Steps to Accreditation

For child care center and preschool directors and owners

Pursuing state accreditation assists early childhood programs in improving their quality of service. Accredited programs provide research-based, high quality early childhood education that benefits children, parents, and local school systems. Whether you're already working to become accredited, or you're just beginning to consider the possibilities, the Howard County Office of Children's Services can help you through the process. Join us at these upcoming workshops to learn more about how and why to become accredited.

1. **MSDE Orientation: Overview of Accreditation**
   This workshop is *required* for programs pursuing MSDE Accreditation.
2. **Organizing the Self-Appraisal Process**
3. **Indicators, Best Practices, and Rating**
4. **Program Improvement Plan and Implementation**
5. **Organizing Your Documentation**

Instructor Joan Johnson is an experienced validator for MSDE and will help you through the process. If you are actively pursuing accreditation, your program is also eligible for free technical assistance, mentoring, and a program improvement visit.

Please see complete course descriptions, dates, and locations on the back of this flyer. These classes are open only to preschool and center directors and owners; other teachers may enroll only with permission of the instructor. All classes meet in the OCS training room. The first class in the series is free; classes 2 - 5 are $20 each. You are welcome to register for just one class or for the complete series.

For more information on the Steps to Accreditation series, call 410-313-1432.

This series is offered by the Howard County Office of Children's Services.

Department of Citizen Services
Office of Children's Services

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Programs that are actively pursuing Accreditation are also eligible for a Program Improvement Visit. At this visit, experienced validators will assist your program in identifying improvement areas and setting a timeline for completion. Up to four hours of technical assistance and mentoring are also available to programs needing additional assistance. These services are free to eligible programs.

1. Orientation: Overview of Accreditation **Wednesday, March 7 1:00 - 3:00 pm**
Overview of the early childhood accreditation and validation process. Become acquainted with standards, focus areas, supporting documents, self-appraisal, and rating process. Learn about the validation process and discuss selecting a self-appraisal team. This workshop is required for programs pursuing MSDE Accreditation. (2 PRO)

2. Organizing the Self-Appraisal Process **Wednesday, March 21 1:00 - 3:00 pm**
Bring your Program Accreditation documents. Discuss forming a self-appraisal team and learn to help your team become familiar with the Standards document. Learn the self-appraisal process for each age group, and understand your own role in self-appraisal. Create a timeline for self-appraisal and validation, review the Classroom Learning Materials Checklist, and complete your application paperwork. (2 PRO)

3. Indicators, Best Practices, and Rating **Wednesday, April 4 12:30 - 3:30 pm**
Explore each focus area of the Program Standards. Bring your copies of the Standards. Discuss program administration, operation, and partnerships with families and the community. Identify and consider the best practices of your program. Help your staff understand the "why" of the standards, and discuss programming examples that reflect quality early childhood programs. (1 PRO, 1 CUR, 1 COM)

4. Program Improvement Plan & Implementation **Wednesday, April 25 1:00 - 3:00 pm**
Analyze the results of your self-appraisal to help identify your program's strengths and weaknesses. Learn to develop your program improvement plan, implement strategies, and assess the improvements within your established timeline. (2 PRO)

5. Organizing Your Documentation **Wednesday, May 9 1:00 -3:00 pm**
Review all required documents and discuss how to organize your paperwork. Make sure your documents are clearly written and meet Standard requirements. Understand why it's important to present clear and concise information about your program. (2 PRO)

Registration Form for Steps to Accreditation

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ _____

E-mail _____ Date of Birth _____

☐ Center Director ☐ Center Owner ☐ Center Staff

Name of Center or Preschool_____

___ Mar 7 1. MSDE Orientation: Overview of Accreditation (free)

___ Mar 21 2. Organizing the Self-Appraisal Process ($20)

___ Apr 4 3. Indicators, Best Practices, and Rating ($20)

___ Apr 25 4. Program Improvement Plan and Implementation ($20)

___ May 9 5. Organizing Your Documentation ($20)

Total Payment Amount: _____

Register online at www.howardcountymd.gov/children, or choose one of the following options:

Payment By Check or Money Order	**OR**	**Payment By Credit Card**	**Mail to:** Howard County OCS
Enclose your check or money order made out to Director of Finance.		Card Number: _____ _____ _____ _____ Expiration Date: _____ / _____ Name on Card: _____	3300 N. Ridge Rd. Suite 380 Ellicott City, MD 21043