CDA ASSESSMENT
OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT

Preschool, Infant/Toddler, Family Child Care

Name of Advisor __________________________

Candidate Name __________________________ Social Security # __________________________

Observation Site __________________________

Date(s) of Observation __________________________

Setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Ages of children</th>
<th># of children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Child Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infant/Toddler</td>
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</tbody>
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Indicate number of children and age group in Candidate’s care (observed using this instrument):
Young Infants _______ Mobile Infants _______ Toddlers _______

If the Candidate was not observed with all 3 age groups, indicate number of children and age group/s observed during the Supplemental Observation to complete the Advisor observation requirement:
Young Infants _______ Mobile Infants _______ Toddlers _______

Bilingual Specialization: Yes ☐ No ☐

Statement

“This Advisor Observation Instrument is complete and in compliance with the CDA requirements for this assessment.”

______________________________  __________________________
Advisor’s Signature           Date

March 1999
Instructions

This CDA Assessment Observation Instrument is used by Advisors as part of the CDA Candidate Assessment procedure. Through its use, many of the more observable aspects of competence required of a CDA can be assessed. In addition to observation, Advisors may interview Candidates and use other knowledge of the Candidate’s work with children to complete this report.

This observation can be used either in a family child care home or a center-based setting. It is meant to be completed while observing the Candidate working as the primary caregiver with a group of children.

A. Procedures for completing the observation

1. Scheduling the observation:

   The Advisor is required to spend as much time observing the Candidate as it takes to complete this report. This may be accomplished in one visit, or it may require several visits.

   The observer should plan to spend at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 hours watching the Candidate work. In full-day programs, mornings are generally the best time for an observation, but afternoon observations are possible in programs where children’s schedules are very active during the afternoon hours. An example of a program where an appropriate sample of the Candidate’s performance could be observed during an afternoon is an infant program that has individualized schedules so that some of the children are awake throughout the day. In half-day programs, schedule the observation for a time when the program normally meets. All observations must be done within the six months prior to the time the Candidate submits the Direct Assessment Application Form.

2. Before observing:

   a. So you will know what to look for, read the observation instrument thoroughly before observing a Candidate.

   b. Enter the information on the cover sheet.

3. While observing:

   a. Be as inconspicuous as possible. Remember that you are trying to collect information on how the CDA Candidate works with children. Therefore, listen and watch. Of course, you should be courteous if children approach you, but try to avoid interacting with children, asking questions, or interrupting in any way. Keep note of any questions you have for the CDA Candidate and save them until after the observation.

   b. Before actually observing the Candidate, spend 10 to 15 minutes becoming familiar with the setting you are observing.

   c. Move around as needed while observing. Be sure to observe both the CDA Candidate’s interactions and the children’s experiences, as well as aspects of the physical setting.

   d. If more than one adult is working with the group being observed, concentrate your attention only on the CDA Candidate’s behavior.
4. After you complete the observation(s)
   a. Record the rating for each item on the Summary Score Sheet
   b. Place this CDA Assessment Observation Instrument in a sealed envelope and give it to the Candidate for the final Verification Visit.

B. Observation Instrument guidelines

1. Rating

Your observation provides critical information regarding Candidate performance. Bring to bear your most discriminating professional judgment when entering ratings.

You will rate the Candidate’s performance on a series of items in each Functional Area. Your rating will indicate whether the Candidate’s performance on the item occurs rarely, sometimes, or most of the time. Before deciding on your rating, however, you will check off some specific indicators of Candidate’s performance that you observe.

The observation instrument is organized in the following way:

- Each item to be rated is “numbered.” Numbered items describe general aspects of Candidate performance that represent competence. Next to each item is a box. You will rate the Candidate by writing the number 1, 2, or 3 rating code in this box.

  [1] Rarely. As you observed the Candidate, you were unable to witness evidence of this action being taken, or you observed evidence infrequently, or actions taken were inappropriate.

  [2] Sometimes. You were able to observe some evidence of the action.

  [3] Mostly. The Candidate demonstrated repeatedly the behavior described. You observed much evidence that the Candidate was acting in a competent manner.

1.1 All toys and materials provided for use by children are safe.

- Below each numbered item is one or more indicator statements. These describe more specific aspects of competence that are expected of the Candidate. You are to look for these statements and check off each as you observe the Candidate’s performance. Check only if they have relevance to the situation/setting/individual you are observing. All statements need not be checked to determine a rating. The check mark does not indicate an affirmation of positive performance, but rather that you have considered this aspect during this observation.

