5 years. The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ITERS-R) is used in classrooms serving children birth to 30 months old. The School-Age Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) is used by centers serving school-age children.

Participation in ERS training prior to Better Beginnings enrollment meets this requirement. However, if it has been several years since you attended this workshop, you are encouraged to attend an ERS workshop to insure that you have current information.

The School Age Program Quality Assessment is available for grades K-6 and the Youth Program Quality Assessment is for grades 4-12. Programs should use the PQA that best matches the ages served. Centers serving school-age children may choose either the SACERS or the SAPQA/YPQA.

If your center chooses to use the SAPQA/YPQA for its school-age classes, the school age staff should attend Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) training. For more information on SAPQA/YPQA, contact the School Age Coordinator at ASU Childhood Services, 1-888-429-1585.

2.B.7 Nutrition training

The administrator and kitchen manager (if applicable) participate annually in at least two clock hours of training on nutrition for children.

Training on nutrition for children should address nutrition competencies from the Arkansas Key Content Areas and Core Competencies. You can view and download this document on the Better Beginnings website, www.ARbetterbeginnings.com. Nutrition training is offered in workshops throughout the state and in online courses.

This training is required every year.
2.C. Learning Environment

2.C.2 Written daily activity plans for each group

Daily plans must include 1) all areas of development (social and emotional, cognitive, physical, language and literacy), and 2) developmentally appropriate daily physical activities for all children. For school-age programs, plans must include Developmental Assets concepts. (See page 40 of this Guide for resources on physical activities.)

Written daily plans should take into consideration the children’s interests and developmental needs. By following written plans each day, staff are able to provide materials and equipment that will support optimal growth and learning for each child. Basic written plans don’t have to be lengthy or complicated. Examples of learning experiences and activities are found in the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework Handbook and in the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care. Information on activities for school-age children/youth is in the Better Beginnings Toolkit.

Refer to the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environments section) for sample daily plans. http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

2.C.1 Clearly defined interest centers

All classrooms/program spaces in Level 2 centers have a minimum of two clearly defined interest centers.

Interest centers may be called learning centers or interest areas. An interest center contains materials for certain types of play and an appropriate space for such play. Organizing play materials into interest centers supports children’s play and helps children more easily find what they need.

Clearly defined interest centers can easily be identified by observation. Furniture and equipment are often used as boundaries to separate an interest center from the rest of the classroom/program space. Defining the space for each interest center can prevent lost materials and overcrowding and can help children focus on their activities.

The list below gives examples of typical interest centers. Your program may organize some areas differently and may have different names for the centers.

Examples of interest centers in an early childhood setting
Art
Blocks
Dramatic play
Books
Sand
Water
Manipulatives (may be called table games or discovery area)
Science and math (may be called discovery area)
Gross motor
Examples of interest centers for school-age settings
Art
Construction
Drama
Books
Puzzles and Games
Science and Nature

For examples of interest centers and how they may be defined, refer to the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised, item 4; the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised, item 4; and the School-Age Environment Rating Scale, item 4. The School Age Program Quality Assessment and the Youth Program Quality Assessment describe appropriate environments for youth development.

Early Childhood Resources

All About the ECERS-R, chapter 4; All About the ITERS-R, chapter 4

The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, by Dombro, Colker, and Dodge (Teaching Strategies, Inc.)

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, by Dodge, Colker, and Heroman (Teaching Strategies, Inc.)

The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care, by Dodge, Rudick, and Colker (Teaching Strategies, Inc.)

The Complete Learning Center Book: An Illustrated Guide to 32 Different Early Childhood Learning Centers, by Isbell (Gryphon House)

Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments, by Curtis and Carter (Redleaf Press)

School-age Resources

Caring for Children in School-Age Programs: A Competency Based Training – Volume One, by Derry G. Koralek, Roberta L. Newman and Laura J. Colker (Teaching Strategies, Inc.)

