

Guidelines, learning objectives, and self evaluation — Winter 2011

In Texas, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) regulates the training of people who work in home- and center-based facilities.

Must training meet criteria? DFPS recognizes clock hours or continuing education units (CEU) from various sources including 1) workshops offered by local school districts, colleges or universities, or child care licensing; 2) conferences; 3) self-instructional materials; and 4) planned learning opportunities. See minimum standards, §746.1317 for center-based care and §747.1315 for home-based care for further details.

All training must include specifically stated learning objectives; a curriculum, which includes experiential or applied activities; an assessment to determine whether the person has met the objectives; and a certificate of successful completion.

Does DFPS approve training resources or trainers for clock hours? No. It's your responsibility to obtain relevant training from reliable resources. DFPS does recommend, however, that you preview all training materials and ask trainers to verify their knowledge of the subject—both experience and education, and training qualifications.

What is instructor-led training? This is usually a class led by an instructor, who communicates and interacts with learners by answering questions, providing feedback, and offering guidance or information on resources. Advantages include getting a break from the isolation of your work, networking and support, sharing knowledge, and learning about different practices in early care and education.

What is self-instructional training? This is training in which an individual works alone, at her own pace, to complete lessons or modules without the direction, assistance, or feedback of an instructor. That is why CPR and first aid training cannot be obtained through self-instructional training.

DFPS limits the number of annual training hours you can obtain from self-instructional materials. Check your minimum standards for details on these limitations; for home-based care, see §747.1325. For center-based care, see §746.1327.

ALL TRAINING MUST INCLUDE SPECIFICALLY STATED LEARNING OBJECTIVES.

How do I verify training for DFPS? To be counted toward compliance with minimum standards, the trainer or training source should provide you with a certificate or letter showing: your name, date of the training, title or subject of the training, the trainer's name or the training source for self-instructional training, and the length of the training specified in clock hours, CEU's, or college credit hours.

Keep all documentation in a safe place like a file cabinet or personnel file. DFPS licensing representatives may ask to review self-instructional materials to ensure training criteria are met. Do not mail your documentation to child care licensing or to the *Texas Child Care Quarterly*.

Can I use Texas Child Care for self-instructional training? Yes. DFPS will recognize two clock hours of self-instructional training credit from this issue, provided you do the following: 1. Review the learning objectives and evaluation checklist. 2. Study all articles that relate to your work with children. 3. Respond to the checklist with documented evidence (written descriptions, photographs, and

charts, for example). Continue to study the article until you can provide documentation and answer “Yes” to each skill. 4. Attach a copy of the checklist or a cover page to your documentation. Be sure to include your name, the date you completed the documentation, and identify the issue and titles of the articles you studied.

Learning objectives and evaluation checklist

Deserts: Expand your learning oasis

- I can define and describe in writing the following words: *desert*, *drought*, *oasis*, and *precipitation*.
- I can demonstrate through photos, lesson plans, activity logs, and child observations how I introduced desert wildlife and vegetation to my class.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, activity logs, and written observations children’s participation in at least five of the activities presented in this article.

Using small groups and workstations: From chaotic to constructive

- I can describe in writing at least three significant research findings that support the use of small group clusters in early childhood classrooms.
- I can describe in writing my understanding of the most effective approaches to small group formation and support.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, portfolio entries, journals, and anecdotal records the ways in which I’ve used small groups and workstations to support children’s learning.

Free and easy sock crafts

- I can describe in writing why it’s important to help children learn to repurpose rather than discard potential learning materials.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, activity logs, and written observations children’s participation in at least five of the activities presented in this article.

Woodworking: A constructive learning center

- I can describe in writing at least five ways in which woodworking activities support the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children.

- I can demonstrate through photos, lesson plans, activity logs, and child observations how I introduced woodworking concepts (including safety rules) to my class.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, activity logs, and written observations the ways in which I’ve helped children participate in woodworking activities.

Which character traits help children succeed?

- I can describe in writing the differences between *character traits* and *children’s moral development*.
- I can describe in writing how I can encourage the children in my care to develop, in ways appropriate to their developmental levels, the following character traits: persistence, curiosity, gratitude, self-discipline, and passion. ■