1.1 All toys and materials provided for use by children are safe.

   Toys and materials are safe for children’s developmental level.
Examples are also provided as samples of what to look for. They are not required and it is possible for an indicator to be checked even if a specific example is not observed. Every age level and setting are different. Always look for alternate examples of ways in which an item can be observed.

### 1.1 All toys and materials provided for use by children are safe.

- Toys and materials are safe for children’s developmental level.

Ex. unbreakable baby toys too large to swallow; no pillows or heavy blankets for babies; sturdy preschooler’s toys; all materials non-toxic

2. During the observation visit, you are to look for indicators of competence, checking off statements as you see them. Remember, “examples” are samples of what to look for but are not required. Generally, indicators will not be checked off in the order in which they appear in the instrument.

3. Once you have enough indicators checked off to form an opinion of the Candidate’s performance over time, rate the Candidate on the numbered items by writing the 1, 2, or 3 rating code. If all indicators are checked, it is likely, but not necessary, that the item will be rated a 3. However, an item may be greater than the sum of its parts. All indicators might be checked while the item may still be rated a 2 or a 1. Some items may have to be rated after you have reviewed your notes and had a little time to think about the observations.

4. For every item, explain your rating in the comments section. Note brief examples of what the Candidate did or did not do. Also note any peculiar circumstances that prevent the Candidate from complying with the item.

5. Each item should be rated by the time your observation is completed. If you are not able to rate every item based on what you observe, then it will be necessary to ask the Candidate interview questions to complete rating of those items.

6. If the Candidate’s rating is based on what the Candidate says, rather than what you observed, write “I” for interview in the comments section. Write down the question you asked and the Candidate’s response. During this follow-up interview, ask open-ended questions that are not threatening and do not lead the Candidate to an answer. For example, if you need information on naptime you might ask, “How is naptime usually handled?” Listen carefully to the Candidate’s response, record pertinent information, and rate the item, based on all the relevant information you have collected.

7. Following each Functional Area section, space is provided for additional items. In that space, list any additional aspects of the Candidate’s competence that you observed which relate to the competence in the Functional Area, but which can not be categorized under the existing items. Number each item, rate the Candidate using the 1, 2, or 3 rating code, and explain your rating by writing indicators or examples you observed.


These Functional Areas are not directly observable. Comments on these indicators may be based upon an interview with the Candidate. You may need to schedule additional time to conduct this interview.
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FUNCTIONAL AREA 1: SAFE
Candidate provides a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries.

1.1 All toys and materials provided for use by children are safe.
   
   Toys and materials are safe for children’s developmental level.
   
   Ex. unbreakable baby toys too large to swallow; no pillows or heavy blankets for babies; sturdy preschooler’s toys; all materials non-toxic

1.2 Supervision is appropriate for the developmental level of children.
   
   Children are always attended by authorized adult.
   
   Quality and amount of supervision is based on the developmental needs of children in care.
   
   Ex. adult stays closer to babies and toddlers than to preschoolers
   
   Very close, attentive adult supervision is used in typically dangerous situations, indoors and outdoors.
   
   Ex. child on changing table, in bath or wading pool; crossing street; areas of playground
   
   Adult maintains enough control so children do not hurt each other.
   
   Children are protected from any safety risks present in the environment.
   
   Ex. broken toys, equipment, or furnishings are removed; outlets covered with safety caps; children kept away from broken playground equipment; broken glass removed from play areas outdoors; heating units or low windows blocked
   
   Ex. crib sides are always up when children are in cribs
1.3 Emergency procedures are well planned in advance and are well organized.

- Procedures for fires and other emergencies are posted.
  
  *Ex. phone numbers for contacting parents and emergency services including poison control, fire company, and medical help*

- First-aid supplies are evident.

- Potentially dangerous situations are anticipated.
  
  *Ex. instructions for evacuation are presented so they can be understood by children and adults; safe auto and bus travel procedures are understood*

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area SAFE, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
FUNCTIONAL AREA 2: HEALTHY
Candidate promotes good health and nutrition and provides an environment that contributes to the prevention of illness.

