

GLOSSARY

A

Accreditation: National standards for professional practice that guide programs in continuous quality improvement. The accreditation process is completed through a national accrediting agency.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE): Potentially traumatic events that occur during from birth to age 18.

Assessment Tool: A tool used by programs to evaluate their strengths and areas for growth that is based on research and positive early childhood practice and is approved by Child Care Services.

C

Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD): A University of Oklahoma and Child Care Services (CCS) partnering agency that supports Oklahoma early childhood professionals with professional development, trainer and training approval registry, statewide training calendar. www.cecpd.org

Certificate of Mastery (CoM): A minimum 18-credit-hour certificate in infant/toddler, child development or early childhood education awarded by the community college. www.okhighered.org/scholars

Certified Child Care Professional (CCP): A national credential awarded by the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission, Inc. (NECPA) <https://necpa.net/page/ccp/>

Child Care Center: Programs that operate 30 or more hours per week.

Child Care Services (CCS): A division of the Department of Human Services that ensures minimum standards are maintained for the care and protection of children who are away from their homes, encourages and assists child care programs in meeting maximum standards, and works to ensure sufficient and adequate services for child care. <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs/services/child-care-services/child-care-licensing.html>

Child Development: The study of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social changes that occur in children from conception through adolescence.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential: A national credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition to child care professionals who have successfully completed the CDA assessment process. <https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/>

Child Developmental Assessment: A formal or informal assessment of a child's developmental progress.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): The Child and Adult Care Food Program is a USDA child nutrition program for licensed family child care homes and centers. This federally funded program helps children receive the nutrition they need by reimbursing child care providers for the cost of serving food that meets USDA guidelines.

Child Initiated Play: When children have the freedom to choose what and how they are going to engage in play in the environment.

Child Learning Assessment: A formal or informal assessment based on what the child is learning, using the individual goals and observations from the lesson plans and curriculum taking place in the learning environment.

Children Goals: Written goals created for the individual children in the program based on family input, observation documentation, assessments, and developmental screenings. Goals can be written using the ELGs or the Oklahoma Academic Standards as a guide.

Coaching: Evidence based practices where child care personnel work one-on-one with a coach to work towards improving specific quality teaching practices in their classrooms and programs.

Coaching and Reflection Release Time: Scheduled time out of the classroom away from other job duties, for personnel to have the time and space needed to improve on quality practices. This time can be spent with or without a coach present.

Community Involvement: How the community is represented in the children's learning environment as well as what ways the children are actively involved in the community around them.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI): The process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and weaknesses and then testing, implementing, learning from, and revising solutions. This is as an ongoing commitment to improve the ability to provide high-quality educational services and to use those services to maximize outcomes for all children enrolled in a program.

Continuity of Care Plan: A plan that includes how children will remain with specific personnel throughout the majority of the day and are not routinely moved or assigned to another group or classroom.

Curriculum: A purchased curriculum or a self-developed plan, such as lesson plans, that guide personnel as they develop learning opportunities and goals for the children in their care.

Curriculum Coordinator: A person who develops and evaluates curriculum and/or lesson plans as well as monitors or assists in implementation of curriculum/lesson plans and daily activities for children in the program.

D

Daily Schedule: A written timetable of events that shows what is supposed to happen throughout the day. This is different from a lesson plan.

Day Camps: Programs that operate during school breaks for 12 hours or less per day, serve children 5-year-olds and older who are attending, or have completed kindergarten or above, and use the outdoors as a major program component for at least 50 percent of the daily hours of operation.

Department of Human Services (DHS): An agency of the State of Oklahoma that provides help to individuals and families in need through public assistance programs and managing services for children, seniors, and people with disabilities. Child Care Services is a division of this state agency. <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs.html>

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): Principles and guidelines for best practice in the care and education of young children that is based on research of how children develop and learn. They cover ways to nurture young children's optimal learning and development. DAP considers children's age and individual interests, cultural backgrounds, and developmental needs.

Developmental Screenings: Formal or informal screenings to evaluate how a child is developing over time and whether they are meeting the typical developmental milestones.

Developmental Stages: The typical timeframes in which a child is achieving age specific capabilities. Can also be referred to as developmental milestones.

