

# Schedules

**Child Care Learning Centers: 591-1-1-.03(3)(g)** - Schedules. A daily schedule for each group shall be developed to reflect routines and activities. Schedules shall be flexible but routinely followed to provide structure. The schedule must be posted in each group's room or area and made available to Parent(s) upon request.

**Family Child Care Learning Homes:** Although Family Child Care Learning Homes are not required to develop and/or to post a daily schedule of children's routines and activities, they are required to plan and provide a variety of daily activities appropriate for the children's chronological ages and developmental levels. Developing and posting a daily schedule is therefore best practice and ensures that a variety of age-appropriate activities are available for children's participation.

## Rule Type: Non-Core Rule

### Intent of the Rule

To provide a structure that ensures a balance of developmentally appropriate activities for children on a daily basis. To facilitate time management for staff and to provide children with a consistent, reliable (yet flexible) pattern of activity. To increase parental awareness of children's activities and to help parents determine if a program is appropriate for their child's needs.

### Clarification

Children feel secure when activities are structured based on their age and developmental level and when activities are routine. Consistent routines send a message to children that their needs will be met in a predictable, stable way. Developing a daily schedule ensures that the day is planned by time and activities, provides the consistency that children need, and helps caregivers support growth in all areas of development by providing a wide range of activities. Flexibility allows staff to vary the schedule to suit the special needs or interests of the children at any given time. Posting the schedule ensures that caregivers and parents are aware of children's routines and activities throughout the day.

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### Indicators

- ✓ A daily schedule for each group shall be developed to reflect routines and activities.
  - Recommendation: Routinely review schedules to ensure they are up-to-date and accurate.
  - Note: Schedules should reflect children's activities during all hours of operation (i.e., from the time the center opens until the time the center closes). Schedules should include a balance of different types of activities (i.e., indoor/outdoor, active/quiet, individual/small group/large group) with less time allotted for teacher-directed activities and more time allotted for activities that children select. Routine care activities (i.e., meals, naps, toileting/diapering) should also be included on schedules.
  - TIP: Additional information regarding schedules (and sample schedules) can be found on the Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning website. (See resources below.)
- ✓ Schedules shall be flexible but routinely followed to provide structure.
  - Note: Flexibility does not indicate a disregard for the routines with which children feel secure. It means that schedules can be modified or adjusted as necessary. Examples of appropriate times to deviate from the schedule include:
    - When children show fatigue or boredom with regularly scheduled activity.
    - When unexpected learning opportunities arise.

- When the majority of the children are hungry or sleepy before the scheduled meal and rest times.
  - When children must be removed from the classroom due to illness or some other emergency.
  - When unfavorable weather conditions affect scheduled outside play times.
- Recommendation: Create separate schedules for different times of the year. For example, during the summer months, children may need outside play times scheduled earlier in the day when temperatures are cooler.
- ✓ The schedule must be posted in each group's room or area and made available to Parent(s) upon request.
  - Note: Schedules should be age-appropriate and individual to each classroom. It is not appropriate to use one schedule in an entire center because children of different ages and abilities will require varying times for different activities, etc.
  - Organizational TIP: Consider providing families with a copy of their child's classroom schedule upon enrollment and whenever the schedule is altered.

## Resources:

Caring for Our Children

<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/2.1.1.1>

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

<http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/SchedulesforInfantToddlerPrograms.pdf>

<http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/SampleInfantSchedule.pdf>

<http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/SampleToddlerSchedule.pdf>

PBS Kids

<http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/providers/little.html>

Child Care – eXtension (A Part of the Cooperative Extension System)

<http://articles.extension.org/pages/25720/establishing-predictable-routines-in-a-child-care-setting>