

# The Quality Connection

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## Beyond the Rule

### *Activities: Indoor and Outdoor Play*

Creating **quality** age-appropriate and functional indoor and outdoor play environments.

#### Highly rated, quality programs:



##### **Schedule and engage in at least:**

- One (1) hour of outdoor play a day for infants.
- One and a half (1.5) hours of outdoor play a day for children ages one-year and older.



##### **Include a variety of materials and equipment.**

Simple, but appropriately challenging toys; soft and child-sized furnishings.

- Foster diverse learning, creativity and various types of play; give children a sense of control.
- Materials should be durable, in good condition and properly cleaned and maintained.



##### **Ensure that suitable indoor and outdoor space is available and accessible to accommodate activities and varying abilities of children and adults.**

- Meals, group time, free play.
- Ramps, handrails, adjustable chair and table space for adults and children with disabilities.

#### In Summary: Indoor & Outdoor Activities:

- Meets the child's basic needs & encourages child engagement.
- Designed to enable staff to facilitate optimum learning for their children.
- An environment that makes parents and guardians feel welcome,

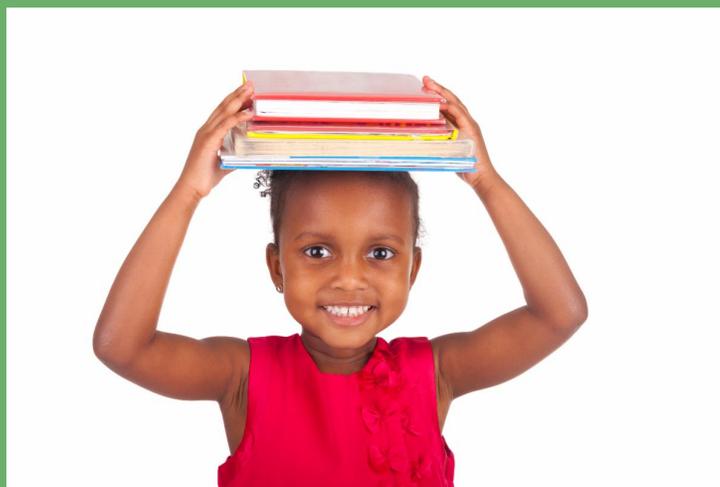
# On the Scale.....

## How Quality is Rated

A high-quality childcare program provides an environment where children feel welcomed, nurtured and engaged. In a high-quality program, positive relationships are promoted and a child's contributions to the community are encouraged and valued.

While specific curriculum can vary from program to program, a high-quality program implements a curriculum that promotes social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive learning and development.

The children's planned activities are linked to curriculum goals that allow them the opportunity to learn through exploration and play, with appropriate materials and toys that support their development.



## BY THE NUMBERS

### *Indoor & Outdoor Play by Age Groups*

#### **INFANTS**

- In the outdoors, provide natural materials such as grass, leaves and nature sounds.
- Allow Infants adequate time on their tummies; include books, musical toys, and activity gyms.
- Older Infants may also enjoy balls, bubbles, tunnels for crawling and toys that are sturdy enough to help them practice standing, such as simple push toys for early walkers.

#### **PRESCHOOL (3's & 4's)**

- Ensure that materials are stored on low, open shelves to keep children reasonably engaged.
- Provide display areas for children's creative work and home/community connections (pictures, etc.)

#### **TODDLERS/ TWO-YEAR-OLDS**

- Provide accessible storage (i.e., cubbies, etc.) for independence.
- Outdoor spaces should allow room for exploration (walking, running, climbing).
- Varied indoor learning centers with materials (books, art, dramatic play, music, etc.)

#### **PRE-K (4's & 5's)**

- At least five (5) interest centers should be used, including a cozy area that is located away from active play.
- Activities allow for varied communication (role play, listening centers, etc.)
- Materials should allow for concrete and expanded learning (books, writing

center, journals, etc.)

- Child-directed activities (free play, etc.) are essential.

### SCHOOL AGE

- Advanced games, activities and opportunities for building of social skills.
- Separate areas for quiet and active play, as well as privacy.
- Allow student-led activities.



### Links to Resources:

- Caring for our Children <https://nrckids.org/CFOC>
- Environmental Rating Scales Institute - <https://www.ersi.info/>
- Community Playthings - <https://www.communityplaythings.com/>