Classroom Spaces that Work by Marlynn K. Clayton with Mary Beth Forton (Northeast Foundation for Children)

Building By Design: Creating Democratic Communities in Programs for 10-15 Year-Olds. Distributed by Work/Family Directions, Inc.

2.D. Environmental Assessment

2.D.1 ERS/YPQA

Level 2 centers score an average of 3.00 or higher on the ERS for each classroom reviewed. If the center is using the SAPQA/YPQA, an average score of 3.00 or higher is required.

An ERS/SAPQA/YPQA assessor will contact you to provide a time frame for your environmental assessment. The environmental assessment usually occurs within 60 days of the assessor’s contact, but you will not know the exact date.

The assessor(s) generally will review 1/3 of your classrooms at each age level (1/3 of infant/toddler rooms, 1/3 of preschool rooms, and 1/3 of school-age rooms). Approximately three weeks after the environmental assessment, you will receive a Summary Report via email.


For the ITERS-R and ECERS-R, select Additional Notes for Updated ITERS-R or ECERS-R.

For the FCCERS-R and SACERS, select Additional Notes.

The Additional Notes provide clarification and explanation of rating scale indicators and are included as part of the rating scale when scoring.

Related Resources: Environmental Assessment

All About the ECERS-R and/or All About the ITERS-R provide examples of each rating scale indicator. These books may be checked out from the Arkansas Child Care Resource Center. Call 1-800-445-3316 or 501-682-9699, or order online, http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/resource.html.

Arkansas State University Childhood Services provides technical assistance at no cost to your program to help your program implement the environment rating scale indicators. Contact the Technical Assistance office at Childhood Services, 1-888-429-1585. Download a Technical Assistance Request Form at http://asuchildhoodservices.org.

Staff training on ERS indicators is offered around the state. To find workshops in your area, go to the Training Opportunities page of the Professional Development Registry website.

The School Age Program Quality Assessment (SAPQA) and the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA): SAPQA and YPQA are designed to evaluate the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs. For information, contact the School Age Coordinator at ASU Childhood Services, 1-888-429-1585.
2.E. **Child Health and Development**

2.E.1 *A medical home for children*

Level 2 centers share information with families regarding medical homes for children. It may sound like a building, but a medical home isn’t an actual place. It’s a doctor you or your child go to for check-ups or when you get sick. This doctor is called a “primary care physician,” or PCP. It may seem easier to see any doctor you can when you or your child is sick. But having a medical home—one doctor or clinic you call every time—means you are more likely to get the best care possible. If you see the same doctor every time, that doctor will know what sicknesses and health care you have had. You and the doctor will also get to know each other.

Why are medical homes important? Children who do not have a medical home may lack basic preventive health services. These children are more likely to receive care in an emergency room, and they are less likely to receive needed follow-up care and wrap around services.

What can your center do to support medical homes?

- **Provide information to families.** Ask about the last well-child visit. Talk with families about the importance of a medical home and well-child visits. Share prevention strategies with families.
- **Screen and coordinate care.** Document concerns about a child’s health and development and contact families about these concerns. If the child participates in ARKids First, refer the family to ConnectCare (1-800-275-1131) for help with locating a primary care physician. Provide families with information to take to the physician. Insure that any medical care plans are kept on file and are followed.

The brochure in the Child Health and Development section of the Better Beginnings Toolkit defines a medical home and explains the benefits of a medical home for children. You may choose to use the brochure to share with families the importance of having a medical home.

2.E.2 *Information on stages of child development/youth development*

Level 2 centers share with families information on children’s stages of development.

One aspect of our partnership with families is sharing our knowledge about children’s development. The more we understand about how children grow and develop, the better able we are to support that development. Be sure to share information regarding the continuum of development—stages their children have passed through, where they are now, and developmental stages that lie ahead.