2.1 General hygiene practices are implemented consistently to cut down the spread of infectious diseases.

- Toys and equipment are kept clean.
- Tissues are used once and discarded in closed plastic-lined container.
- Correct handwashing procedure used by adult before food, after each diapering/toileting, and whenever needed.

Ex. liquid soap, running water, and individual paper towels used

2.2 Health maintenance habits in children are encouraged.

- Children wash hands properly before eating, after toileting, and whenever needed.

Ex. soap and water used; adult supervises to teach children proper procedures

- Preschoolers are encouraged to clean up own spills and minor messes with adult supervision.
- Children wear clothing appropriate for the weather, and extra clothing is available when needed.
- Children do not share personal items.

Ex. children use own hair brushes, combs, hats, etc.

- Dental hygiene practiced with toddlers/preschoolers.

Ex. teeth brushed after eating; toothbrushes labeled with children’s names stored in open container; bristles do not touch
2.3 Diapering/toileting procedures are organized to maintain health.

____ Implements sanitary diapering/toileting procedures.

Ex. infants: disposable diapers discarded in lined, covered container; soiled clothes sealed in labeled plastic bags; changing area washed with bleach and dried after each diaper change; hands washed between children

Ex. toddlers/preschoolers: toilet facilities are sanitary; toilets flushed after each use; spills of bodily fluids cleaned with bleach solution

Observation comments:

2.4 Meals/snacks meet the developmental needs of children.

____ Provides appropriate mealtime experiences.

Ex. infants: held in inclined position during feeding; individual feeding schedules; bottles not propped; no group feeding; feeding not rushed

Ex. toddlers/preschoolers: children fed when hungry; appropriate amounts of foods provided to children

Ex. children are not required to “finish” food on their plates to get dessert; meals/snack food are not used for rewards or punishment

____ Age-appropriate self-help skills during meals/snacks are encouraged.

Ex. older infants/toddlers: finger foods offered; toddlers encouraged to use spoons; child-sized plates, cups, utensils used; children clear own places when ready

Ex. preschoolers: serve themselves; learn appropriate table behavior; participate in simple food preparation; set table; help with clean-up

Ex. special needs: menus and utensils adapted
2.5 Pleasant and appropriate environment conducive to rest is provided daily.

_____ Pleasant nap or quiet times meet children’s needs for rest.

*Ex.* infants/younger toddlers: individual nap schedules; never awakened from naps for another activity

*Ex.* older toddlers/preschoolers: at least one rest/nap each day for full-day program; soothing naptime routines; quiet time each day for half-day programs

_____ A quiet, isolated place is available for a sick child to rest with an adult nearby.

Observation comments:

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area HEALTHY, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

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FUNCTIONAL AREA 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Candidate uses space, relationships, materials and routines as resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration and learning.

3.1 Well-arranged space, which meets the developmental needs of children during routines and play, is provided.

___ Adult makes an effort to create a pleasant atmosphere in spaces used.

Ex. displays pleasing posters, pictures, plants, etc.; few or no cute or cartoon materials used; avoids clutter; keeps music at comfortable level; displays children’s art, culturally relevant objects, items from nature; keeps pet cages and aquarium clean

___ Furnishings are well arranged.

Ex. family day care: space arranged so space and belongings of family are treated with respect

Ex. infants: small but uncrowded play spaces; children can crawl and/or walk about easily

Ex. special needs: room arrangement allows all children to participate and interact

Ex. multi-age groups: furnishings used to protect older children’s projects from younger children

Ex. all settings: different areas assigned specific activities; quiet/noisy activities separated; related activities near each other; no crowding; clear short pathways; furniture used to mark off play areas

___ Uses a variety of materials.

Ex. different surfaces; soft areas/hard areas; open ended materials areas/areas for materials with one obvious use

___ Individual spaces for children to store own things.

Ex. cubbies/hooks labeled with names or child’s photo
3.2 A variety of developmentally-appropriate materials are made available.

--- Uses a variety of materials.

Ex. balance of hard/soft, quiet/active, unlimited possibilities/one solution, messy/neat, indoors/outdoors, pretend/real

--- Materials are developmentally appropriate for all children, including those with special needs.

Ex. toys are good match to what children can do; toys are not too difficult or easy; toys interest the children

--- Sufficient number of materials.

