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## PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

1



### Self-Assessment

## Responsive & Supportive Interactions



MASSACHUSETTS  
**Department of  
Early Education and Care**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK SELF-ASSESSMENT

Program quality touches all areas of a family child care program. Because of this, it is important for family child care educators to regularly assess and refine their program quality practices through a process of continuous quality improvement or CQI.

*Responsive & Supportive Interactions, Environment, Curriculum & Assessment, Business Practices, Leadership & Professional Learning, and Family & Community Engagement* are the domains of program quality that can be measured, assessed, and refined through a process of CQI. The **Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment** is one tool that family child care educators can use to assess program quality in relation to the Program Quality Framework for Family Child Care Programs when engaging in the CQI process.

As with all aspects of CQI, when family child care educators engage with the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment, it is important to think flexibly about the ways the practices can look in their program. To aid family child care educators in their assessment of program quality and engage in CQI goal setting, the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment offers examples of practice to consider. **However, there are many ways that quality can be identified in programs and the examples listed here are one way they can look.** The Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment provides a tool for family child care educators to identify the ways that programs demonstrate their unique quality practices through the lens of the EEC Program Quality Framework.

## How To Use the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment

**To complete the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment family child care educators should:**

- 1. Review** each priority area and its related actions by reading the practices in the left column and the example of **one** way the practice might look in the middle column. The information in these columns will help family child care educators to understand what quality looks like in a family child care program.
- 2. Observe** their program in action and look for ways that the priority area is present in their setting.
- 3. Record** the ways that their program demonstrates this action in the column on the far right. The information in this column will be their unique program data to review, discuss and interpret.
- 4. Discuss** the program's overall reflections for each priority area as a team and assign each priority area a number by entering the appropriate number using the following descriptors into the score box:
  - **3** = We demonstrate this priority area in full and consistently.
  - **2** = We demonstrate this priority area sometimes or partially.
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- 5. Use** the findings from this program self-assessment as a starting point to guide quality improvement goal setting and planning (see Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook for more information).

**PRIORITY AREA 1.A:** Use trauma-informed care practices to meet the needs of all children and families, especially children who are experiencing or have experienced trauma.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Ensure that children feel safe and supported by offering comfort, understanding, and recognition of their feelings.   | <i>Responding to challenging behavior calmly, with understanding, and by helping children to name their feelings.</i>   |                              |
| Respond or attend consistently to children's preferences and needs.   | <i>Asking families about their child's personality, culture, interests, and needs and applying these preferences in daily routines such as at rest time.</i>  |                              |
| Model and encourage children to use self-regulation strategies.   | <i>Teaching children cool-down techniques such as breathing exercises, counting to ten, or taking a break in a safe space.</i>  |                              |
| Manage incidents of challenging behavior through positive and developmentally appropriate guidance, with consideration of children's survival and stress responses. | <i>Interacting with children at eye-level, using a calm, soothing voice to help them label their feelings.</i>  |                              |
| Be aware of and responsive to children's emotional states and reactions with respect and empathy (rather than with judgment).                                       | <i>Having daily check-ins to ask children how they are feeling and validating their emotions with specific feedback such as, "I see that you are upset about dropping your lunch; that is frustrating. How can I help you feel better?"</i> |                              |

Additional Notes:



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**PRIORITY AREA 1.B:** Intentionally create opportunities for the development of positive relationships and a sense of community among children.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Encourage safe behavior and model respectful engagement with children, families, colleagues, and community.   | <i>Being an active listener when children or families are speaking such as nodding, making eye contact, and repeating back what was shared.</i>                   |                              |
| Encourage and recognize children's efforts, persistence, and accomplishment, regardless of the results.   | <i>Talking about the importance of the process of learning rather than emphasizing the product while a child works on an art project.</i>                         |                              |
| Engage with children warmly and enthusiastically (both physical and non-physical).  | <i>Using open, welcoming gestures and facial expressions when speaking with children.</i>   |                              |
| Create opportunities for children to engage with and learn from each other.   | <i>Teaching children to be active listeners with each other by asking children to share about themselves in group circles.</i>                                    |                              |
| Pay attention to children who aren't participating, find out why they are avoiding others or feeling left out, and encourage them to join group activities. | <i>Suggesting small, manageable ways to participate such as completing a favorite puzzle at a table with peers and recognizing children's attempts to engage.</i> |                              |