**Strategies for sharing information with families**

- Bulletin board or other display
- Information included in handbook for families
- Information included in monthly newsletters
- Handouts sent home with children
- System for families to check-out books and articles on specific topics
- Information shared during meetings and conferences
3.A. Administration

3.A.1 PAS program review

Level 3 centers have an average score of 4.00 or higher on PAS items 1-21. Items 5 and 6 are rated and scored, but are not included in the PAS average score. Items 21-25 will not be scored; facilities will meet the Better Beginnings requirements for staff qualifications.

See pages 8-9 in this Guide for information about the PAS program review.

See pages 20-21 in this Guide for important information about the Better Beginnings Program Portfolio.

3.A.2 Strengthening Families online self-assessment

Level 3 administrators complete the Strengthening Families online self-assessment for three or more Strategies.

The Strengthening Families approach has identified seven strategies that child care programs can use to support families. The overall goal of Strengthening Families is to prevent child maltreatment by building up families.

To access the self-assessment, go to http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/resources. You will be directed to create an account so that you can return to the self-assessment and action plan.

Form H of your Better Beginnings application asks you to list the date the self-assessment was completed and the three strategies completed.

3.A.3 Strengthening Families action plan

After completing the online self-assessment, Level 3 centers create a Strengthening Families Action Plan and implement at least one action step.

Form H of your Better Beginnings application asks you to attach a copy of your action plan with one action step implemented.
3.B. Administrator/Staff Qualifications/Professional Development

3.B.1 Administrator qualifications

The administrator of a Level 3 center meets the requirements for Intermediate 1 or higher, including at least 45 clock hours in Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership.

Professional Development Registry members are assigned a level, based on their education and training. The levels are Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced.


Effective administrators have knowledge and skills in both management and early childhood/youth development. Better Beginnings administrator qualifications require evidence of training in both areas.

The administrator must have 45 clock hours or more of training in the Key Content Areas of Program Planning/Management and/or Leadership. You can view and download a copy of the Arkansas Key Content Areas and Core Competencies on the Better Beginnings website, www.ARbetterbeginnings.com.

3.B.2 Staff qualifications

For Level 3, all staff meet requirements for Foundation 1 or higher within the first year of employment and at least 50% of teaching staff met requirements for Foundation 3 or higher.

Professional Development Registry members are assigned a level, based on their education and training. The levels are Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced.


New employees who do not meet the Better Beginnings administrator/staff qualifications requirements will be allowed 12 months from their date of hire to meet the required qualifications.

Access to Training Transcript

Staff members should login to their personal data pages and give permission for DCCECE Better Beginnings staff to view their training transcripts. Contact the Registry office for more information, 1-888-429-1585.
3.B.3 Administrator and staff annual professional development

All administrators and teaching staff in a Level 3 center participate annually in 25 clock hours of approved professional development.

See pages 24-25 for more information about annual professional development.

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**Do you have an individual professional development plan?**

You attend workshops, seminars, and conferences. You participate in webinars and online courses. You check your training transcript to make sure everything is listed. You count your hours to be sure you have enough.

But what is the point of all this attention to professional development? If you don’t have a plan, there may not be a point. Without a plan, you may be logging hours, but missing the *development*.

To create your individual professional development plan, think about what you already know and what skills you already have.

- What would you like to know more about?
- What would you like to be able to do even better?

Your answers to these questions can help you set one or two goals for your professional growth.

When you have a goal, you can begin to look for training, videos, books and articles, websites, and mentors to help you move toward your goal. It’s true that you may not “get hours” for all of your professional development activities, such as working with a mentor or reading an article. However, the benefit you are likely to receive is much greater than a certificate. You will gain a better understanding of children and of your work. You will become effective at what you do. You will make a positive difference in the lives of children. And isn’t that the point of professional development?