Ex. extra materials available and rotated into play as children’s needs and interests change; enough toys so children do not have to wait; duplicates of popular toys

3.3 Materials for play are well organized.

--- Materials are well organized and accessible to children throughout the day.

Ex. infants/younger toddlers: toys placed where child can see or play with them without adult support; new toys offered as child loses interest

Ex. toddlers/preschoolers: play materials stored on low open shelves for free use; toy boxes never used; learning areas for books, blocks, pretend play, art, music, table toys; woodworking for older preschoolers; shelves labeled; toys with smaller parts stored in see-through unbreakable plastic containers

--- Children encouraged to help maintain the setting.

Ex. toddlers/preschoolers help at clean up time to put things back where they belong; children help keep indoors and outdoors play areas litter-free
3.4 Schedule provided meets children’s needs for routines and play.

__ Schedule allows for routine needs of children to be met.

*Ex. no waiting when children are hungry or tired; playground use scheduled to avoid crowding*

__ Schedule is dependable, yet flexible enough to meet children’s needs.

*Ex. regular activities stopped when no longer interesting to children; activities and routines can be earlier or later, based on children’s needs*

__ Schedule is developmentally appropriate.

*Ex. most of day spent in exploratory free play; schedule for infants/toddlers more individualized than that for preschoolers*

__ Group times are developmentally appropriate.

*Ex. infants/toddlers: children under 3½ years not expected to join in group time*

*Ex. preschoolers: occasional large groups; no longer than 10 minutes; children permitted to leave when they wish; children actively involved; pace varied; group time changed if not working well*

__ Schedule provides variety.

*Ex. some group activities offered between individual or self-selected play; balance of large/small muscle*

__ Schedule provides smooth transitions.

*Ex. children reminded when activity will be changing; time allowed to finish activities; no waiting or lining up; children move in small groups, not large ones*
Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

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________________________________________________________________________
FUNCTIONAL AREA 4: PHYSICAL
Candidate provides a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote the physical development of children.

4.1 A variety of activities are offered which enable children to develop their large muscles.

Observation comments:

- Large muscle skills are encouraged with developmentally appropriate activities.

  Ex. infants/younger toddlers: safe opportunities to crawl, stand, push, pull, walk, roll, throw, climb, etc.

  Ex. older toddlers/preschoolers: safe opportunities to walk, run, climb, jump, throw, kick, dance, gallop, balance, rock, ride, push, pedal, etc.

4.2 A variety of activities are offered which enable children to develop their small muscles.

- Small muscle skills are encouraged with a variety of developmentally appropriate materials and toys.

  Ex. safe infant toys that can be held and manipulated; dump and fill toys; puzzles; fit together/take apart toys; toys adapted for special needs children

4.3 Program activities are adapted to meet individual needs and special needs of children with disabilities.

- Makes modifications in the environment for individual children.

- Observes and evaluates children’s physical development and makes program plans accordingly.

- Communicates to children through actions and classroom experiences the importance of physical activity.
4.4 Opportunities are offered to help children develop their senses.

Uses sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch experiences.

Ex. emphasizes activities noticing colors, smelling odors, tasting different foods, and feeling and touching a variety of objects

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area PHYSICAL, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

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________________________________________________________________________
FUNCTIONAL AREA 5: COGNITIVE
Candidate provides activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the development levels and learning styles of the children.

5.1 A variety of age-appropriate materials and activities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving are accessible to children throughout most of the day.

Toys are developmentally appropriate.

*Ex. infants/young toddlers: toys with bright or contrasting colors; toys infants can rattle, squeeze, roll, push; toys with interesting designs; things that move; things that make noise; mouthable toys; cause/effect toys; mobiles; unbreakable mirrors; toys of many textures*

*Ex. older toddlers/preschoolers: blocks in various shapes and sizes; toys that make noise or do something when manipulated; sand and water; cooking activities; pegboards; beads to string; construction sets; things for children to compare; puzzles with 4-12 pieces; things for children to count; toys of many textures; cause/effect toys; toys with open-ended possibilities*

Activities involve real, hands-on experiences.

*Ex. colors, numbers, letters, words, science, and nature not taught by rote but based on experiences with real things; activities busily involve children; teacher demonstrates new techniques with materials if needed but allows children to figure out what to do by themselves; television very limited, if at all*

5.2 Interactions provide support for play, exploration, and learning.

Adult is available as a resource to children.