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**PRIORITY AREA 1.C:** Actively prompt and engage in conversations with children.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Welcome, talk with, listen to, and check in with children regularly.  | <i>Greeting each child by name and asking them a question such as, "How was your weekend?"</i>  |                              |
| Create many opportunities to engage and talk with children, individually and in groups.   | <i>Setting aside time for individual check-ins during the daily routine where each child gets to talk with the educator.</i>  |                              |
| Have ongoing conversations with children about their play, thoughts, or relationships, where you both keep discussing and building on each other's ideas. | <i>Joining children when they are playing and asking open-ended questions about what they are doing.</i>  |                              |
| Provide additional information and ask questions to extend children's learning.   | <i>Adding to children's ideas by saying things such as, "You are working so hard on building that tower so high but it just keeps tipping over! What if we...?"</i> |                              |
| Share information freely and consistently respond to children's questions.  | <i>Answering children's questions fully, using simple language and examples.</i>  |                              |



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**PRIORITY AREA 1.D:** Encourage children’s autonomy, confidence, and willingness to try new things.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Encourage independence in self-care, play, and learning activities, as developmentally appropriate.      | <i>Using visual aids such as picture schedules, charts, pictures and familiar icons that outline steps for routine tasks such as washing hands.</i>                      |                              |
| Provide children with choices and input into their activities and interactions.                          | <i>Allowing children to choose between two options during activities such as using crayons or markers to complete an art project.</i>                                    |                              |
| Scaffold children’s learning through “just enough” help to succeed and/or support to fail and try again. | <i>Asking guiding questions such as, “What have you tried?” or “Have you thought about...?” to help children problem-solve instead of providing immediate solutions.</i> |                              |

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## PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

2



### Self-Assessment

## Curriculum & Assessment



MASSACHUSETTS  
**Department of  
Early Education and Care**

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## How To Use the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment

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5. **Use** the findings from this program self-assessment as a starting point to guide quality improvement goal setting and planning (see Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook for more information).