*For assistance with professional development planning, contact the Professional Development Registry, 1-888-429-1585.*
3.C. Learning Environment

3.C.3 Written daily activity plans

Written daily plans should take into consideration the children’s interests and developmental needs. By following written plans each day, staff are able to provide materials and equipment that will support optimal growth and learning for each child. Basic written plans don’t have to be lengthy or complicated. Examples of learning experiences and activities are found in the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework Handbook and in the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care. Information on activities for school-age children/youth is in the Better Beginnings Toolkit. Refer to the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environments section) for sample daily plans. http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

Daily plans in Level 3 centers must include learning goals for children. These may be called benchmarks, performance indicators, or child learning outcomes. If a program is implementing a curriculum that is listed as approved for ABC programs, the learning goals within that curriculum may be used.

For school-age programs, plans must link to Arkansas Department of Education K-12 frameworks. The following website may be helpful for school-age programs. http://www.arkansased.org/divisions/learning-services/curriculum-and-instruction/resource-materials-for-lesson-plans

3.C.1 Clearly defined interest centers

All classrooms/program spaces in Level 3 centers have a minimum of three clearly defined interest centers.

See pages 27-28 for information about defined interest centers.

3.C.2 Portfolios for each child

Teaching staff in Level 3 centers maintain a learning/developmental portfolio for each child. If you have portfolios for Work Sampling System or other purposes, those portfolios meet this requirement.

A portfolio is organized documentation of a child’s developmental progress and learning. The purpose of a portfolio is to capture moments that demonstrate a child’s growth over time. Staff observe what children are doing and record their observations. Samples of children’s work and photographs of children’s activities are usually included in portfolios, along with staff observations and notes. In a good portfolio, each item should be linked with one or more learning goal or developmental milestone.
Items for each child’s portfolio might be kept in a file folder, a pizza box, or a large envelope. Some centers scan items and store portfolios in their computer, on a disk, or through a web-based service. The container you choose for portfolios must fit into your available storage space and be easy for staff to access.

A good portfolio contains multiple sources and types of documentation. For example, a child’s portfolio might contain samples of the child’s drawing, photos of the child playing in the blocks center, and notes about what the teacher observed during outdoor play. The items in the child’s portfolio should show what the child has done over a period of several months. Refer to the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environment section) for suggestions of types of documentation.

**Related Resources**

“Common Types of Portfolio Documentation” in the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environment section)  
http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

*The Portfolio and Its Use*, by MacDonald (Southern Early Childhood Association)

*Basics of Assessment*, by McAfee (National Association for the Education of Young Children)

“Look What I Did!  Why Portfolio Assessment Works”  

“The Portfolio and Its Use: Developmentally Appropriate Assessment of Young Children”  

“Asessing the Development of Preschoolers”  

**3.C.3 Written curriculum plan**

Level 3 centers develop a current written curriculum plan that provides a brief overview of your curriculum approach.

*Suggested elements of a Better Beginnings curriculum plan are listed below. These elements are not required.*

- Statement of your program’s overall goals for children
- Name and description of curriculum used (may be more than one or may be self-developed)
- Examples of topics of study and/or projects that you have planned in the past year and some that you expect to plan for the coming year
- How your curriculum incorporates investigation, play, child-initiated activities, and adult-guided activities
- How your curriculum builds on children’s prior learning and experiences

Refer to the sample curriculum plan in the in the Better Beginnings Toolkit (Learning Environments section).  
http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit
Your curriculum plan will be unique to your program, reflecting your program’s goals, philosophy, mission, and approach to children’s learning and development. The following samples are provided to illustrate the individuality of curriculum plans.

- Lindgren Child Care Center
  [http://www.stcloudstate.edu/childcare/programs](http://www.stcloudstate.edu/childcare/programs)

- Hilltop Children’s Center
  [http://www.hilltopcc.com/about/overview-learning-at-hilltop](http://www.hilltopcc.com/about/overview-learning-at-hilltop)  
  [Click on Hilltop’s Approach and on Emergent Curriculum]

- Riverfield Country Day School
  [http://www.riverfield.org/academics/pre-school.cfm](http://www.riverfield.org/academics/pre-school.cfm)

3.D. Environmental Assessment

3.D.1 ERS/YPQA

Level 3 centers score an average of 4.00 or higher on the ERS for each classroom reviewed. If the center is using the SAPQA/YPQA, an average score of 4.00 or higher is required.