Direct Care Organization: Any licensed child care program or family child care home that is registered with the Oklahoma Professional Development Registry.

Director's Advanced Training: An administration and management certificate for directors that is no longer in effect. This is recognized as an additional certification option in Star levels four-and-five for Directors that previously completed this certificate.

Director's Leadership Academy: For child care directors, assistant directors, and administrators. The Academy provides leadership skills training and focuses on ways to become a more effective leader to meet the needs of staff and children in their care.

E

Early Head Start: A program sponsored by a Head Start agency or grantee that provides low-income pregnant women and families with children from birth to age three with family-centered services that support child development, parental roles, and self-sufficiency.

Educational Professional Development Plan (EPDP): A written plan that documents an individual's goals to stay current in the knowledge and practices of the field of early childhood education/child development and personal professional growth. An EPDP helps individuals stay organized to meet required training deadlines, plan for and track required training to renew credentials that expire, develop a list of meaningful training, and develop a plan to progress in the field of ECE.

Emergency Plan and Procedure Training: A plan created by the program on how they will train all staff on the emergency plans and procedures set in place in the

Enhancement Activities: Activities that are incorporated throughout the program that promote basic skills and a higher level of thinking such as social studies, theater, cooking lessons, or life skills. These activities should be documented on the lesson plans and are conducted on a routine basis while being rotated based on the needs and interest of the children.

Equipment Inventory: A detailed list of required equipment specific to the number and ages of children in a particular child care setting. An equipment inventory is done by counting equipment and completing the required DHS form. It is completed at least annually and is used as part of the program evaluation process.

Extension of Time to Comply: A written request by a child care owner, designated agent, director, or primary caregiver to ask for additional time to meet Stars criteria.

F

Family Advisory Board: A group of parents who meets with the center director, owner, and other personnel and provides input to help create program goals, activities, and procedures.

Family Conferences: Meetings held in person between a child's teacher and parents where the child's progress, accomplishments, and challenges are discussed, and goals are set together.

Family Contracts: Agreements between parents and a program which includes, but is not limited to, policy concerning hours, fees, payment schedule, vacations, and termination. Contracts are signed and dated by parents.

Family Orientation: The formal process of accepting new families into the program. This includes orientation to the classroom and routine, and for the parent and child to meet the teaching personnel. These processes are included in the program's written parent policies.

Family Partnership: The ways in which the families are serving an active role in the program, such as serving on a parent advisory board, volunteering or conducting visits in the family's home. The program encourages families to be involved in the child's education and development.

Family Resource Area: An area where families can get information about agencies that provide services to families and articles on family-related topics.

Family Surveys: Questionnaires given to parents to obtain their opinions and help the program identify strengths and weaknesses of the program to evaluate their effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and parents. Data collected from surveys are used to set goals to improve the program and learning environment.

Formal professional development: Two or more clock hours from an OPDR-approved training organization or OPDR-approved college credit hours. Formal professional development hours are determined by CECPD on the OPDR website.

H

Head Start Agency or Grantee: A local public or private nonprofit agency approved to operate a Head Start program by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Head Start: A program funded under the Head Start Act and carried out by a Head Start agency or grantee that provides ongoing comprehensive child development services according to the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Health Consultant: A healthcare professional who supports the health, safety, and wellness of the young children, families, and staff in early care and education settings. They foster quality by observing for recommended practices and identifying hazards in the program.

I

Informal professional development: Less than two clock hours from an OPDR-approved training organization, any number of clock hours from a non-approved training organization, and any training from electronic media, such as videos or DVDs. Formal and informal professional development hours are determined by CECPD on the OPDR website.

Individualized: The process of planning and implementing learning experiences that are responsive to each child's interests, strengths, and needs. Teachers reflect on their observations of each child and then plan the most effective ways to support each child's learning and development

Individualized Educational Plans (IEP): A written plan for children ages 3 to 21, focusing on the educational needs of the child. It is a legal document under U.S. law developed for each public school child who needs special education. It is created by a team including the child's parent and school district personnel knowledgeable about the child's needs.

Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP): A written plan for children birth to age 3 (and their families) who are found eligible for early intervention services from Oklahoma's SoonerStart program due to identified developmental delays. The plan is developed by a team including the parent, service coordinator, and professional(s) directly involved in conducting the evaluation or assessment. The IFSP includes the services necessary to enhance the unique developmental needs of an individual child.

Interest Areas: The areas within a learning space arranged so that children can interact with a variety of interesting, age-appropriate materials and participate in a variety of activities in art, reading, dramatic play, blocks, manipulatives, math, and science/nature. Interest areas should also expand to the outdoors area, taking the interest areas outside for the children to explore and experiment.

Invitations to Play: Can also be referred to as invitations to learn, provocations, or makerspaces. They encourage children to learn through exploration by providing materials that “invite them to play” in a creative, non-directive way with no criteria for success. It is a way to set up children’s play and invite them in to a new and different way to spark their interest and expand their thinking with little direction from an adult.

J

Job Description: A written tool that describes the unique and essential duties of a particular job and usually includes the job title, responsibilities, major tasks (what the personnel will be doing), and qualifications (such as education, experience, and specialized skills or knowledge). They help potential personnel decide if they are a good fit with a program’s philosophies and needs and provide a foundation for personnel evaluations.

L

Learning Environment: This can be inside or outside, anywhere the children have an opportunity to engage in learning. The learning environment gives children the space, materials and opportunity to learn and practice new skills.

Learning Opportunities: Any part of the day, structured or unstructured where the children have an opportunity to engage in the environment and activities.

Lesson Plan: Curriculum or lesson plans reflect the program philosophy and goals; are based on child development and appropriate practice; provide for children's various ages, abilities, developmental stages, and special needs; provide for children's physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and social-emotional development; and incorporate music and songs into children's activities at multiple times of the day. Programs implement developmentally appropriate activities in their lesson plans or curriculum aligning with the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines or Oklahoma Academic Standards.

Licensing: Child Care Licensing is managed by Child Care Services (CCS), a division of (DHS). The Child Care Facilities Licensing Act defines those programs required to be licensed. Their website links to licensing requirements, also known as standards, for various types of care. 844-834-8314, <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs/services/child-care-services/child-care-licensing.html>

Licensing Specialists: Child Care Services personnel who monitor to make sure minimum standards are met for the care and protection of children away from their own homes and who assist childcare programs in maintaining the higher quality standards of the Stars program.

Life Skills: Everyday essential skills children need to succeed as they continue to grow, such as focus and self-control, communication, and critical thinking.

M

Master Teacher: An individual working on site, at the program a minimum of 50% of the program's operating hours. Must be at least 18 years of age, have a current OPDL level 4 or higher. The individual must have approved ELG training or receive approved ELG training within 90 calendar days of assuming the role of master teacher. Master teachers are responsible for direct care of children and supporting other teaching personnel and program management with planning and implementing lesson plans, classroom arrangement, planning and implementing family communication and engagement, and providing program development and evaluation feedback.

Mission and/or Vision Statement: Describes the goals of your program, the unique qualities your program provides, and the overall vision or it could be the definition and purpose of your program.

N

National Administrator Credential (NAC): A comprehensive, 45 hours course, and is an award for demonstrated mastery of child care administration skills. It is recognized as a mark of excellence that designates professionals who have demonstrated the knowledge that is essential for managing a child care program.

<https://necpa.net/page/nacoverview/>

National School Lunch Program: A federally assisted meal program. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children in child care programs.

Non-Compliance: Term used to define when a licensing requirement is not met.

O

Oklahoma Academic Standards: The expectations for what students in Oklahoma public schools should know and be able to do by the end of each school year as defined by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. <https://sde.ok.gov/oklahoma-academic-standards>

Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (R&R): A CCS partnering agency that has a network of regional sites throughout Oklahoma and provides services for parents, providers, and communities including child care referrals, provider training, technical assistance, and advocacy. <http://www.oklahomachildcare.org>

Oklahoma Core Competencies: A document which includes what all who work with young children need to know, understand, and be able to do to support children's learning and development. It can be used to assess skills in content areas, plan for professional development, write job descriptions and personnel policies, and evaluate educational options.