**PRIORITY AREA 2.A:** If the mission emphasizes “child-led learning and exploration,” prioritize open-ended materials and opportunities for children to make choices, rather than highly structured, teacher-directed activities.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Create learning activities based on key early education and care models, theories, and philosophies, focusing on child development and learning.                               | <i>Preparing learning centers for preschoolers that incorporate sensory materials and hands-on play.</i>   |                              |
| Use plans for learning activities that are developmentally-appropriate and evidence-based, with clear learning goals informed by learning standards.                           | <i>Posting a weekly plan for learning that includes learning goals and appropriate activities to support the children’s goals and interests.</i>   |                              |
| Involve children, families, and the community in the design and implementation of learning activities and curricula that are reflective of their culture and languages.        | <i>Routinely offering opportunities for families to share how they live such as by leading a cooking activity, reading a book from their home, or by teaching the class rules to a new game.</i> |                              |
| Use screening tools to document children’s developmental progress, identify children’s unique strengths and needs (across all areas of development) and inform learning goals. | <i>Working with families to complete a screening (such as Ages and Stages Questionnaire ASQ) at the beginning of each school year.</i>   |                              |
| Use shared and individualized learning goals for children to inform learning activities.   | <i>Regularly observing children and taking notes to plan future learning experiences.</i>  |                              |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Use formative assessments (observation) and documentation to capture children’s learning and development over time.   | Collecting samples of children’s work in a portfolio to show how they have developed over a period of time.  |  |
| Use information and data from observation, documentation, and assessment to inform decisions about instruction, supports for children, and use of learning materials. | Using photographs of children building towers in the block area to decide what learning activities should be planned next to foster this interest. |  |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.B:** Use inclusive practices to meet the strengths and needs of all children, including multilingual learners, children facing challenges, children with disabilities, and children experiencing trauma.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Respect and value children's strengths and differences.                                    | <i>Offering open-ended activities and the choice of multiple materials that allow children to show and use their strengths.</i>  |                              |
| Intentionally address the needs of any children facing challenges.                         | <i>Working with families, specialists, and colleagues to support children facing challenges with specific accommodations.</i>  |                              |
| Use modeling and scaffolding to support children's learning and development at all levels. | <i>Repeating 1-2 step instructions clearly, using visual cues, or offering simple language for children to respond to.</i>   |                              |
| Use learning materials that nurture positive identity and appreciation for diversity.      | <i>Using materials such as crayon/marker colors, wall displays, dramatic play materials, dolls, and puzzles that show different cultures, family structures, abilities, races and ethnicities.</i> |                              |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.C:** Help children develop social-emotional skills, described in the learning standards and as guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Offer activities to engage children in cooperative play.</b>   | <i>Providing materials that encourage cooperative play, sharing of materials, and making a group decision such as blocks, games, and puzzles.</i>                  |                              |
| <b>Guide children on how to handle social situations, make good choices, and build relationships with others.</b> | <i>Acting out situations through role play where children make choices, such as how to share toys or resolve conflicts with words instead of physical actions.</i> |                              |
| <b>Provide opportunities for children to value themselves and others.</b>   | <i>Assigning group “jobs” such as line leader/caboose or timekeeper to help children feel a sense of responsibility.</i>   |                              |
| <b>Teach children to recognize and label feelings and use strategies to self-regulate emotions.</b>               | <i>Reading books that focus on feelings, relationships, and problem-solving and talking out loud about how the characters are dealing with their emotions.</i>     |                              |
| <b>Offer activities that help children with memory and recall.</b>  | <i>Providing games such as “Memory,” “Simon Says,” or singing familiar rhyming songs and fingerplays.</i>  |                              |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Provide opportunities for children to self-regulate through their choice of activities (independent vs. group) and practice impulse control.</b> | <i>In times of trauma or stress, offering simple choices like, “Do you want to play with the blocks or the puzzle?” or creating a quiet space where children can go to relax, manage their emotions, and choose items such as comforting soft toys, and calming pictures.</i> |  |
| <b>Integrate social-emotional learning across activities and interactions.</b>  | <i>Modeling thinking aloud when solving a problem or being patient during activities throughout the day.</i>  |  |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.D:** Help children develop language and literacy skills as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Offer activities to engage children in singing, storytelling, and rhyming, to encourage play with language and sounds of language.  | <i>Using finger plays, songs, and rhyming games during transitions.</i>  |                              |
| Provide activities that help children improve their speaking, understanding, and listening skills.  | <i>Conducting a routine during the daily circle time such as "All About..." where children can share stories, answer questions, and listen to others.</i>      |                              |
| Offer both guided and free-play activities that help children build phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, knowledge of letters and sounds, and emergent writing.           | <i>Clapping out syllables in children's names, playing letter sound-matching games, and exploring beginning sounds of words with picture cards or objects.</i> |                              |