See page 29 for more information about the ERS, YPQA, and the environmental assessment.
3.E. Child Health and Development

3.E.1 Information on nutrition and physical activity

Level 3 centers share with families information on nutrition and physical activity for children.

Today’s children spend many hours “plugged in.” They watch television, play video games, and log many hours of computer time. As a result, our children are spending less time engaged in physical activities such as bike riding, running, and playing catch.

In addition, many children are living on fast food diets. Convenience foods tend to be higher in fat, salt, and sugar and lower in important nutrients. Poor diet affects the child’s health and ability to learn.

We know that the child’s early experiences set the stage for lifelong habits and behaviors. The combination of inadequate nutrition with limited physical activity has serious long-term consequences for our children and our society.

The solution is simple. Children need appropriate physical activities every day, and they need appropriate servings of nutritious meals and snacks. You are in a unique position to help children and their families develop healthier lifestyles.

The Better Beginnings Toolkit (Child Health and Development section) contains samples of information that can be shared with families.
http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/providers-teachers/providers/centers/toolkit

Related Resources

From the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dccece/Pages/BammProgram.aspx
- “B.A.M.M.M.: Books and Movement—a Magical Mix”, by Brown and Wright

From ASU Childhood Services, http://asuchildhoodservices.org/#!chs_publications
- Helping Young Children Become Physically Active for Life, by Sanders and Courson
- Healthy Choices for Better Beginnings, by White and Courson

Ideas for physical activities: http://www.pecentral.org, click on “Lessons” and select a grade level


Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC), http://www.napsacc.org
ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – CENTER-BASED REQUIREMENTS

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENTS</th>
<th>LEVEL 1</th>
<th>LEVEL 2</th>
<th>LEVEL 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator attends “PAS Basics” training.</td>
<td>2.A.1 A program review is completed by a certified PAS assessor.</td>
<td>3.A.1 The facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on PAS items 1-21 (items 5 and 6 scored, but not included in average).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.A.1 Administrator attends “PAS Basics” training.</td>
<td>2.A.2 Administrator reviews the Strengthening Families website, webinar or receives training in the Strengthening Families Initiative.</td>
<td>3.A.2 Administrator completes Strengthening Families online self-assessment for 3 or more Strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.1 Administrator and teaching staff maintain membership in the TAPP Registry and/or the ADE Registry.</td>
<td>3.A.2 Administrator completes Strengthening Families online self-assessment for 3 or more Strategies.</td>
<td>3.A.3 Facility develops a Strengthening Families action plan and implements at least 1 action step.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.2 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher, including 21 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>3.B.1 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Intermediate 1 or higher, including 45 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>Qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator/Staff Qualifications/Professional Development</td>
<td>1.B.3 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher.</td>
<td>2.B.2 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher, including 30 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>3.B.2 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.B.4 Administrator completes an ERS training.</td>
<td>2.B.3 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 2 or higher.</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.B.5 Administrator completes training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.</td>
<td>2.B.4 All administrators and teaching staff participate annually in 20 clock hours of approved professional development; for administrators, at least 4 clock hours must be in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>3.B.3 All administrators and teaching staff participate annually in 25 clock hours of approved professional development; for administrators, at least 4 clock hours must be in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>Qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.3 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher.</td>
<td>2.B.5 At least 50% of teaching staff complete “Framework Basics” training; school age staff should complete “Developmental Assets Training.”</td>
<td>Qualifications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.
- LEVEL 1 facilities must meet all requirements for LEVEL 1.
- LEVEL 2 facilities must meet all requirements for LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2.
- LEVEL 3 facilities must meet all requirements for LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 and additional requirements as specified.

