



## Basic Practices in the Care of Young Children

### SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

This Self-Assessment is designed to help you reflect on your program, provide a picture for the LifeWays consultant who will visit, and help you formulate areas you might want to discuss with her. Both our Program Services Director, Shanah Ahmadi, and the LifeWays consultant arranged to visit will use this form to be better resources for you.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Program website if you have one: \_\_\_\_\_

Facebook page? \_\_\_\_\_

Your cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Program phone if there is one: \_\_\_\_\_

Your email: \_\_\_\_\_

Program email if different: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the program in your home? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, please provide your home address as well: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What days and hours are you open?

How many children (total) do you serve, and what is their age range?

How many children do you care for each day?

Do you work alone or with an assistant? (If a larger center, please describe the groups and whether or not the lead teachers have taken the LifeWays training.)

How long have you been offering the program?

Are you licensed in your state?

When and where did you take the LifeWays Certificate Training?

Do you have children of your own (ages):

Have you taken other Waldorf-related trainings or courses?



## Basic Practices in the Care of Young Children

### SELF ASSESSMENT FORM

Please respond to all **applicable** statements. Please write on the back if you need more space and list the number of the question you are continuing.

#### I. Relationship-Based Care of the Children

1. *Family-style* care, to include keeping children with the same caregivers/teachers for at least 2-3 consecutive years in order for them to have continuity of care whenever possible is a priority.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. I/We enjoy having children of mixed ages and are able to meet their varied developmental needs.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

3. I/We work to foster a strong relationship with each child and believe that bonding and continuity of care are important to support the development of children's social, emotional and intellectual skills.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

4. Relationship to the children is warm and loving with healthy objectivity rather than sentimentality.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

5. Infants are held and comforted as needed, taking care that they are given ample time for self-movement and floor time. Most of the interactive time with the infants is during diapering, clothing, feeding or soothing. By giving them out-of-arms time they learn how to self-soothe and to move freely on the floor.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

6. Whenever possible and appropriate relationships are established with senior adults and youth who visit on a regular basis. This creates a rich multi-generational community for the children and families. Throughout the year, the children are given opportunities to demonstrate gratitude to the elders who have become a part of their life experience.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

## II. Work with the Parents

1. I/We believe it is of primary importance to support healthy bonding between the children and their parents to include sharing heart-warming stories with the parents about their children.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. I/We work to develop a working partnership between the children's parents and the caregiver(s) by meeting with the parents of each child annually in a private meeting and through daily interaction.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

3. Further partnership with the parents is developed by offering a topical parent evening twice a year. This supports the parents' understanding of our approach to caregiving and the work with The Living Arts (domestic, nurturing, social and creative).

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

## III. Communications

1. For those children who are enrolled from three to five days a week, I/we visit their home within the first year of the child's enrollment. This may be as brief as afternoon tea or for dinner or a birthday party. It can give the child a sense of cohesiveness between home and childcare and can also help to better understand family dynamics. If the family is uncomfortable with such a visit, then I/we wait until they may become more comfortable.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. I/We offer a regular newsletter (ideally twice a year) with news about center activities and informative articles for the parents.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

#### IV. Working with Colleagues

1. I/We foster a healthy, respectful working relationship with colleagues. This includes finding the courage to speak with a colleague about disagreements and finding the time to share a kind word with colleagues on a regular basis.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. I/We participate in regular staff meetings (minimally monthly) and contribute to the topics being discussed.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

#### V. Work with the Living Arts – Domestic, Nurturing, Creative and Social

1. In keeping with the model of the home, where the children play while the adults tend to the care of the household, my/our weekly routine includes the following domestic activities (**please check those that you do**):

laundry (washing, drying, folding)  ironing  cleaning bathroom (toilet, floors, sink)  
 gardening  dusting  sweeping/mopping  repairing things  
 setting the table (tableware, napkins, placemats or tablecloth)  baking  
 food preparation (chopping, cutting, mixing, etc.)  
 ongoing craft work such as sewing, crocheting, knitting, weaving, woodworking, or such.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. Every day (with rare exception) the children two and older participate (with simple chores) in clean up, table setting, and/or other daily life activities. If children 3.5 or older do things haphazardly, messily or without care they are given the necessary time to go back and do it properly so that their skills can be strengthened.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

3. Every day (with rare exception) the children two and older participate in clean up after lunch.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

