Environment Rating Scales:
Implementation of Learning Activities Practices

Why these practices are important for children's development

Children learn best by having access to a variety of learning materials and activities. This includes providing many different options for children to engage with, in hands-on and open-ended ways. Interacting with children as they are using the materials during those experiences enhances their learning and development.

Key Implementation Practices

- Provide fine motor materials and activities that encourage the use of muscles in fingers and hands.
- Invite children to express themselves through the use of a variety of open-ended art materials.
- Provide daily musical experiences for children such as access to musical instruments, recorded music, singing, and movement activities.
- Provide access to a variety of different types of blocks (wooden unit blocks and large cardboard blocks) and block accessories (people, animals and trucks/cars) with adequate space which is protected from other play.
- Create a dramatic play area where children can act out roles (housekeeping, work, and fantasy) and use materials in their own ways.
- Provide science opportunities to help children understand the natural world, including hands-on activities and exploring nature and living things both indoors and outdoors.
- Include math activities in everyday experiences, including using materials in the environment for counting, comparing, measuring, and learning about shapes.
- Limit the use of technology/screen time and ensure any experiences provide opportunities for active participation and are age appropriate. Screen time is not recommended for children under 2.
- Provide materials (books, photos/pictures, and toys) which show diversity in race, culture, age, ability, and nontraditional gender roles.

Additional Resources

- Rocking and Rolling: Screen Sense – Making Smart Decisions About Media Use for Young Children https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2015/smart-decisions-about-media-use
- How to Support Children's Approaches to Learning? Play with Them! https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/support-learning-with-play



