

Tennessee's Child Care Evaluation & Report Card Program

Beginning in October 2001, every licensed child care provider, prior to the expiration of its annual license, will be evaluated as part of the licensing renewal process. After the evaluation, providers will receive a new license and a report card with the results of their evaluation. The report card is to be displayed along with the new license. This program is part of the state's comprehensive plan to provide more information for parents and improve the quality of child care in Tennessee.



What will I be evaluated on?

Centers will be evaluated on the following seven areas.

1. Director Qualification
2. Professional Development
3. Developmental Learning
4. Parent/Family Involvement
5. Ratios and Group size
6. Staff Compensation
7. Program Assessment

Family and Group Homes will be evaluated on the following five areas:

1. Professional Development
2. Developmental Learning
3. Parent/Family Involvement
4. Business Management
5. Program Assessment



Who will evaluate my program?

The information that will be used to evaluate your program will be collected as part of your reevaluation before your current license expires. Your licensing counselor will collect all of this information except for the program assessment information, which will be collected by a highly trained DHS assessor. The assessor will contact you about 6 to 8 weeks before your license expires to schedule your assessment. The assessor will observe your program using the Environment Rating Scales. These scales are nationally recognized, reliable tools for assessing child care programs. The assessor will use the rating scales to assess your physical environment, basic care, curriculum, interactions with children, and schedule and

program structure. Once your licensing counselor has collected all required information, including your program assessment results, he or she will use it to fill out a report card that will be mailed to you with your new license.



How was the evaluation and report card program developed?

The evaluation and report card program is based on a law that the Tennessee Legislature passed in 2000 and revised in 2001. Two teams of child care professionals developed the evaluation areas and criteria, which were modeled after successful child care improvement programs in North Carolina and Oklahoma. The teams met for seven planning sessions. These sessions were led by consultants from the National Child Care Information Center.

The proposed criteria were shared with providers in 23 public meetings across the state. About 2,000 providers attended these meetings. The proposed criteria were also mailed to all licensed providers and shared with center directors and child care professional organizations. The final criteria were based on suggestions from providers and others. Then DHS and the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth approved and finalized the criteria.



How will I know the results of my evaluation?

When you receive your new license from DHS, you will also receive a report card that shows how your child care program meets the report card criteria. You must display this report card with your new license so parents can see how your program is currently doing in each area.

What if I have questions about my evaluation or program assessment?

Your licensing counselor will send you your new license and report card. You will also receive a summary report about the assessments conducted at your facility. Once you read this information, if you have questions about your report card, call your licensing counselor. If you have questions about your assessment or your summary report, call the [assessment unit supervisor](#) or your local [Child Care Resource and Referral Center](#). Please see the New Grievance Process for important information regarding the amount of time you have to appeal any part of the assessment you feel is incorrect.





What can I do to prepare for my evaluation and program assessment?

To prepare for your evaluation:

- ◆ Review all the information DHS sends you about the licensing rules and the evaluation program.
- ◆ Start organizing information for your licensing counselor.
- ◆ Call your local Child Care Resource and Referral Center or a Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) office to find out about upcoming workshops on the evaluation program or the Environment Rating Scales.
- ◆ Review the licensing regulations and the Environment Rating Scales and share them with your staff.



How can I obtain more information?

If you would like to learn more about the evaluation program, contact your DHS licensing counselor.

If you would like to learn more about the Environment Rating Scales, contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral Center and ask to speak with the technical assistance coordinator or call your local TECTA office.