| Read aloud to children from a variety of books using interactive strategies to spark their imagination, help them learn about the world, show how words and pictures work together. | <i>Using interactive reading strategies such as picture walks, asking questions, summarizing, and predicting when reading aloud to children.</i>               |                              |
| Use strategies that help multilingual learners and native English-speakers with language and reading.   | <i>Using props, puppets, and expressive voices during storytelling and read-alouds.</i>  |                              |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.E:** Help children develop knowledge and skills in mathematics as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Provide learning activities to support math thinking, reasoning, language, and problem-solving.                                       | <i>Using daily routines such as snack time as an opportunity for counting and comparing, “How many crackers do you have?” “James has 3 crackers and Sally has 2 crackers. Who has more crackers?”.</i> |                              |
| Provide learning activities that include counting, recognizing numbers, how numbers relate (more/less), and addition and subtraction. | <i>Incorporating math songs with visual aids such as “Five Little Ducks,” “Ten in the Bed,” “One, Two, Buckle My Shoe”.</i>  |                              |
| Provide learning activities that include recognizing and naming shapes and understanding spatial relations (above, below, next to).   | <i>Looking for real-life examples of shapes like circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles in the indoor and outdoor environments.</i>   |                              |
| Provide learning activities that include recognizing and making patterns, sorting, and classifying.                                   | <i>Providing sets of items such as blocks, beads, or other manipulatives and set up activities that encourage sorting, or pattern making.</i>  |                              |
| Provide learning activities that include comparing sizes and making measurements.   | <i>Providing a sensory table with measuring cups, spoons, and containers of various sizes for filling and dumping.</i>   |                              |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Integrate math learning across activities and interactions. | Assigning group jobs that involve counting or sorting, such as passing out materials or counting attendance.   |  |
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**PRIORITY AREA 2.F:** Help children develop knowledge and skills in scientific inquiry as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care  | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Offer learning activities that extend children’s learning and help them develop conceptual thinking skills.              | <i>Prompting children to sort things by their features, such as sorting toy animals by body parts, habitat, diet, or movement.</i>  |                              |
| Provide activities that spark children’s curiosity and help them make and test predictions.                              | <i>Setting up hands-on science stations with a question prompting children to make a prediction, such as a water table with objects that sink and float, “Which objects will sink? Which will float?”.</i>                        |                              |
| Provide learning activities that help children make connections to prior learning and teach new science ideas and words. | <i>Incorporating scientific terms into everyday conversation, using language like “observe,” “experiment,” “predict,” or “construct” during activities throughout the day.</i>  |                              |
| Provide learning activities that teach about plant and animal life, the human body, and the world around them.           | <i>Prompting children to document scientific observations (daily weather observations, how their seed has grown from week to week, or tracking their own height throughout the year) through writing and drawing in journals.</i> |                              |
| Integrate science learning across activities and interactions.   | <i>Asking simple, open-ended questions to encourage exploration and problem solving throughout the day.</i>   |                              |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.G:** Help children develop knowledge and skills in understanding society and culture as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Provide opportunities for children to learn about people and how they live.</b>   | <i>Encouraging children to learn and ask questions about the people in and out of their community and how they live now and in the past.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Offer learning activities that reflect children's real lives and interests.</b>   | <i>Including pictures of children and their families in room displays and asking children questions such as, "What is your favorite food at home?" "What is your favorite holiday that you celebrate with your family?"</i> |                              |
| <b>Offer learning activities that help children build awareness of the world around them, including different cultures and places.</b> | <i>Reading books about different cultures and locations in the world and talking about what you see or what may be missing.</i>   |                              |
| <b>Integrate learning about society and culture across activities and interactions.</b>  | <i>Providing both old and new objects (an old telephone vs. a smartphone or a typewriter and keyboard) for dramatic play, and discuss how these objects have changed over time.</i>   |                              |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.H:** Help children develop fine and gross motor skills as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop age-appropriate gross motor skills, body awareness, and physical movement.   | <i>Organizing indoor and outdoor spaces to include places to safely climb, roll, sit up, lie down, jump over, or weave through.</i>  |                              |
| Provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop age-appropriate fine motor skills (especially related to writing) through planned activities, free play, daily routines, and self-help skills. | <i>Providing various activities that encourage children to use the small muscles in their hands such as using play dough, picking up smaller objects, and holding mark-making tools such as crayons and paint brushes.</i> |                              |
| Integrate opportunities to practice fine and gross motor skills across activities and interactions.   | <i>Providing opportunities to practice with buttons, zippers, and snaps such as busy boards on a wall, or encouraging older children to zip and button their own jackets.</i>  |                              |

