

Managing Quality

City of Toronto Operating Criteria

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Atkinson Centre

Purpose of this presentation

- What is Operating Criteria
- Origins
- Structure
- Measuring Quality
- Changes and Ongoing Development
- Benefits
- The Spin

What is it?

- One of several tools for managing Toronto's Child Care System
- City's expectations for child care programs
- Advice to parents what their expectations should be
- Hierarchy of Policy, Service Plan and Criteria
- Feedback to Service Planning and City Budget

Origins

- Need for accountability in purchased (community operated) child care programs
- Issues of low quality programs in high need areas in late 1980's
- Interpreting DNA language
- Ensuring consistency

Structure

- Different OC for different type of program
 - Criteria for licensed child care centres was developed first and are most mature
 - Criteria for Special Needs Agencies, Home Child Care, and Family Resource Programs are in various stages of implementation
 - City run ARC programs (recreation-based program for school age children)
 - All Criteria are developed in consultation with the child care community and tested before release

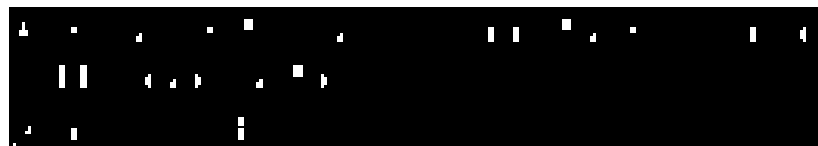
Structure

- Sections
 - Introduction
 - Age Specific Criteria – separate Infant, Toddler, Preschool and School Age
 - Playground
 - Administration
 - Nutrition
 - Financial
 - “Working Together”
 - Appendices – clarifications, glossary etc.

Components of Quality

- Structural components are measured primarily in the Administration Section
 - Ratios
 - Proportion of fully trained staff
 - Evidence of, and use of a curriculum
- Process components are found primarily within the individual age group sections
 - The age group assessment are the one currently published on City's website
 - The data is published as an aggregate of rooms serving the same age group and compared to overall City results and previous assessment

Average Ratings for the Centre's 3 Pre-School Rooms compared to All Assessed Pre-School Rooms



Date: April 29, 2010

Subsection	2008		2009	
	Centre Average	City Average	Centre Average	City Average
Pre-School Program Totals	2.9	3.7	3.0	3.6
Activities and Experiences	2.1	3.8	2.4	3.7
Physical Environment	2.7	3.5	2.8	3.6
Learning	3.0	3.6	2.8	3.6
Physical Needs	2.9	3.7	3.4	3.7
Health and Safety	2.9	3.7	3.0	3.6
Interactions	3.3	3.7	3.1	3.6

Rating of 3.0 means that the program meets the minimum requirements of City of Toronto Operating Criteria. The maximum rating is 4.0.

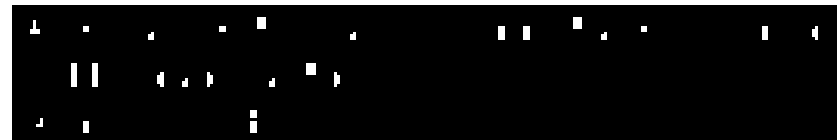
Program evaluated on August 26, 2009, by a [Children's Services Consultant](#)

[Description of Criteria Subsections](#)

Toronto Operating Criteria

Pre-School Rating by Criteria Subsection

Average Ratings for the Centre's 3 Pre-School Rooms compared to All Assessed Pre-School Rooms



Date: April 29, 2010

Subsection	2008		2009			
	Centre Average	City Average	Centre Average	City Average	Action Required by	Action Verified on
Pre-School Program Totals	2.9	3.7	3.0	3.6		
Activities and Experiences	2.1	3.8	2.4	3.7		
Daily Schedule	2.7	3.8	3.0	3.7	August 28, 2009	
Program Plans Posted	1.7	4.0	2.0	3.9	August 27, 2009	September 3, 2009
Activities And Experiences	2.0	3.6	2.3	3.6	August 31, 2009	September 3, 2009

Validating Operating Criteria

- City contracted with OISE (Dr. Perlman) to determine if the Criteria are capable of measuring Quality
- Process integrity= responsibility of the City
 - Inter-rater reliability – annual re-testing
 - Ongoing training

Ongoing Changes

- Improvements
 - Clarification of language
 - Interpretation guidelines
- Additions and extensions
 - New sections such as financial management and community integration
 - Expansion to cover Home Child Care and Family Resource Programs

Benefits of Operating Criteria

- Children and Families
- Service Providers
 - Self-assessment and evaluation
 - Access to program supports, training opportunities and justification for future budget adjustments
 - Posted data are used in program promotion

Child Care System Benefits

- Improved accountability
- Monitoring of change, e.g.
 - Impact of ELP
 - Base funding shortfalls
- Research ... connecting the dots
- Feedback to Service Planning and Policy Development

Cost of Quality Assessment

- Approximately 2,500 rooms with 40,000 children
- 1.5 hrs per room (normally 2 rooms in 2 hours)
- 3,750 hours per year
- Less than 3 FTE at 200 days per person
 - Remainder spent on training, evaluation etc.
- At \$100,000 per FTE assessor
- Cost child/day = 2.8 cents, \$7.31 per year

Future Challenges

- Addressing the dual role of Children's Services Consultants
- Incorporation of ELECT
- Extending Operating Criteria to all child care programs
- Ongoing exploration of methodological issues

Conclusion

- Formal, standardized program assessments are essential
- Self-assessments are important, but not sufficient to ensure program quality
- Quality assessment must be a transparent processes
- Public access to information
- Who is the client?

More information?

www.toronto.ca/children

- Toronto Operating Criteria for child care centres
- Critères d'exploitation de la Ville de Toronto
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