

Standard 3: NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Teaching

Program Standard: The program uses developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child’s learning and development in the context of the program’s curriculum goals.

Rationale: Teaching staff (see the box “Definition of Teaching staff and Teacher”) who purposefully use multiple instructional approaches optimize children’s opportunities for learning. These approaches include strategies that range from structured to unstructured and from adult-directed to child-directed. Children bring to learning environments different backgrounds, interests, experiences, learning styles, needs, and capacities. Teachers’ consideration of these differences when selecting and implementing instructional approaches helps all children succeed. Instructional approaches also differ in their effectiveness for teaching different elements of curriculum and learning. For a program to address the complexity inherent in any teaching-learning situation, it must use a variety of effective instructional approaches. In classrooms and groups that include teacher assistants or teacher aides and specialized teaching and support staff, the expectation is that these teaching staff work as a team. Whether one teacher works alone or whether a team works together, the instructional approach creates a teaching environment that supports children’s positive learning and development across all areas.

Definition of Teaching staff and Teacher: Throughout the accreditation criteria and self-study materials, teaching staff is used to refer to all members of the teaching team, including all teachers, teaching assistants and assistant teachers. Teacher refers to the individual assuming primary teaching responsibility.

3.A. Designing Enriched Learning Environments

3.A.01 U I T P K

Teaching staff, program staff, or both work as a team to implement daily teaching and learning activities, including Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and other individual plans as needed.

3.A.02 U I T P K

Teachers design an environment that protects children's health and safety at all times.

3.A.03 U I T P K

Teaching staff support children's needs for physical movement, sensory stimulation, fresh air, rest, and nourishment.

3.A.04 U I T P K

Teachers organize space and select materials in all content and developmental areas to stimulate exploration, experimentation, discovery and conceptual learning.

3.A.05 T P K

Teachers work to prevent challenging or disruptive behaviors through

- environmental design.
- schedules that meet the needs and abilities of children.
- effective transitions.
- engaging activities.

3.A.06 T P K

Teachers create classroom displays that help children reflect on and extend their learning. They ensure that children's recent works predominate in classroom displays (e.g., art, emergent writing, graphic representation, and three-dimensional creations) and that some displays are at children's eye level.

3.A.07 T P K

Teaching staff and children work together to arrange classroom materials in predictable ways so children know where to find things and where to put them away.

3.B. Creating Caring Communities for Learning

3.B.01 U I T P K

Teaching staff's daily interactions demonstrate their knowledge of:

- the children they teach.
- the children's families.
- the social, linguistic, and cultural context in which the children live.

3.B.02 U I T P K

Teaching staff create and maintain a setting in which children of differing abilities can progress, with guidance, toward increasing levels of autonomy, responsibility, and empathy.

3.B.03 U I T P K

Teaching staff develop individual relationships with children by providing care that is responsive attentive, consistent, comforting, supportive, and culturally sensitive.

3.B.04 U I T P K

Teaching staff are active in identifying and countering any teaching practices, curriculum approaches, or materials that are degrading with respect to gender, sexual orientation, age, language, ability, race, religion, family structure, background, or culture.

3.B.05 U I T P K

Teachers help individual children learn socially appropriate behavior by providing guidance that is consistent with the child's level of development.

3.B.06 U I T P K

Teachers manage behavior and implement classroom rules and expectations in a manner that is consistent and predictable.

3.B.07 U I T P K

Teachers' responses to challenging, unpredictable, or unusual behavior are informed by their knowledge of children's home and classroom life.

3.B.08 U I T P K

Teachers notice patterns in children's challenging behaviors to provide thoughtful, consistent, and individualized responses.

3.B.09 I

Teaching staff create a climate of respect for infants by looking for as well as listening and responding to verbal and nonverbal cues.

3.B.10 I T

Teaching staff individualize routine care (e.g., learning to use the toilet and to feed oneself) by incorporating family practices whenever possible and by respecting the home culture and the family's preferred language.

3.B.11 T P K

Teaching staff create a climate of mutual respect for children by being interested in their ideas, experiences, and products.

3.B.12 T P K

Teachers address challenging behavior by

- assessing the function of the child's behavior.
- convening families and professionals to develop individualized plans to address behavior.
- using positive behavior support strategies.

3.B.13 P K

Teachers provide children opportunities to affect what happens in the classroom through participation in decision making about issues concerning classroom behavior, plans, and activities.

3.C. Supervising Children

3.C.01 U I T P K

Teaching staff supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible.

3.C.02 I T

Teaching staff supervise infants and toddlers/twos by sight and sound at all times. (This is a required criterion.)

3.C.03 I T

When infants and toddlers/twos are sleeping, mirrors, video, or sound monitors may be used to augment supervision in sleeping areas, but such monitors may not be relied on in lieu of direct visual and auditory supervision.

- Sides of cribs are checked to ensure that they are up and locked.
- Teachers, assistant teachers, or teacher aides are aware of, and positioned so they can hear and see, any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, especially when they are actively engaged with children who are awake.

3.C.04 P K

Teaching staff supervise children primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., those who can use the toilet independently, who are in a library area, or who are napping). (This is a required criterion.)

3.C.05 K

Teaching staff allow kindergarten children who are doing tasks in a safe environment to be out of the teacher's sight and sound supervision for a short period of time (e.g., when taking the attendance report to the office). Teachers check on children if those children do not return promptly to the group or if the adult at a child's destination does not confirm the child's arrival.

3.D. Using Time, Grouping, and Routines to Achieve Learning Goals

3.D.01 U I T P K

Teachers provide time daily for indoor and outdoor activities (except when conditions pose a health risk as defined by local health officials.)