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**PRIORITY AREA 2.I:** Helping children develop knowledge and skills in the arts as described in the learning standards and guided by an intentional curriculum plan.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Provide learning activities that allow children to express themselves through a variety of ways (i.e., visual arts, music, movement and dance, and dramatic and imaginative play). | <i>Using puppets, musical instruments, or various art supplies and media to express feelings and tell stories.</i>   |                              |
| Encourage children to discuss their own art and others' art, emphasizing the creative process rather than just the final result.   | <i>Asking open-ended questions such as, "Can you tell me about your art?" instead of asking "What did you make?" or "What is this?"</i>  |                              |
| Integrate the arts across activities and interactions.   | <i>Providing art activities that connect to what children are learning about in other curriculum areas such as drawing pictures of the stages of a growing plant they planted from a seed.</i> |                              |

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## PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

3



### Self-Assessment

## Family and Community Engagement

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### **PRIORITY AREA 3.A:** Proactively communicate with families.

| <b>Family Child Care Educators</b>   | <b>One way this can look</b>   | <b>How this looks in my program</b> |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Build and maintain mutual relationships with families.</b>  | <i>Using surveys or frequent discussions to learn about each family's values, languages, and needs.</i>                                      |                                     |
| <b>Engage families in discussions about their children's progress.</b>                                     | <i>Involving families in goal-setting for their child by sharing observations and data at family/teacher conferences.</i>                    |                                     |
| <b>Help prepare families for their children's ongoing growth, development, and future transitions.</b>     | <i>Providing accessible resources on child development, and future milestones and transitions with families to help them prepare.</i>        |                                     |
| <b>Invite families to share about their traditions, cultural values, home language, and experiences.</b>   | <i>Inviting families to share cultural traditions through storytelling, recipes, music, or projects.</i>                                     |                                     |
| <b>Support families by identifying additional supports, resources, and services that might be helpful.</b> | <i>Providing a family resource center with information regarding additional support services and resources outside the program entrance.</i> |                                     |



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**PRIORITY AREA 3.B:** Show respect for families.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Use strategies appropriate to each family when communicating, including language and format, and showing sensitivity to families facing challenges. | <i>Asking families for their preferred communication methods and offering translated materials such as a family newsletter.</i>   |                              |
| Adapt children’s goals, learning activities, and supports based on family input.  | <i>Involving families in setting goals for their children based on their values, home practices, and interests and incorporating these into daily plans and routines.</i> |                              |

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## PRIORITY AREA 3.C: Engage with the community.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Establish and maintain relationships with agencies and institutions that can support the program in achieving its goals.           | <i>Maintaining regular communication with partners via meetings and updates or by inviting them to serve on the program advisory council.</i>  |                              |
| Establish and maintain relationships with social service providers in the community and help families to access these services.    | <i>Identifying local agencies and organizations that align with program goals and sharing this information in a family resource center.</i>  |                              |
| Advocate for the needs of the program and its families in the community among service agencies and local government organizations. | <i>Participating in advocacy campaigns or information sessions to share the importance of supporting early childhood education.</i>  |                              |
| Stay informed about changes in policies related to early education and care and related family services.                           | <i>Joining early childhood education networks such as National Association for the Education of Young Children and other professional resources to stay informed on current practices.</i> |                              |
| Cooperate on neighborhood interests and needs.   | <i>Collaborating with local agencies to address neighborhood issues such as access to parks, safe transportation, or family-friendly spaces.</i>   |                              |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Partner with local businesses and organizations to develop community-based learning experiences for children. | Collaborating with local businesses such as local farms, museums, or stores to establish field trips, guest speakers, and other learning activities for children.  |  |
| Additional Notes:   |  |  |
| <div><div></div><div>SCORE</div></div>  | <div>3 = We demonstrate this priority area in full and consistently.</div> <div>2 = We demonstrate this priority area sometimes or partially.</div> <div>1 = We do not demonstrate this priority area yet.</div> |  |



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## PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

4



### Self-Assessment

## Environment



MASSACHUSETTS  
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Early Education and Care**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK SELF-ASSESSMENT

Program quality touches all areas of a family child care program. Because of this, it is important for family child care educators to regularly assess and refine their program quality practices through a process of continuous quality improvement or CQI.

*Responsive & Supportive Interactions, Environment, Curriculum & Assessment, Business Practices, Leadership & Professional Learning, and Family & Community Engagement* are the domains of program quality that can be measured, assessed, and refined through a process of CQI. The **Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment** is one tool that family child care educators can use to assess program quality in relation to the Program Quality Framework for Family Child Care Programs when engaging in the CQI process.

As with all aspects of CQI, when family child care educators engage with the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment, it is important to think flexibly about the ways the practices can look in their program. To aid family child care educators in their assessment of program quality and engage in CQI goal setting, the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment offers examples of practice to consider. **However, there are many ways that quality can be identified in programs and the examples listed here are one way they can look.** The Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment provides a tool for family child care educators to identify the ways that programs demonstrate their unique quality practices through the lens of the EEC Program Quality Framework.