*Terms: TAPP, ADE, ERS*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LEVEL 1: Must meet all requirements for Level 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 2: Must meet all requirements for Level 1 and Level 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.6 All administrative staff and 50% of teaching staff complete an ERS training; if facility is using YPQA school age staff should complete YPQA training.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.7 Administrator and kitchen manager (if applicable) participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
<td>1.C.1 A developmentally appropriate daily program schedule is posted in each classroom/program area.</td>
<td>2.C.1 All classrooms/program spaces have a minimum of two (2) clearly defined interest centers.</td>
<td>3.C.1 All classrooms/program spaces have a minimum of three (3) clearly defined interest centers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.C.2 Staff develop and implement written daily plans for each group.</td>
<td>2.C.2 Written daily plans for each group include all areas of development as defined in the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework or the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care.</td>
<td>3.C.2 Staff maintain a portfolio for each child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.C.3 Staff plan and implement daily developmentally appropriate physical activities for all children.</td>
<td>3.C.3 Facility develops a current written curriculum plan and daily plans that include learning goals for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>1.D.1 Facility completes a self-evaluation using applicable approved environment rating tools (ERS or YPQA).</td>
<td>2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 3.00 or higher on the ERS for each classroom reviewed; classrooms reviewed with YPQA must score an average of 3.00 or higher.</td>
<td>3.D.1 Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on the ERS for each classroom reviewed; classrooms reviewed with YPQA must score an average of 3.75 or higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Health &amp;</td>
<td>1.E.1 Facility documents distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured children.</td>
<td>2.E.1 Facility shares with families information regarding medical homes for children.</td>
<td>3.E.1 Facility shares with families information on nutrition and physical activity for children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>1.E.2 Facility shares with families information on child development and on children’s health.</td>
<td>2.E.2 Facility shares with families information regarding stages of development for children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.E.3 Any medical and educational care plans involving a child are written and on file, and implementation is documented while maintaining confidentiality.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – FAMILY CHILD CARE REQUIREMENTS**

*All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENTS</th>
<th>LEVEL 1</th>
<th>LEVEL 2</th>
<th>LEVEL 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.A.1 Primary caregiver attends “BAS Basics” training.</td>
<td>2.A.1 A program review is completed by a certified BAS assessor.</td>
<td>3.A.1 Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on BAS items 2-10 (item 2 is scored, but not included in average).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provider/Staff Qualifications/Professional Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.A.2 Primary caregiver reviews Strengthening Families website, webinar, or receives training in the strengthening families initiative.</td>
<td>3.A.2 Primary caregiver completes Strengthening Families online self-assessment for 3 or more strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B.1 Primary and secondary caregivers are members of the TAPP Registry and/or ADE Registry.</td>
<td>2.B.1 All caregivers maintain membership in the TAPP Registry and/or ADE Registry.</td>
<td>3.B.1 Primary caregiver meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher and has an additional 15 clock hours.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B.2 Primary caregiver meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 2 or higher.</td>
<td>2.B.2 Primary caregiver meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher.</td>
<td>3.B.2 Within the first year of employment all secondary caregivers meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of secondary caregivers are at TAPP Foundation 2 or higher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B.3 Primary caregiver completes an ERS training.</td>
<td>2.B.3 Within the first year of employment at least 50% of secondary caregivers meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher.</td>
<td>3.B.3 Primary caregiver participates annually in 25 clock hours of approved professional development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B.4 Primary caregiver completes training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.4 Primary caregiver participates annually in 20 clock hours of approved professional development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B.6 Primary caregiver participates annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children.</td>
<td>2.B.6 Primary caregiver participates annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Environment</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.C.1 A developmentally appropriate daily program schedule is posted in each program area.</td>
<td>2.C.1 Program spaces have a minimum of two (2) clearly defined interest centers.</td>
<td>3.C.1 Program spaces have a minimum of three (3) clearly defined interest centers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMPONENTS</td>
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|                     |                                                                          | Must meet all requirements for Level 1  
Registered facilities must meet licensing ratios                                                             | Facilities must be licensed                                                                        |
|                     |                                                                          | 2.C.2 Written daily plans for each group include all areas of development as defined in the  
Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework or the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care.          | 3.C.2 Caregivers maintain a portfolio for each child.                                                |
|                     |                                                                          | 2.C.3 Caregivers plan and implement daily developmentally appropriate physical activities for all children.  | 3.C.3 Facility develops a current written curriculum plan and daily plans that include learning  
goals for children.                                                                             |
|                     | 1.C.2 Caregivers develop and implement written daily plans for each group.  | 2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 3.00 or higher on the FCCERS.                                            |                                                                                                  |
| Environmental       |                                                                          | 2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on the FCCERS.                                            |                                                                                                  |
| Assessment          | 1.D.1 Facility completes a self-evaluation using the FCCERS.               | 3.D.1 Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on the FCCERS.                                            |                                                                                                  |
| Child Health        |                                                                          |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                  |
| & Development       | 1.E.1 Facility documents distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured children.              | 2.E.1 Facility shares with families information regarding medical homes for children.                     | 3.E.1 Facility shares with families information on nutrition and physical activity for children. |
|                     | 1.E.2 Facility shares with families information on child development and on children’s health.                 | 2.E.2 Facility shares with families information regarding stages of development for children.             |                                                                                                  |
|                     | 1.E.3 Any medical and educational care plans involving a child are written and on file, and implementation is documented while maintaining confidentiality. |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                  |
### ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – SCHOOL-AGE REQUIREMENTS

