

## Questions to Ask in Evaluating Early Childhood Curriculum and Activities

Curriculum Criteria	Santa Fe Centers	Other Center
Does it respect children's physiological needs for activity, sensory stimulation, fresh air, rest, and nourishment/elimination?	*	
Does it help achieve social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth through an integrated approach?	*	
Is it sensitive to and respectful of cultural and linguistic diversity? Does it expect, allow, and appreciate individual differences?	*	
Does it promote positive professional relationships with families?	*	
Is it based on current brain research to help each child reach individual social, emotional, physical and cognitive potential?	*	
Does it encourage safe, active learning and allow children to make meaningful choices at their own pace?	*	
Does it foster children's exploration and inquiry, rather than focusing on "right" answers or "right" ways to complete a task?	*	
Does it promote the development of higher order abilities such as thinking, reasoning, problem solving, and decision making?	*	
Does it build and elaborate on children's current knowledge, abilities and skills?	*	
Does it promote language development through the encouragement of social interaction child and adult and children to children?	*	
Are the child's feelings respected and supported? Does it promote feelings of psychological safety, security, and belonging?	*	
Is each child accepted and supported at their individual stage of social-emotional development?	*	
Is the curriculum content meaningful, important and relevant at their stage of development and presented in hands-on format?	*	
Does it provide experiences promoting feelings of success, competence, and the joy of active learning?	*	
Does it promote interactive hands-on learning, encouraging the child's personal construction of conceptual knowledge?	*	
Is the content integrated across all traditional subject matter areas and is interactive in nature?	*	
Are the expectations realistic, attainable and developmentally appropriate at this time or could the children more easily and efficiently acquire the knowledge or skills later on?	*	
Does it challenge teachers to provide developmentally appropriate activities through encouraging flexibility and out-of-the-box thinking as they follow and support the children's learning needs and creative ideas?	*	
Does this curriculum and the way it is promoted in the classroom represent the way in which you would like your child to gain social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills?		

## Questions to Ask in Evaluating Early Childhood Program Staff Members

Childcare Staff Considerations	Santa Fe Centers	Other Center
Do staff members hold appropriate credentials, education or degrees in fields related to child care and development including: CDA; AA or BA in Early Childhood Education; BA, MA or certification in P-3 or K-5; BA in Psychology; BS in Nursing?	*	
Are staff members encouraged to reflect on their practice and grow professionally? Does the center financially support staff in further developing their skills through on-going education?	*	
Are staff members available to families to address questions during both operating and after-hours via face-to-face, email, or phone? Are questions answered in a timely manner?	*	
Do staff members build and maintain a professional, ethical and mutually respectful relationship with families?	*	
Do teachers use positive discipline strategies leading to self-regulation and development of higher level thinking skills?	*	
Do staff members provide materials that are concrete, real and relevant to the lives of young children instead of worksheets, pre-made pieces and adult-made models for activities?	*	
Is each child's interactive and creative process valued over the product or result?	*	
Does staff demonstrate their creativity, flexibility and out-of the box thinking as they work to meet the challenge of providing developmentally appropriate activities for their children?	*	
Does the staff actively observe children at play, record each child's special interests and abilities and adjust their plans accordingly?	*	
Do staff members prepare the classroom environment to support the children's learning through active exploration with adults, peers and materials?	*	
Does the staff model and promote a sense of joy in being with their children leading to each child's feelings of acceptance, success, competence, and confidence in their abilities?	*	
Do staff members provide for a wider range of developmental interests and abilities than the chronological age range of the group would suggest?	*	
Are staff members prepared to meet the needs of children who exhibit unusual interests or skills?	*	
Do staff members provide a variety of activities and materials that increase in complexity, difficulty and level of challenge as the children develop greater understanding and higher skill levels throughout the year?	*	
Are staff members able to discuss difficult issues with families in a supportive way and provide developmentally appropriate support in the classroom or referral for outside services?	*	
Does staff share important milestones about your child's day using specific examples?	*	