

School-Age Center Self-Assessment Tool



This tool was created to help school-age center staff become familiar with the new certified school-age center rules. It can be used during Program Coordinator observations, staff meeting discussions, individual or group goal setting, program self-assessment and/or as a program planning tool. Each item is taken directly from the [Certified School-Age Center Rules](#).

414-310-0380 Creating a Climate for Healthy Child Development

School-Age Center Rule	X	Notes / Observations
(1) When communicating or interacting with children, a school-age center must ensure staff maintain a climate for healthy, culturally responsive child development such as:		
(a) Using a calm and encouraging tone of voice;		
(b) Using positive language to explain what children can do and give descriptive feedback;		
(c) Having relaxed conversations with children by listening and responding to what they say. Adult conversations must not dominate the overall sound of the group;		
(d) Greeting children upon arrival and departure at the learning program;		
(e) Using facial expressions such as smiling, laughing, and enthusiasm to match a child's mood;		
(f) Using physical proximity in a culturally responsive way to speak to children at their eye level;		
(g) Validating children's feelings and showing tolerance for mistakes;		
(h) Being responsive and listening to children's requests and questions, encouraging children to share experiences, ideas, and feelings;		
(i) Observing children in order to learn about their families, cultures, individual interests, ideas, questions, and theories;		
(j) Modeling and teaching emotional skills such as recognizing feelings, expressing them appropriately, accepting others' feelings, and controlling impulses to act out feelings;		
(k) Being respectful of cultural traditions, values, religion and beliefs of enrolled families; and		
(l) Interacting with staff and other adults in a positive, respectful manner.		
(2) A school-age center must ensure staff encourage positive interactions between and among children with techniques such as:		
(a) Giving children several chances a day to interact with each other while playing or completing routine tasks;		
(b) Modeling social skills;		
(c) Encouraging socially isolated children to find friends;		
(d) Helping children understand the feelings of others; and		
(e) Including children with special needs to play with others.		

414-310-0400 Activity Plan

School-Age Center Rule	X	Notes / Observations
(1) A school-age center must provide an environment for children where adults' actions demonstrate respect for their changing physical, emotional and intellectual needs.		
(2) A school-age center must make the emotional and physical needs of children the first priority, ensuring that children get adequate care and prompt attention.		
(3) When a school-age center operates for more than five continuous hours per day, the center must develop, post and follow written weekly activity plans that:		
(a) Indicate indoor and outdoor plans for each day;		
(b) Are designed to meet the children's developmental abilities, interests, cultural and individual needs; and		
(c) Are inclusive for all children in the group regardless of disabling or limiting conditions.		
(4) A school-age center must ensure the activity plan and available materials allow for a range of learning experiences to support each child's development of:		
(a) Self-esteem, self-awareness, self-control, cooperation, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities;		
(b) Social, emotional, cognitive, language, literacy, and physical growth; and		
(c) Creativity, experimentation, and exploration.		
(5) A school-age center must provide children with opportunities to choose from a variety of age-appropriate activities and experiences which include:		
(a) Reading books;		
(b) Creative expression through music and the arts;		
(c) Gross motor development;		
(d) Individual projects, which may include homework;		
(e) Exposure to individual and team physical activities; and		
(f) Daily opportunities to rest if tired. The center must provide a space that encourages rest for those children who wish to rest.		
(6) A school-age center must not provide or allow a child to have more than 2.5 hours of screen time per week.		
(a) When the internet is accessible for children's use, the center must ensure that children do not have access to inappropriate websites, email, instant messaging, and similar technology.		
(b) Screen time is defined as time spent using electronic devices, including, but not limited to computers, television, tablets, phones and game consoles but does not include assistive or adaptive technology for children with disabilities.		
(c) Usage times may be extended for physical activity guidance, special events, projects (i.e. coding lessons) and homework.		
(d) All media exposure must be developmentally and age appropriate, non-violent, and culturally sensitive.		
(e) When screen time is a group activity, at least one alternative activity must be available for children who do not want to participate.		

414-310-0410 Behavior and Guidance

School-Age Center Rule	X	Notes / Observations
(1) A school-age center must have a written policy on behavior and guidance of children that is simple and understandable to the child, the parent(s), and all staff.		
(2) A school-age center must have the behavior and guidance policy available in a prominent and frequently visited location for the parents and public to view.		
(3) A school-age center’s behavior and guidance policy must include the use of positive guidance to help children develop self-control, self-direction, and respect for others through these approaches:		
(a) Setting and teaching simple, consistent, clear and positive rules and limits that children can understand;		
(b) Setting up the environment for success with engaging activities that encourage positive behavior and self-regulation;		
(c) Following a predictable daily routine and schedule with planned transitions;		
(d) Reinforcing positive behaviors with encouragement and descriptive praise;		
(e) Supervising actively, taking steps to prevent problems before they occur and explaining safe, natural and logical consequences related to a child’s behavior;		
(f) Helping children recognize and appropriately express their feelings and understand the feelings of others;		
(g) Modeling and teaching social skills such as taking turns, cooperation, waiting, treating others kindly, and problem solving; and		
(h) Redirecting or helping a child change their focus to something appropriate when their behavior is unacceptable.		
(5) A school-age center must provide guidance that is fair, consistently applied, timely, and appropriate to the behavior, age, and development of the child.		
(6) When other methods have not been effective, a school-age center may remove the child from an activity or group for the time necessary to regain self-control. Staff must be actively responsive to the child’s needs. When the child has regained self-control, the child may rejoin a group or ongoing activity.		
(7) A school-age center must have a policy that addresses how staff must proceed if a child is displaying inappropriate behaviors that could endanger themselves or the safety of others		
(8) A school-age center may only use physical restraint with a child who is endangering themselves or the safety of others and when there is a plan in writing developed with a specialist or care team.		
(a) All staff working with the child must receive training based on the written plan.		
(b) A school-age center must document and report any incident when physical restraint is used		
(9) A school-age center must intervene appropriately to stop biased behavior displayed by children or adults, including but not limited to:		
(a) Redirecting an inappropriate conversation or behavior;		
(b) Being aware of situations that may involve bias, responding appropriately, taking actions to prevent future occurrences; and		
(c) Refusing to ignore bias.		