## How To Use the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment

**To complete the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment family child care educators should:**

- 1. Review** each priority area and its related actions by reading the practices in the left column and the example of **one** way the practice might look in the middle column. The information in these columns will help family child care educators to understand what quality looks like in a family child care program.
- 2. Observe** their program in action and look for ways that the priority area is present in their setting.
- 3. Record** the ways that their program demonstrates this action in the column on the far right. The information in this column will be their unique program data to review, discuss and interpret.
- 4. Discuss** the program's overall reflections for each priority area as a team and assign each priority area a number by entering the appropriate number using the following descriptors into the score box:
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  - **2** = We demonstrate this priority area sometimes or partially.
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- 5. Use** the findings from this program self-assessment as a starting point to guide quality improvement goal setting and planning (see Continuous Quality Improvement Playbook for more information).

**PRIORITY AREA 4.A:** Manage a physical environment that promotes all children’s learning, growth, development, health, and safety.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Make sure the environment is safe and appropriate for children's health and safety, including ease of supervision, preventing access to dangerous materials, and reducing risks for children.</b> | <i>Ensuring toys and materials are safe and suitable for the age group such as avoiding small parts that could be choking hazards for younger children.</i>    |                              |
| <b>Ensure that the environment is set up to allow children to explore, discover, and engage safely and freely.</b>   | <i>Planning for children’s gross motor needs by setting up an area with a soft climber to encourage safe climbing and exploration.</i>                         |                              |
| <b>Make the physical environment accessible and engaging for all children as they grow and develop.</b>  | <i>Organizing materials so that they are accessible for children to independently access such as placing art supplies at eye level and with visual labels.</i> |                              |
| <b>Select and refresh learning materials to reflect children’s interests, identities, learning needs, and cultural backgrounds.</b>  | <i>Regularly rotating diverse learning materials and activity stations based on children’s evolving interests and needs.</i>                                   |                              |
| <b>Monitor and supervise children’s safety.</b>  | <i>Arranging furniture so that it does not block the line of sight to ensure children are always within view.</i>  |                              |



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| Demonstrate care for the environment and help children become environmentally responsible. | Modeling how to care for the environment for children by having a consistent routine for disposing of trash, and cleaning up materials together.   |  |
|  |  |  |
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**PRIORITY AREA 4.B:** Use consistent routines and flexible schedules.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Use verbal and nonverbal cues and reminders about routines and expectations.                                      | <i>Playing a familiar song when it is time to clean up the room, or using cues like timers, clapping, or songs to signal transitions.</i>                               |                              |
| Set a consistent schedule with efficient transitions and adequate time to engage in learning activities and play. | <i>Displaying a visual schedule with pictures for each part of the day and referencing this schedule frequently to remind children of the routine and expectations.</i> |                              |
| Provide opportunities for eating, toileting, and sleeping that meet each child's needs.                           | <i>Creating a safe, calming environment for rest that is separate from more active parts of the learning environment.</i>   |                              |

**Additional Notes:**



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**PRIORITY AREA 4.C:** Follow a planned schedule that includes a balanced variety of different types of learning materials and activities.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Offer learning activities that can be done independently or in various-sized groups.</b> | <i>Setting up activity choices that offer open-ended participation such as reading a book independently or with a partner, or building a block tower alone or with a small group.</i> |                              |
| <b>Provide both indoor and outdoor learning activities.</b>                                 | <i>Displaying and adhering to a visual schedule for children that shows indoor learning time and outdoor learning time every day.</i>   |                              |
| <b>Offer a balance of both quiet and active learning activities.</b>                        | <i>Creating quiet areas such as a reading corner, separate from active zones such as a gross motor climbing structure.</i>  |                              |

**Additional Notes:**



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## PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

5



### Self-Assessment

## Leadership and Professional Learning

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Early Education and Care**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK SELF-ASSESSMENT

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## How To Use the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment

