

Alberta Child Care Accreditation

Evaluation and Scoring Framework

(for the Aligned Accreditation Standards)

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About this Document

This document provides the framework for the evaluation and scoring of child care programs participating in Alberta Child Care Accreditation against the accreditation standards. The Government of Alberta contracts the delivery of accreditation assessment services to an accrediting organization that will use this Framework to develop tools and processes to evaluate and award provincial accreditation status to eligible child care programs.

Background - What is Accreditation?

Alberta child care accreditation promotes excellence in child care settings and helps families choose the best care for their children. Accreditation is a voluntary process through which licensed and approved child care programs (day care centres, out-of-school care programs, and family day home agencies) demonstrate that they meet the accreditation standards of excellence which are over and above the provincial licensing regulations and family day home standards. The accreditation standards reflect current research and leading practices which support high quality child care for families and children.

The accreditation standards are comprised of six standards of excellence that focus on four essential outcomes: i) for children; ii) for families; iii) for staff; and iv) for the community, as outlined below:

I. Outcomes for Children	Standard 1. Positive, supportive relationships and enriched physical and emotional environments foster children’s well-being and development. Standard 2. Program planning and practices support every child’s optimal development in an inclusive early learning and care environment that incorporates the value and importance of play.
II. Outcomes for Families	Standard 3. Relationships with families are supportive and respectful.
III. Outcomes for Staff	Standard 4. Child care programs create a supportive work environment to maintain a qualified team of child care professionals and assist them in providing high quality child care services through its philosophy, policies, procedures and practices.
IV. Outcomes for Community	Standard 5. Child care programs collaborate with community organizations and services to respond to the needs of children and families they serve. Standard 6. Continuous quality improvement is demonstrated through ongoing self-monitoring and evaluation processes.

Each of the six standards is comprised of numbered *criteria* (principles and guiding practices that make up the standard) which are further broken down into *indicators* (that serve as observable measurements).

The accreditation standards with related criteria and indicators can be found online at www.humanservices.alberta.ca/accreditation.

The accreditation process starts with the child care program undergoing a comprehensive self-evaluation of its services and policies, including activities such as: creating a quality enhancement plan; identifying areas for improvement; and implementing developed strategies to achieve the standards of excellence. The self-evaluation process takes approximately 15 months to complete. Once the program is satisfied that it has met all the standards, gathered the supporting evidence and is ready for the formal evaluation, it requests the accrediting agency to conduct an on-site evaluation. During the evaluation process, the accrediting agency will collect evidence to validate whether the program has consistently met the accreditation standards. If successful, the program is awarded an accreditation certificate that is valid for up to three years at which time another on-site evaluation is required. To maintain accreditation status, programs will continuously develop and implement strategies outlined in their quality enhancement plan and submit annual reporting to the accrediting agency.

Overview – Evaluation and Scoring Framework

The Evaluation and Scoring Framework (Framework) sets out the evaluation process that is used by the accrediting agency as a result of on-site assessments to determine the accreditation status of participating child care programs. The accrediting agency utilizes this Framework to develop tools and processes to effectively measure whether a child care program has met the accreditation standards, criteria and indicators based on the consistency of evidence collected during an on-site evaluation.

The Framework uses an evidence-based approach, utilizing observations and a review of the program's documentation. A scoring rubric is used to evaluate the program's alignment with the accreditation standards by measuring the consistency of evidence for each of the accreditation indicators.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process consists of the following steps:

- A. Collection of Evidence** – obtained through observations and documentation.
- B. Rating and Scoring** – a scoring rubric is used to rate/score each indicator based on the consistency of evidence collected. Numerical scores are tabulated for every indicator and totalled for each Standard.
- C. Decision** – based on a total score of indicators within each Standard (refer to Page 8 for details on passing score requirements).

A. Collection of Evidence

The accrediting agency collects and reviews documentation (which includes paper and digital materials), completes observations of the staff:child interactions and the program’s physical environment, and may supplement the collected evidence with information gathered through conversations with program director, staff, families and, occasionally, with children attending out-of-school care programs.

The collection of information (by the accrediting agency) must be clearly documented and include:

- evidence to support each indicator;
- gaps and/or lack of evidence (as applicable);
- opposite practice (as applicable).