*Ex. sits on floor near children; moves about room as children play, talking with and helping them; modifies activities for special needs child; assists children to become involved as needed; shows children how to use any unfamiliar equipment*

*Ex. allows children to learn new skills without interference; child’s attempts to talk not interrupted; children not told what to do in play*
Encourages and respects children’s choices of play.

Ex. children not assigned to play; children not pushed or forced to participate; children are free to move from one interest to another; child works at own pace and in own style

Encourages children’s problem solving.

Ex. asks children thought-provoking questions that have many possible answers; children encouraged to explore and discover on their own, to expand on own ideas, and to ask questions

Helps make learning delightful for children.

Ex. follows children’s interests; shows enthusiasm and interest in their discoveries

5.3 Individual learning styles are recognized.

Obtains or makes and uses special learning materials.

Supports children’s repetition of the familiar.

Allows individual variation in group activities.

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area COGNITIVE, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):
FUNCTIONAL AREA 6: COMMUNICATION
Candidate actively communicates with children, provides opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating.

6.1 Communication with each individual child is frequent.

- Frequently talks with each child.
- Makes eye contact when talking with child.
- Uses positive nonverbal messages, such as holding out hand, hugging, smiling, etc.
- Takes turns when talking with child; talks with, not at, child.
- Uses several languages, whenever possible or when needed.

*Ex. for bilingual specialization: talks, sings songs, and routinely incorporates language into daily routines*

6.2 Talk with children is developmentally appropriate.

- Talks with children about real things they are experiencing.

  *Ex. tells child what is happening or about to happen during routines; gives children many opportunities to learn new words through real experiences; talks to children about their play*

- Talks only as long as the child is interested.
- Uses simple clear sentences.

  *Ex. uses more words and longer sentences for older toddlers and preschoolers; gives clear, simple instructions; uses words correctly; never uses baby talk*

- Uses many different ways to express ideas.
6.3 Children are encouraged to talk.

☐ Makes eye contact and listens with interest when children talk.

☐ Gives frequent opportunities and much time for children to talk and express ideas.

Ex. infants/younger toddlers: shows delight with sounds child makes; imitates cooing and babbling

Ex. older toddlers/preschoolers: encourages children to talk with each other, to talk about what they see and do; leads natural pleasant conversations during meals; does not dominate conversations; limits talk to whole group to 3-4 minutes

☐ Encourages talking through questioning.

Ex. asks older infants and toddlers easy “what” and “where” questions; asks older preschoolers “how” and “why” questions

6.4. Children’s attempts to communicate are responded to positively.

☐ Responds to verbal messages from children.

Ex. answers crying, babbling, attempts to say words, children’s ideas and questions; listens with acceptance to what children say; accepts grammar without correcting; gives clear understandable answers to children’s questions; sometimes expands on what child has said

☐ Responds to nonverbal messages from children.

Ex. reaching out arms to be picked up, pointing to something of interest, smiles or other facial expressions
6.5 A developmentally-appropriate, print-rich environment in which children learn about books, literature, and writing is provided.

Children helped to discover written words as a natural part of their ongoing experiences with real things.

Ex. written words and numbers where toddlers/preschoolers can see; names on cubbies, pictures, etc.; children shown the words they are interested in when reading; writes down preschooler-dictated stories

Preschoolers given opportunities to write as they show interest.

Ex. writing area available for preschoolers for free choice; children encouraged but never forced to write or trace letters; children’s own spellings encouraged; no flashcards, work sheets, phonics lessons or drill used

Many opportunities for hands-on experiences with age-appropriate books available daily.

Ex. infants/toddlers: cardboard books propped for non-mobile baby to see; bright cardboard books, some vinyl or fabric books accessible

Ex. older toddlers/preschoolers: comfortable, inviting book area with many child-appealing books; books displayed on low open shelves with book covers facing children; variety of books accessible, including child-made books; adult goes to book area to chat or read with children; selects books from appropriate bibliography

Group story times are age appropriate.

Ex. very short picture books read with infants; some story groups are small enough to allow children to sit next to or on lap of adult; all can see pictures during reading

Children are active participants, not passive listeners.

Ex. infants/toddlers: allowed to pat, point to and name pictures in books

Ex. preschoolers: invited to tell or retell stories; children and adult informally talk about what happened in stories; “how” and “why” questions used to encourage children to think about the story; children encouraged to tell stories to others while using pictures in books

Observation comments:
Children given variety of literature/story experiences.