3.D.02 U I T P K

Teaching staff use routine care to facilitate children's self-awareness, language, and social interaction.

3.D.03 U I T P K

Teachers provide time and materials daily for children to select their own activities.

3.D.04 U I T P K

Teaching staff offer children opportunities to interact with children of various ages.

3.D.05 U I T P K

Teachers plan for children to revisit experiences and materials over periods of days, weeks, and months.

3.D.06 I

Teachers organize time and space on a daily basis to offer infants opportunities to play individually, in pairs, and in small groups.

3.D.07 T P

At snack times, teaching staff sit and eat with children and engage them in conversation. When provided, meals are served family style, and teaching staff sit and eat with children and engage them in conversation.

3.D.08 T P K

Teaching staff coach and support children as they learn to participate in daily cleanup and maintenance of the classroom.

3.D.09 T P K

Teaching staff help children follow a predictable but flexible daily routine by providing time and support for transitions.

3.D.10 T P K
Teachers organize time and space on a daily basis to allow children to work or play individually and in pairs, to come together in small groups, and to engage as a whole group.

3.D.11 T P K
Teachers create opportunities for children to engage in group projects and to learn from one another.

3.D.12 K
Adults sit and eat with children and engage them in conversation at snack and meal times. (This criterion is an Emerging Practice.)

3.E. Responding to Children's Interests and Needs

3.E.01 U I T P K
Teaching staff reorganize the environment when necessary to help children explore new concepts and topics, sustain their activities, and extend their learning.

3.E.02 U I T P K
Teachers scaffold children's learning by

- modifying the schedule,
- intentionally arranging the equipment, and
- making themselves available to children.

3.E.03 U I T P K
Teachers use children's interest in and curiosity about the world to engage them with new content and developmental skills.

3.E.04 U I T P K
Teachers use their knowledge of individual children to modify strategies and materials to enhance children's learning.

3.E.05 I
Teachers use the needs and interests of infants to influence schedules, routines, and learning experiences.

3.E.06 I
Infants who show interest or pleasure in an activity are encouraged and supported in prolonging that activity.

3.E.07 I
Teaching staff actively seek to understand infants' needs and desires by recognizing and responding to their nonverbal cues and by using simple language.

3.E.08 T P K
Teachers use their knowledge of children's social relationships, interests, ideas, and skills to tailor learning opportunities for groups and individuals.

3.E.09 T P K
Throughout the day, teaching staff actively seek out children's ideas and discern how they understand things by observing, talking with, and listening to them.

3.F. Making Learning Meaningful for All Children

3.F.01 U I T P K
Teachers use curriculum in all content and developmental areas as a flexible framework for teaching and to support the development of daily plans and learning experiences.

3.F.02 U I T P K
Play is planned for each day.

3.F.03 U I T P K
Teachers and families work together to help children participate successfully in the early childhood setting when professional values and practices differ from family values and practices.

3.F.04 U I T P K
Teaching staff help children understand spoken language (particularly when children are learning a new language) by using pictures, familiar objects, body language, and physical cues.

3.F.05 U I T P K
Teaching staff support the development and maintenance of children's home language whenever possible.

3.F.06 U I T P K
Teachers offer children opportunities to engage in classroom experiences with members of their families.

3.F.07 T P K
Teaching staff use varied vocabulary and engage in sustained conversations with children about their experiences.

3.G. Using Instruction to Deepen Children's Understanding and Build Their Skills and Knowledge

3.G.01 U I T P K
Teachers have and use a variety of teaching strategies that include a broad range of approaches and responses.

3.G.02 U I T P K
Teachers use multiple sources (including results of informal and formal assessments as well as children's initiations, questions, interests, and misunderstandings) to

- identify what children have learned.
- adapt curriculum and teaching to meet children's needs and interests.
- foster children's curiosity.
- extend children's engagement.
- support self-initiated learning.

3.G.03 U I T P K
As children learn and acquire new skills, teachers use their knowledge of children's abilities to fine-tune their teaching support. Teachers adjust challenges as children gain competence and understanding.

3.G.04 U I T P K
Teaching staff help children enter into and sustain play.

3.G.05 U I T P K
Teachers support and challenge children's learning during interactions or activities that are teacher initiated and child initiated.

3.G.06 I
Teachers observe infants and exchange information about their abilities with their families and with other professionals (after getting family consent) who are involved with the infant's care. Teachers use the information to plan opportunities and provide materials that challenge infants to develop socially, physically, linguistically, and cognitively.

3.G.07 T P K
Teachers use their knowledge of content to pose problems and ask questions that stimulate children's thinking. Teachers help children express their ideas and build on the meaning of their experiences.

3.G.08 U I T P K
Teachers help children identify and use prior knowledge. They provide experiences that extend and challenge children's current understandings.

3.G.09 U I T P K
Teachers engage in collaborative inquiry with individual children and small groups of children.

3.G.10 U I T P K
Teaching staff join children in learning centers to extend and deepen children's learning. They observe children, engage children in conversations, and position themselves at eye level with the children.

3.G.11 U I T P K
Teachers are able to determine the different components of a task and break it into meaningful and achievable parts.

3.G.12 U I T P K
Teachers promote children's engagement and learning by responding to their need for and interest in practicing emerging skills, and by enhancing and expanding activities that children choose to engage in repeatedly.

3.G.13 P K
Teachers promote children's engagement and learning by guiding them in acquiring specific skills and by explicitly teaching those skills.

3.G.14 P K
Teachers demonstrate their knowledge of content and developmental areas by creating experiences that engage children in purposeful and meaningful learning related to key curriculum concepts.