414-310-0390 Program Schedule

School-Age Center Rule	X	Notes / Observations
(1) A school-age center must develop, post, and follow a written schedule for each group of children, according to their ages, interests, and abilities.		
(a) The written schedule should provide a consistent routine while allowing for flexibility to respond to the needs of the individual children and group of children.		
(b) The schedule must: (A) Cover all hours of operation;		
(B) Provide a balance of active and quiet opportunities; and		
(C) Include activities such as small and large group activities, free play, daily outdoor experiences and snacks and meals.		
(c) Any time a school-age center operates more than five continuous hours a day, the center must offer a total of ninety minutes of active play, which may be broken up into smaller blocks of time.		
(2) A school-age center must ensure daily outdoor play for each child regardless of age, provided weather and environmental conditions do not pose a significant health or safety risk.		

414-310-0270 General Staffing Requirements

School-Age Center Rule	X	Notes / Observations
(1) A school-age center must ensure that all staff, including persons not counted in the staff-to-child ratio and volunteers:		
(a) Know and comply with certification rules;		
(b) Recognize and act to correct hazards to physical safety, both indoors and outdoors;		
(c) Demonstrate good judgment as evidenced by responsible behavior that reasonably ensures the health and safety of children;		
(e) Relate to children with courtesy, respect, acceptance, and patience;		
(f) Demonstrate realistic expectations for behavior based on the age, abilities, and needs of children;		
(g) Recognize and respect the uniqueness and potential of all children, their families, and their cultures;		
(h) Report suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation in accordance with Oregon law		
(i) Have the required training and experience for the position they are filling.		
(2) A school-age center must ensure that employees counted in the staff-to-child ratios:		
(a) Individualize the care and learning opportunities to meet each child's needs based upon the child's age and abilities, including reviewing the information provided by parents while respecting confidentiality;		
(b) Have a method to identify each child for whom they are responsible; and		
(c) Are physically capable of performing duties related to child care.		
(3) A school-age center must ensure that at least one person who has current certification in first aid and CPR is present in the center at all times, during transportation, and on field trips.		

414-310-0520 Play Materials

School-Age Center Rule	X	Notes / Observations
(1) A school-age center must provide play equipment and materials that are:		
(a) Appropriate to the developmental needs, interests and abilities of the children;		
(b) Sturdy and free of sharp points or corners, splinters, protruding nails or bolts, loose or rusty parts, or paint that contains lead or other toxic materials;		
(c) Have smooth, nonporous surfaces or washable fabric surfaces that are easy to clean and sanitize, or be disposable;		
(d) In good condition; and		
(e) Easily accessible to the children.		
(2) A school-age center must provide a shock-absorbing floor surface under indoor-climbing equipment and platforms over 18 inches in height that will effectively cushion the fall of a child.		
(3) A school-age center must offer a quantity and variety of play materials (i.e., toys, books, and games) for each age group that is sufficient to:		
(a) Avoid competition for popular items;		
(b) Provide a variety of choices to each child;		
(c) Provide a balance of:		
(A) Active and quiet activities; and		
(B) Individual and group activities;		
(d) Meet the developmental needs of each group of children; and		
(e) Provide the variety of activities required in 414-310-0400 Activity Plan, as appropriate.		
(4) A school-age center must provide a variety of age-appropriate toys, materials and equipment which give children choices such as manipulatives, language and literary materials, art materials, table games, music, or dramatic play.		
(5) If engaged in activities that include a tool that could pose a safety risk (e.g., iron, glue gun, woodworking tool), staff must first instruct children in the tool's proper use and safety measures. A staff person must be actively engaged with the activity to reduce the risk of injury.		
(6) A school-age center must provide culturally and racially diverse learning opportunities within the center's curriculum, activities, and materials that represent all children, families, and staff.		
(a) Equipment and materials that support diversity include, but are not limited to:		
(A) Diverse dolls, books, pictures, games, or materials that do not reinforce stereotypes;		
(B) Diverse music from many cultures in children's primary languages; and		
(C) A balance of different ethnic and cultural groups, ages, abilities, family styles, and genders.		
(b) A school-age center must actively reflect on the learning opportunities provided in the program to broaden cultural understanding and representation of the cultural backgrounds of the children in the program.		