Ex. puppets, finger plays, flannel boards or songs used to tell stories; short poems that children enjoy; tape recording of favorite books for children who can listen and turn pages; telling stories without books

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area COMMUNICATION, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):
FUNCTIONAL AREA 7: CREATIVE
Candidate provides opportunities that stimulate children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, space, and ideas in individual ways and to express their creative abilities.

7.1 Individual expression and creativity are appreciated.

- Children’s creative work is respected and valued.

*Ex. most of room is decorated with children’s work displayed at their eye-level; block buildings appreciated; listens with delight to child’s made-up songs*

- Children are encouraged, but never required, to take part in creative activities.

*Ex. music experiences are not formal learning activities; children always have choice of other activities*

- Creative activities are child directed and process oriented.

*Ex. projects presented that cannot be done wrong; there are no “parts” cut out and controlled by adult*

- Unconventional use of materials is accepted.

7.2 Many appropriate music experiences are available to children.

- Music experiences are available daily.

- Creativity in musical experiences is encouraged.

*Ex. children encouraged to respond to music in their own way, adult doesn’t show how to move; children make up own songs; play music instruments with own rhythm*

- Musical instruments that children can play themselves are accessible.

*Ex. musical sound toys for infants/toddlers; age-appropriate musical instruments such as drums, bells, triangles, wood blocks, and tambourines offered as an everyday free-choice activity; children shown how to care for instruments*

- Frequent singing of appropriate songs by children and adults.
**7.3 Art experiences are age-appropriate and varied.**

- Art materials are available daily to older toddlers and preschoolers for independent use.
- Creativity is encouraged in children’s artwork.
- A variety of art materials are offered as children become developmentally ready.

- Older infants/toddlers: large sheets of plain paper; fat crayons; wide water color markers
- Older toddlers/preschoolers: large blank sheets of paper; many colors of construction paper; water color markers; blunt-end scissors; paste and glue; collage materials; modeling dough or clay; paints with wide brushes

**7.4 Dramatic play experiences with a variety of age-appropriate props are available.**

- Dramatic play available daily.
- Creativity in dramatic play is encouraged.
- Variety of props allows children to copy familiar behavior.
- New props and ideas made available regularly to add variety to play.
7.5 Variety of age-appropriate block play opportunities are available.

Block play is available daily.

Blocks are age appropriate and varied.

*Ex. infants/toddlers: colorful lightweight blocks; large cardboard blocks*

*Ex. preschoolers: unit blocks; smaller building blocks*

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area CREATIVE, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):
8.1 Children are given the message that each person is important, respected, and valued.

_____ Appropriate affection shared with each child.

Ex. infants held closely and handled gently; gives and accepts lots of hugs, kisses and snuggles; doesn’t tease or tickle; uses warm voice; gives children time to show affection

_____ Personalized interactions with each child.

Ex. uses children’s names often; encourages children to use each others’ names; treats each child’s work with respect and interest; shows delight to be with each child

_____ Helps children feel proud of themselves.

Ex. focuses on children’s positive qualities; does not use belittling nicknames; shows excitement and interest in children’s activities; encourages self-help skills; notices children’s successes; doesn’t compare children with each other, promote competition or criticize children’s efforts

8.2 Individual children are helped to develop a sense of security.

_____ Shows acceptance, respect and sensitivity to each child’s feelings.

Ex. does not startle infant; talks with infants about their feelings; puts toddlers’ problems into words; comforts children who are upset; respects children’s “NO” when possible; respects children’s preferences; helps to ease daily separations; gets excited along with children; enjoys children’s humor; is patient; helps children accept feelings and find safe ways to deal with them
8.3 Diapering/toileting procedures are developmentally appropriate and are organized to encourage self-help skills.

Toileting is developmentally appropriate and a positive experience for children.

*Ex. toilet learning is encouraged when child is ready and interested; children not shamed, rushed or made to feel like failures; children shown how to use good toilet habits such as wiping properly, lifting and lowering seat, and aiming well*

Independence is encouraged in toileting.

*Ex. children allowed to go to toilet by themselves*

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area SELF, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
FUNCTIONAL AREA 9: SOCIAL
Candidate helps each child feel accepted in the group, helps children learn to communicate and get along with others, and encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults.