The accrediting agency is responsible for ensuring that the collection of evidence and scoring are completed in an objective manner by trained and qualified individuals to achieve maximum reliability and validity. The accrediting agency will use supplementary tools/guides to record the collection of evidence in a consistent manner.

B. Rating and Scoring

The rating and scoring is based on the consistency of evidence for each indicator as set out below.

Scoring Rubric

Score Value (for each Indicator)	Rating Criteria (for each Indicator)
2	Consistent Evidence
1	Inconsistent Evidence
0	No Evidence
-1	Opposite Practice

Defining the Rubric

	Consistent Evidence	Inconsistent Evidence	No Evidence	Opposite Practice
	2	1	0	-1
Overarching Concept	The majority of evidence exists to reliably meet the Indicator.	Limited/Some evidence and practices are in place to meet the Indicator; and/or there are several gaps and/or lack of consistency between program's policy/documents and observed practices.	No evidence of the Indicator being met.	The evidence is contrary and/or detrimental to the intent of the indicator.
Defining Words	Frequent Non-conflicting Congruent Compatible Regular Preponderance Dependable Stable	Some Infrequent Insufficient Limited Occasional Seldom Partial	No evidence Non-existent Never observed	Contradictory Contrary Detrimental Damaging Unfavorable Negative Unacceptable Adverse

NOTE: Evidence of opposite practice will lead to score of “-1” even if other supporting evidence exists for the indicator.

Applying the Rubric

	Consistent Evidence	Inconsistent Evidence	No Evidence	Opposite Practice
Examples	2	1	0	-1
Used for Indicators that Require Evidence to be Collected through Observations and Documentation	<p>Regular practice of the Indicator is demonstrated throughout the observations.</p> <p>Policy that supports the Indicator is in place and is consistently practiced.</p> <p>Combination of observed and documented evidence supports that the Indicator is being consistently met.</p> <p>Evidence within the physical environments demonstrates that the Indicator is consistently supported the vast majority of time.</p> <p>There is a preponderance of evidence to support the Indicator is in practice.</p>	<p>Lack of consistency exists between program's policy/documents and observed practice.</p> <p>Combination of observed and documented evidence that supports the Indicator exists on an infrequent basis.</p> <p>Evidence within the physical environment demonstrates that the Indicator is only supported in some situations.</p>	<p>There is no observed/ documented evidence that suggests that practice of the Indicator is supported.</p> <p>There are no elements in the physical environment that suggest the Indicator is supported.</p> <p>Support for the Indicator is not found in policies, documents, digital materials, or through observations.</p>	<p>Evidence demonstrates the practice is contrary to the intent of the Indicator and may pose risk to or negative impact on: children's development; families; staff; and/or community.</p>
Used for Indicators that Require Evidence to be Collected through Documentation and Digital Materials Only	<p>Policies provide strong support for the Indicator.</p> <p>Policies, documents and digital materials that support the Indicator are clear and provide detail to demonstrate the Indicator being met.</p>	<p>Policies, documents and digital materials are not clear to provide solid evidence to support the Indicator.</p> <p>There are significant contradictions found between policies, documents and/or digital materials to support the indicator.</p>	<p>There are no policies, documents or digital materials that support the Indicator.</p> <p>Policy to support the indicator is written during site visit.</p>	<p>Documents, policies or digital materials indicate a practice that is contrary or detrimental to the intent of the Indicator</p>

C. Decision

The decision to award accreditation status to a child care program is determined by whether or not the program has achieved a minimum required score in each of the six accreditation standards. The accrediting agency determines the total score for each standard by adding the individual scores assigned for each indicator within each of the six standards.

The minimum required score for each accreditation standard is based on a value nearest to 80% as indicated in the table below:

	Number of Indicators per Standard	Minimum Required Score (out of the possible maximum score)
Standard 1	26	42 points (out of 52)
Standard 2	36	58 points (out of 72)
Standard 3	18	29 points (out of 36)
Standard 4	21	34 points (out of 42)
Standard 5	11	18 points (out of 22)
Standard 6	17	27 points (out of 34)