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

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<tr>
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<th>LEVEL 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Must meet all requirements for Level 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Must meet all requirements for Level 1 and Level 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on PAS items 1-21 (items 5 and 6 scored, but not included in average; items 10 and 11 not scored).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>1.A.1 Administrator attends “PAS Basics” training.</td>
<td>2.A.1 A program review is completed by a certified PAS assessor.</td>
<td>3.A.1 Administrator completes Strengthening Families online self-assessment for 3 or more Strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifications</strong></td>
<td>1.B.1 Administrator and teaching staff maintain membership in the TAPP Registry and/or ADE Registry.</td>
<td>2.B.1 Administrator and teaching staff maintain membership in the TAPP Registry and/or ADE Registry.</td>
<td>3.B.1 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Intermediate 1 or higher, including 45 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.B.2 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher, including 21 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>2.B.2 Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Intermediate 1 or higher, including 30 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>3.B.2 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Intermediate 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.B.3 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher.</td>
<td>2.B.3 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 2 or higher.</td>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>1.B.4 Administrator completes an ERS or YPQA Training.</td>
<td>2.B.4 All administrators and teaching staff participate annually in 20 clock hours of approved professional development; for administrators, at least 4 clock hours must be in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
<td>3.B.3 All administrators and teaching staff participate annually in 25 clock hours of approved professional development; for administrators, at least 4 clock hours must be in program planning/management and/or leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.B.5 Administrator completes training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children/youth.</td>
<td>2.B.5 At least 50% of teaching staff complete “Developmental Assets Basics” training.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPONENTS</td>
<td>LEVEL 1</td>
<td>LEVEL 2</td>
<td>LEVEL 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.B.6 All administrative staff and 50% of teaching staff complete an ERS or YPQA training.</td>
<td>3.C.1 All classrooms/program spaces have a minimum of three (3) clearly defined interest centers if not utilizing single-use spaces. Single use spaces are exempt from this requirement as long as other program spaces are available to allow for other interest center activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
<td>1.C.1 A developmentally appropriate daily program schedule is posted in each classroom/program area.</td>
<td>2.C.1 All classrooms/program spaces have a minimum of two (2) clearly defined interest centers if not utilizing single-use spaces. Single use spaces are exempt from this requirement as long as other program spaces are available to allow for other interest center activities</td>
<td>3.C.2 Staff maintain a portfolio for each child/youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.C.2 Staff develop and implement written daily plans for each group.</td>
<td>2.C.2 Written daily plans for each group include the Developmental Assets concepts.</td>
<td>3.C.3 Facility develops a current written curriculum plan and daily plans that include links to ADE K-12 frameworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Assessment</td>
<td>1.D.1 Facility completes a self-evaluation using an applicable approved environment rating tool (SACERS or YPQA).</td>
<td>2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 3.00 or higher on the SACERS or scores 3.00 or higher on the YPQA for each classroom/program space reviewed.</td>
<td>3.D.1 Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on the SACERS or scores 3.75 or higher on the YPQA for each classroom/program space reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child/Youth Health &amp; Development</td>
<td>1.E.1 Facility documents distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured children/youth.</td>
<td>2.E.1 Facility shares with families information regarding medical homes for children/youth.</td>
<td>3.E.1 Facility shares with families information on nutrition and physical activity for children/youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.E.2 Facility shares with families information on child/youth development and on children’s/youth health.</td>
<td>2.E.2 Facility shares with families information regarding child/youth development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACRONYMS, TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ADE: Arkansas Department of Education