9.1 Each child is helped to feel accepted in the group.

☐ Provides many opportunities to interact in play.

*Ex. infants play where they can see others; plenty of chances for preschoolers to play together*

☐ Provides plenty of age-appropriate opportunities to learn cooperation skills.

*Ex. some toys and activities require cooperation; games support cooperation, such as “Ring-Around-the-Rosy”*

☐ Provides support to encourage social interactions.

*Ex. gently introduces strangers; helps shy or aggressive children to get along with others; comments when children are friendly and cooperative*

☐ Adult takes steps to assure positive integration of children with special needs.

*Ex. sets up environment and activities so disabled child can participate with others as much as possible; encourages interactions among all children*

9.2 Feelings of empathy and respect for others are encouraged.

☐ Adult helps children understand feelings of others.

*Ex. gives simple explanations of feelings to toddlers; asks preschoolers to explain how they feel, models concern*
9.3 Non-biased curriculum is used.

Cultural activities are natural part of day.

Ex. all pictures, posters, books, and other materials reflect and celebrate diversity in culture, age, sex, special needs; languages, real objects, music, art, foods, and many aspects of cultures are incorporated into the curriculum; implements associated with special needs included in dramatic play

Non-sexist activities for all.

9.4 Children are encouraged to respect the environment.

Care of indoor environment encouraged.

Ex. children help keep areas they use clean; use materials properly so they do not get broken

Emphasis on respect for nature and its resources.

Ex. water and lights turned off when not in use; children help care for plants; children encouraged to help care for outdoor areas they use

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area SOCIAL, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

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FUNCTIONAL AREA 10: GUIDANCE
Candidate provides a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group.

10.1 Methods for avoiding problems are implemented.

- Space and materials are arranged to limit disruptive behavior.
  
  *Ex. many duplicate toys; safe alternatives offered to children who want to do something dangerous or inappropriate*

- Adult is a good model of positive behavior.
  
  *Ex. smiles often; shares well; gentle and warm; listens and talks*

- Rough play is minimized.
  
  *Ex. defuses rough play before it becomes a problem; makes superhero play more manageable by limiting time and place*

- Attention is given for positive behavior.
  
  *Ex. self-control and considerate behavior noticed and praised; minor distractions ignored*
10.2 Positive guidance techniques are used.

Emphasis is on children’s learning and using self-discipline.

Ex. adult acts as mediator and helps children solve problems; listens and asks open-ended questions to get children to think through solutions; uses “effective listening” by being someone children can trust, letting them do most of the talking, attending to their actions as well as words, accepting whatever they say in a way that leads them to think more about the idea

Adult is consistent and calm when dealing with more severe problems.

Ex. is fair and firm if “no” must be said; maintains self-control when dealing with aggressive child; separates children from group only when child might hurt or do damage; stays with child in “time out” until problem is resolved

Adult helps children learn to control their actions and feelings of anger and aggression.

Ex. children helped to see how what they do affects others; helps children understand that friendly, cooperative behavior is expected

10.3 Guidance practices are related to knowledge of each child’s personality and developmental level.

Modifies situations in anticipation of problems.

Accepts children’s feelings and provides acceptable outlets for children to express them.

Observation comments:
Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area GUIDANCE, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

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FUNCTIONAL AREA 11: FAMILIES
Candidate maintains an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family; encourages involvement in the program; supports the child’s relationship with his or her family.

11.1 Various opportunities to appreciate children’s families are part of the regular program.

☐ Parents made to feel welcome.

Observation comments:

Ex. pleasantly greeted during drop-off and pick-up of children; invited to take part in special activities

☐ Displays pictures of children and their families at children’s eye level.

☐ Knows children’s family members and uses information about them in conversations and program activities.

11.2 Information about families’ culture, religion, and childrearing practices is used in program experiences.

☐ Provides experiences that reflect the diversity of the children in the group.

Ex. books represent diverse family lifestyles; based on family preference, different strategies are used for toileting, napping, feeding, disciplining, and fostering self-help/independence with children

☐ Comfortably discusses diversity when talking to children.

☐ Honors parents’ dietary, dress, or other preferences for their children.

☐ Provides regular oral and written communication with parents in their preferred language.

11.3 Various opportunities provided to help parents understand the development of their child and understand their child’s point of view.