Oklahoma Director's Certificate of Completion (DCoC): A minimum 24 credit hour certificate in child development and administration awarded by the Scholars Program and is available for directors, assistant directors, and family child care home providers only. The Scholars program offers a tuition scholarship to eligible providers. 866-343-3881, 405-225-9395, www.okhighered.org/scholars

Oklahoma Director's Certificate of Mastery (DCoM): A 33 credit hour certificate in child development and administration available only through OSU-Oklahoma City and Carl Albert State Colleges. The Scholars program offers a tuition scholarship to eligible directors, assistant directors, and family child care providers for this credential. 866-343-3881, 405-225-9395, www.okhighered.org/scholars

Oklahoma Director's Pathway to Program Administration: A 130 clock hour curriculum that provides training and preparation in the area of business, management, and leadership in child care. The Scholars program offers a tuition scholarship to eligible directors, assistant directors, and family child care providers for this credential. 866-343-3881, 405-225-9395, www.okhighered.org/scholars

Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines (ELG): Guidelines for early childhood teachers to help children with what they need to know and be able to do to experience success in school. There are Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines for Infants, Toddlers and Twos and Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines for Children Ages Three through Five.

Oklahoma Professional Development Ladder (OPDL): The formal process that allows individuals to document their experience and professional development in early care and education. It is maintained on a registry by CECPD. www.cecpd.org

Oklahoma Professional Development Registry (OPDR): An online statewide database that recognizes the professional development (PD) of all individuals working in the early care and education field and is maintained by CECPD. www.cecpd.org

Oklahoma State Department of Health: The department responsible for protecting Oklahomans' health using strategies that prevent disease. 405-426-8000, 800-522-0203, <https://oklahoma.gov/health.html>

Oklahoma State Department of Health Certified Healthy Early Childhood Program: The program is administered by the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Certified Healthy Early Childhood Program recognizes early childhood programs that are working to improve the health of children, families, and staff by providing wellness opportunities and implementing policies that lead to healthier lifestyles.

On-going: Activities conducted routinely throughout the year.

Organizational Structure: The purpose of this structure is to identify the chain of command within a program. Some organizational structures look like pyramids, charts, etc.

Outdoor Interest Areas: Areas outside arranged so that children are able to interact with a variety of interesting, age-appropriate materials and participate in a variety of activities in art, reading, dramatic play, blocks, manipulatives, math, and science/nature. Outdoor interested areas could be permanent or temporary with items added to enhance learning.

Out-of-School Time Program (OST): Child care programs that operate when school is not in session, such as before and after school and school breaks, and serve 3-year-olds and older who are attending or have completed pre-kindergarten or above.

Owner: The individual listed on the ownership documentation for permit or license that is submitted to Child Care Licensing.

P

Parent Handbooks: Inform parents/families of the policies and procedures of the child care program with information that helps develop a partnership between a child's family and child care.

Part Day Program: Child care programs that operate for more than 15, but less than 30 hours per week.

Personnel Evaluation: Used to clearly communicate expectations, document personnel performance, recognize accomplishments, reward outstanding performance, improve personnel performance, develop and motivate personnel, and help achieve the goals of a program. It should utilize the Oklahoma Core Competencies and be based on the personnel's formal job description and be specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound.

Personnel Meetings: Scheduled meetings with all personnel and serve as a way to communicate information, make and relay decisions, build teams, and identify and resolve problems.

Personnel Policies: Policies that are provided to personnel upon employment and when revisions are made. The policies include information on hiring and termination, job duties and responsibilities for each position, professional development requirements including hours required, attendance policy, the program's mission or vision statement, organizational structure, professional and ethical conduct, plans for children's transitions, and continuity of care plans.

Personnel Surveys: Questionnaires given to program personnel to obtain their opinions and help the program identify strengths and weaknesses of the program to evaluate their effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, parents, and personnel.

Physical Activities: Planned physical activities that promote large (gross) motor development. Ideas for developmentally appropriate gross motor activities can be found in the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines. These planned physical activities can be both indoor and outdoor.

Physical Environment Checklist: A tool completed to help programs assess their environments for any potential hazards, both indoors and outdoors, to provide a safe environment for children and personnel.