**To complete the Program Quality Framework Self-Assessment family child care educators should:**

1. **Review** each priority area and its related actions by reading the practices in the left column and the example of **one** way the practice might look in the middle column. The information in these columns will help family child care educators to understand what quality looks like in a family child care program.
2. **Observe** their program in action and look for ways that the priority area is present in their setting.
3. **Record** the ways that their program demonstrates this action in the column on the far right. The information in this column will be their unique program data to review, discuss and interpret.
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**PRIORITY AREA 5.A:** Act ethically and responsibly as caretakers of children.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Demonstrate good judgment and ability to handle emergency situations, mandated reporting, or other incidents appropriately.  | <i>Modeling calm completion of tasks during emergencies.</i>  |                              |
| Follow practical, ethical, and legal considerations and professional guidelines in sharing information (protecting children's privacy), making referrals, communicating with colleagues, and supporting young children with specific learning needs. | <i>When discussing a child with a specialist, share only necessary information, ensuring compliance with privacy laws.</i>  |                              |
| Create and implement policies and procedures that protect all staff, children, and families.   | <i>Developing, sharing, and practicing non-emergency and emergency policies and procedures such as fire drills or routinely counting children in care with children.</i>      |                              |
| Use child assessments appropriately to make referrals or access resources.   | <i>Working with families to review screening data such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) to make decisions about child referrals for special education services.</i> |                              |

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|--|--|--|
| Monitor and manage special education requirements.   | Ensuring that an Individualized Family Service Plan or Individualized Education Program are followed with appropriate accommodations in place by asking questions for clarification. |  |
| Continually reflect on and seek to address the impacts of structural racism and implicit bias. | Regularly assessing interactions with children to ensure fair treatment and address any biases in expectations or discipline methods.  |  |

Additional Notes:



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**PRIORITY AREA 5.B:** Pursue improvement and professional growth and engage in reflective practice.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Engage in education, professional development, and self-reflection to stay updated on research and best practices, promote continuous learning, and improve practices.   | <i>Regularly attending workshops, community of practice groups, and conferences focused on the latest research in early childhood education.</i>               |                              |
| Pursue professional development in response to the unique needs/interests of children and families.  | <i>Frequently assessing the needs of your community and filling any gaps in knowledge/skills that may be necessary to meet the needs of children/families.</i> |                              |
| Engage in a professional community of educators as part of ongoing professional learning and continuous improvement that helps to build collaborative professional relationships and supports reflective practice. | <i>Meeting regularly with other program leaders in the community to share experiences, resources, and challenges and reflect on ways to improve practice.</i>  |                              |
| Ensure that the program meets licensing regulations; responds to non-compliances with a plan on how to come into compliance, and improve the quality of practice.  | <i>Regularly reviewing licensing requirements and conducting an internal audit.</i>  |                              |
| Work collaboratively with educators, families, EEC, other agencies, and community partners to improve program quality.   | <i>Using program data such as the results of a family survey to establish goals for improvement.</i>   |                              |

Additional Notes:



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## PROGRAM QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

CATEGORY

6



### Self-Assessment

## Business Practices



MASSACHUSETTS  
**Department of  
Early Education and Care**

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## PRIORITY AREA 6.A: Lead with a mission/vision.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look  | How this looks in my program |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Develop a written mission/ vision statement along with colleagues (when applicable) that communicates the program's core values and unique program features, philosophy, goals and objectives, ages of children served, and the services provided.</b> | <i>Developing a clear written mission statement in partnership with families.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Guide employees in implementing the program's mission/vision. (For educators with assistants).</b>   | <i>Engaging in discussions/ reflections on ways to integrate the program's mission into daily practice and planning.</i> |                              |
| <b>Engage families and colleagues (when applicable) in regularly reviewing and updating the mission/vision statement.</b>   | <i>Setting aside time to reflect on the mission statement through conversations with families and revise as needed.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Consider the program's mission/vision statement when making decisions.</b>   | <i>Reflecting on alignment to the program's mission when making plans to engage with a new curriculum.</i>               |                              |

Additional Notes:



SCORE

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**PRIORITY AREA 6.B:** Establish clear, consistent, and strategic policies/procedures.