☐ Projects made by the children are sent home.

☐ Shares information with parents about what children learn in everyday household tasks and routines.

☐ Helps parents understand the importance of play for children.

☐ Provides parent conferences where there are opportunities to express their point of view.
11.4 Resources provided to help families meet their child’s needs.

- Exchanges information with parents about community events.
- Collaborates with parents to plan program events and topics for discussion at parent meetings.
- Identifies resources to diagnose and treat children with special and handicapping conditions.

*Ex. makes referrals to agencies or individuals and follows up to assist parents; brochures and pamphlets available for parents to take*

- Establishes cooperative working relationships with other helping professionals in the community.

Observation comments:

Use the space below to list observed aspects of competence in Functional Area FAMILIES, which are not included as part of the above items.

Additional items (number each item):

__________________________________________________________

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FUNCTIONAL AREA 12: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
Candidate is a manager who uses all available resources to ensure an effective operation. The Candidate is a competent organizer, planner, recordkeeper, communicator, and a cooperative co-worker.

This Functional Area is not directly observable in the daily classroom routine. Checkmarks next to indicators or comments may be made based upon interviewing the Candidate or through knowledge of the Candidate’s work from sources other than observation. Do not rate the Candidate; record 3 comments in this Functional Area.

_____ Observes and records information about children and their families in a non-judgmental manner for use in planning and carrying out daily program activities.

_____ Maintains up-to-date records on children’s growth, health, behavior, and progress.

_____ Implements plans for each day with developmentally and culturally appropriate experiences.

_____ Discusses issues that affect the program with appropriate staff (or in family child care, with family members) and follows up on their resolution.

_____ Knows local family child care regulations and complies with group size requirements.

_____ Makes plans for substitute caregivers for emergencies and pre-planned occasions and chooses substitutes carefully, requiring experience with children of the same ages whenever possible.

_____ Takes account of families concerns about such issues as language usage and culturally different styles of relating.

_____ Knows the social service, health, and education resources of the community and uses them when appropriate. Establishes liaisons with community resources that respond to family violence and child abuse.

_____ Recognizes possible learning problems and works with parents and specialists to develop plans specific to the needs of the child.
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FUNCTIONAL AREA 13: PROFESSIONALISM

Candidate makes decisions based on knowledge of early childhood theories and practices, promotes quality child care services, and takes advantage of opportunities to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

This Functional Area is not directly observable in the daily classroom routine. Checkmarks next to indicators or comments may be made based upon interviewing the Candidate or through knowledge of the Candidate’s work from sources other than observation. Do not rate the Candidate; record 3 comments in this Functional Area.

___ Continues to gain knowledge of physical, cognitive, language, emotional, and social development as a basis for planning program goals.

___ Knows her/his own ability to provide quality care for children and cares for the ages with whom s/he can work well.

___ Keeps all personal information about children and families confidential.

___ Takes opportunities for professional and personal development by joining appropriate professional organizations, and attending meetings, training courses, and conferences.

___ Recognizes that caregiver fatigue, low morale, and lack of work satisfaction decrease effectiveness and finds ways to meet his/her own needs and maintain energy and enthusiasm.

___ Learns about new laws affecting family child care, children, and families.

___ Increases knowledge about bilingual education by reading, attending workshops, and consulting professionals.

___ Maintains and works to increase fluency in her/his second language.

___ Works with other professionals and parents to develop effective strategies to communicate to decisionmakers the needs of children and families.

___ Seeks information about child sexual abuse and neglect. Keeps up-to-date on legal reporting requirements for child caregivers, and on program policies concerning reporting.
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IMPORTANT

Before you complete and sign the Candidate's Direct Assessment form, please make sure that you have completed this CDA Assessment Observation Instrument according to the following requirements:

1. Every numbered item has been rated.

2. All observations have been completed within the 6 months prior to the time the Candidate submits the Direct Assessment Application Form.

3. Place this completed Assessment Observation Instrument for Advisors in a sealed envelope and give to the Candidate for the final Verification Visit.
CDA Assessment Observation Instrument
Summary Score Sheet

**ADVISORS**: please record the score for each item in the space below. Indicate “I” after the score for any item where the Candidate’s interview comments contributed to your rating.

**Candidate Name:** ___________________________ **SS#** __________________

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*For Council Use*

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Observer Name  Observer Signature  Date