ADE K-12 Frameworks: http://arkansased.org/parents/refrigerator_curriculum.html

administrator: person on-site who is responsible for day-to-day operation of the program

ARKids First: Arkansas health insurance for eligible children up to 18 years old; http://www.arkidsfirst.com

BAS: Business Administration Scale

Better Beginnings: Arkansas’ Quality Rating Improvement System

ERS: Environment Rating Scale(s)

FCCERS: Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale

good standing: is not currently debarred, defunded, excluded, or under adverse licensing action.

medical home: the doctor a child or adult goes to for check-ups or when they get sick. This doctor is called a “primary care physician,” or PCP – the doctor that families visit on a regular basis.

PAS: Program Administration Scale *Disclaimer* - Where an item in PAS conflicts with Arkansas law or rules and regulations promulgated by DCCECE or DHS, the latter will prevail and the PAS item in conflict will not be used. The term “documents needed” in PAS does not mean the facility is required to have those documents. The documents listed are only suggested sources for the information that may be requested during a PAS review.

primary caregiver: person in charge of the family child care program

SACERS: School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale

secondary caregiver: an employee in a family child care program who is supervised by the primary caregiver

staff: employees who work directly with children/youth, and those involved in the planning or implementing of services for children/youth

TAPP: Traveling Arkansas’ Professional Pathways professional development system

  **TAPP Foundation 1:** Practitioner is registered in the TAPP Registry. Practitioner has completed 15 clock hours of TAPP registered early childhood education or after school education training which includes an orientation course.

  **TAPP Foundation 2:** Practitioner is registered in the TAPP Registry. Practitioner has completed 30 clock hours of TAPP registered early childhood education or after school education training.

  **TAPP Foundation 3:** Practitioner is registered in the TAPP Registry. Practitioner has completed 45 clock hours of TAPP registered early childhood education or after school education training or three semester hours of early childhood education or after school care education at an institution of higher education.

  **TAPP Intermediate 1:** Practitioner has completed a CDA credential or 135 clock hours of TAPP registered early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education or nine semester hours of early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education.

  **TAPP Intermediate 2:** Practitioner has completed 18 semester hours of early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education.

  **TAPP Intermediate 3:** Practitioner has completed an associate degree which includes 25 semester hours of early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education or associate degree in a field related to early childhood education.

  teaching staff: employees who are regularly scheduled to work directly with children/youth

YPQA: Youth Program Quality Assessment; this tool has two options. The YPQA (generally suited for 4th grade – 12th grade children) or the Younger Youth Program Quality Assessment (generally suited for kindergarten – 6th grade children).
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education