| Family Child Care Educators   | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Develop a projected one-year operating budget that estimates income and expenses.</b>  | <i>Developing a projected one year budget for revenue and expenses that reflects data on enrollment projections, grants, salaries, materials, and facility costs.</i>   |                              |
| <b>Monitor the budget regularly to ensure adequate cash flow and revenue.</b>   | <i>Using budget tracking software to monitor actual monthly income and expenses against projections.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Engage in a needs assessment and goal-setting process as part of the program's annual budget planning, including forecasting at least two years into the future.</b> | <i>Including budget assessment and planning as part of the program's goal-setting process for continuous quality improvement.</i>   |                              |
| <b>Establish a formal enrollment process.</b>   | <i>Establishing clear and consistent enrollment procedures such as completing a tour with a program leader, completing enrollment paperwork, and reviewing the program handbook before the child's first day.</i> |                              |
| <b>Provide families with an up-to-date handbook that includes the written policies/procedures.</b>  | <i>Providing a comprehensive handbook that is posted on the program's family board and also available digitally.</i>  |                              |



## PRIORITY AREA 6.B *continued*

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Develop and implement a formal marketing and outreach plan to enroll families and meet revenue targets.</b>  | <i>Using several platforms to market the program such as social media, attending community events to share information, or email blasts.</i>                        |  |
| <b>Review the effectiveness of marketing and outreach efforts annually to meet program enrollment and revenue goals and community needs.</b>  | <i>Adjusting marketing strategies to address vacancies in enrollment such as targeting families with preschool-aged children to fill available preschool slots.</i> |  |
| <b>Identify and remove barriers to enrollment for marginalized and underserved groups.</b>  | <i>Providing enrollment materials in the languages that are most prevalent in your community.</i>   |  |
| <b>Ensure that the program meets all EEC requirements for securely storing budget and financial reports, personnel records and information, and key family and child-level records.</b> | <i>Conducting regular program audits to ensure the security, completeness, and accuracy of financial records and staff/child/family data.</i>                       |  |
| <b>Conduct regular data system quality-control checks to confirm financial data and staff/student records are complete and accurate.</b>  | <i>Creating a protocol for monthly quality control of data to ensure accuracy of financial records.</i>   |  |

Additional Notes:



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## PRIORITY AREA 6.C: Establish a positive working environment.

| Family Child Care Educators  | One way this can look   | How this looks in my program |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Provide personnel policies to each employee, including job descriptions for all paid positions, the salary range for their position, and the procedure for determining the salary for their position. (For providers with assistants)</b> | <i>Reviewing personnel policies during the onboarding of each new staff member and annually with all staff at a staff meeting.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Establish a process to annually review the compensation plan, considering staff credentials, education, and experience levels. (For providers with assistants)</b>  | <i>Reviewing the program's compensation plan annually with each staff member during a feedback and reflection session of their annual goals.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Review, reflect, and adjust the program's strategy annually for recruiting and retaining qualified staff, using feedback from educators. (For providers with assistants)</b>  | <i>Conducting annual staff satisfaction surveys and exit surveys for those who terminate employment, and analyzing those results to improve future staff retention and recruitment.</i> |                              |
| <b>Coordinate staffing arrangements to ensure that children have continuity of educators to support their learning and development. (For providers with assistants)</b>  | <i>Creating a consistent and routine staff schedule in each group in which the same educators are scheduled daily.</i>  |                              |
| <b>Establish a safe, updated, and healthy physical work environment and facilities that meet the needs of adults.</b>  | <i>Developing a maintenance schedule and reporting system to address repairs promptly to support a productive work environment.</i>   |                              |

## PRIORITY AREA 6.C *continued*

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Get feedback from educators annually on the working environment and workplace policies and practices.</b> <i>(For providers with assistants)</i></p> | <p><i>Developing anonymous staff surveys to gather feedback on workplace policies, practices, and the overall work environment.</i></p>                                       |  |
| <p><b>Promote teamwork and respect through your interactions with colleagues, valuing diverse perspectives.</b> <i>(For providers with assistants)</i></p> | <p><i>Taking time each day to interact with staff members by visiting learning areas and engaging in their group's culture and daily routines.</i></p>                        |  |
| <p><b>Promote educators' health and wellness (physical, emotional, social).</b> <i>(For providers with assistants)</i></p>                                 | <p><i>Encouraging staff to take care of their physical and mental health needs, such as taking breaks or taking advantage of physical health/mental health resources.</i></p> |  |

### Additional Notes:



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