Planning Time: A scheduled time during the day allowing teachers time outside of the classroom to plan and prepare their lesson plans and set goals for the children and families that they serve.

Probationary Master Teacher Agreement: The written agreement between the director and personnel working towards the master teacher qualifications. The agreement is verified by Licensing and followed up with routinely.

Probationary Master Teacher: A personnel that is appointed by the director, who enters into a written agreement of how the personnel will work towards the master teacher requirements during a 1-year probationary term. The personnel and the director complete and submit a probationary master teacher agreement to Licensing.

Professional Development: Learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families including ongoing experiences to enhance their work.

Professional and Ethical Conduct: Defines the core values of the program and provides guidance for what personnel should do when they encounter conflicting obligations or responsibilities in their work.

Program Evaluation: A systematic and intentional process used to improve program practices and services. Program goals are established and implemented considering information gathered from family and personnel surveys, equipment inventories, physical environment checklists, and assessment tool(s).

Program Goals: Written plans based at minimum on information gathered from the completed equipment inventories, physical environment checklist(s), family and personnel surveys, and CCS approved assessment tool or approved national accreditation assessment tool. They include goals related to the professional development and educational needs of personnel as well as program policy and procedures.

Pyramid Model: An evidence-based model that promotes social emotional development in infants and young children. The model includes high quality professional development and resources as well as coaching to support in strengthening effective practices with children and their families.

Q

Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS): The part of Child Care Services that is responsible for the Stars program, which is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education and school-age settings. The criteria used in QRIS are developed from research and what is universally considered to be quality care.

R

Resiliency Training: Professional development on emotional, cognitive and mental, physical, and/or spiritual resilience.

Routinely: Occurring on a regular and consistent basis and part of the normal operations.

S

Scholars for Excellence in Child Care Program: Child Care Services partnering agency that provides scholarships for eligible child care professionals so they can complete coursework in child development, early childhood, or school-age education. Scholar Coordinators assist and guide child care providers participating in the Scholars Program while they work toward a CDA credential, Certificate of Master, Director's Certificate of Completion, Director's Certificate of Mastery, and/or Associate of Arts or Science degree in CD/ECE. Scholar Coordinators provide support services, technical assistance, and academic and career advising. 866-343-3881, 405-225-9395, www.okhighered.org/scholars

School-Age Certificate of Completion (SACoC): A minimum 18 credit hour certificate in child development and school-age development awarded by the Scholars program. 866-343-3881, 405-225-9395, www.okhighered.org/scholars

Screen Time: The use of electronic media with a screen, such as television (TV), digital video display (DVD), video home system (VHS), video games, tablets and computers. Acceptable uses of screens in child care include e-readers for reading and games involving physical activity participation such as Wii Dance. Television and screen time are not used for children 1 year of age and younger.

Social Emotional Development: The developing capacity of the child to form and maintain close and secure relationships, experience, regulate and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways, and explore the environment and learn- all in the context of family, community and culture.

Stars Outreach Specialist (SOS): Child Care Services personnel who process Star applications, track 2, 3, 4 and 5 Star accredited and Head Start programs, provide professional development and technical assistance, and promote the Stars program.

STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, & Math. These activities aim to teach students innovation, to think critically and use engineering or technology in imaginative designs or creative approaches.

T

Teacher Guided Activities: Learning opportunities where the adult determines the activity, purpose and the length of time spent engaging in the activity.

Technical Assistance (TA): When a person provides information, expertise, instruction, or skills training to help another person learn something new or apply something they have learned.

Transition Times: Times when children change from one activity to another, move between classrooms, experience changes in teaching staff, and transition to a new child care program, Head Start, or school.

Transition Plan: A plan of age-appropriate activities to help children when they change from one activity to another that minimizes wait time.

V

Violation: A term used to define when Star criteria is not met.

Visual and Pictorial Classroom Schedule: Pictures or a combination of pictures and words showing the sequence of events for the day. This can be pictures taken of the children at your program or clipart showing each part of the day.

W

Well Equipped: Having enough equipment in the interest area to provide multiple choices for the children and enough materials so the children can work together.