4. My/Our weekly routine includes the following nurturing activities for the children (please check those that apply):

singing  teaching them hand washing  teaching them tooth brushing  footbaths or foot rubs  
 face washing  oiling/putting salve on face and hands  rocking/cuddling/lap time  
 storytelling  puppetry  giving them plenty of time to get themselves dressed and undressed  
 taking time and having gentle interactions with infants/toddlers when diapering, clothing and feeding them

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

5. When diapering an infant or clothing a child, it is done, as much as possible, the same way every time, engaging with the child and without rushing.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

6. When clothing or diapering a child, time is allowed for the child to participate (e.g., pull up the socks or underpants). It is developmentally supportive when children feel that they are participating in their care, rather than just having something done to them. They are not rushed.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

7. Doing domestic and nurturing activities routinely every day and every week is equally as important as doing craft or artistic projects with children. Time for such activities is prioritized.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

8. I/We do one-on-one nursery rhyme songs and body games with each infant and toddler at least three times a week.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

9. At story time, the children hear the same story for at least 2-3 weeks before introducing another story. This deepens the children's relationship to the story. Stories are chosen to serve the developmental stages of the children and to represent goodness and beauty.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

10. At story time, stories are told, rather than read, at least 50% of the time.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

11. When a story is told or read, it is not done with drama, but rather a soothing cadence with slight variations. I/We also pause throughout the story to give the children time to digest the images.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

12. When telling or reading a story, I/we do not engage the children in conversation. Rather they are allowed to dream into the images of the story. If the children begin asking questions or try to engage the storyteller in conversation, I/we continue on with the story rather than answering or chatting back with them. This helps them to re-engage in the story and also serves the other children who want to hear the story without interruption.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

14. In the Pre-School/Kindergarten program in our childcare setting, the older children are offered more in-depth stories (simple fairy tales, for example) and more involved craft projects, as well as extended nature walks, with the pedagogical inspiration of Waldorf early childhood education.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

15. Giving children an abundant amount of time for self-directed play and exploration while the caregiver(s)/teacher(s) are tending to the “hearth” is a high priority. If there is a need to enter into their play to help resolve an issue or to support their creativity, the goal is to extract back out of their play as quickly as possible.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

16. The children go outside in all but the most inclement weather (extreme cold or heat, dangerous wind, heavy rain) in order to help them become more robust and strengthen their bond with the environment in which they live.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

17. The children spend long stretches of time outside.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

18. I/We sing for and with the children throughout the day.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

19. Our food program serves primarily organic foods. Lunch is a good balance of organic vegetables, fruits, protein, and grains from whole foods, not processed or canned foods. All meat and dairy served is organic, if possible.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

20. Food preparation is routinely done in the presence of and/or with the children.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

21. Breakfast, when able, is a warm meal; e.g., oatmeal or other warmed cereal.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

22. At least one or two traditional seasonal festivals are offered a year.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

23. I/We recognize that children's birthdays mark a sacred event in the child's life and have developed a birthday celebration that sets a celebratory, but not silly, mood. A mood of gratitude is fostered at such times. For example, the birthday child is encouraged to express thanks to friends and family who are present, perhaps by having him or her serve others before serving herself or himself.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

24. While understanding the importance of allowing children and infants to cry at times, I/we avoid letting them work themselves into a state of extreme agitation.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

25. The infants are carefully wrapped or swaddled for sleeping to provide a healthy sense of security and warmth.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:



26. Cotton, silk or wool caps are provided for infants up to one year old to protect their sensitive heads and ears. Parents are encouraged to do this at home as well.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

27. I/We do my best to have clear, articulate, melodic speech. In accordance with research, melodic speech (called mother-ese) is important for the language development of infants. Clear speech is important for all young children.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

28. The content of what I/we speak about with the children primarily has to do with what is happening in the present. This allows the children to more fully be present, schools their attentiveness and can help them to be less hyperactive and more relaxed into the NOW. I/We avoid meaningless conversation

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

## **VI. Physical Space**

1. The majority (90-95%) of toys provided are of natural materials and lend themselves to the imaginative, open-ended play of the child.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. A protected area is provided outside for crawlers and infants. Where it is possible, infants who fall asleep outside can remain outside, snugly wrapped and covered in a buggy, until time for everyone to go in. Fresh air provides a deep, more restful sleep.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

3. The outside play equipment is primarily natural.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

4. The care setting is a television- and video-free environment except for use in administration and adult education.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

5. Infants are provided safe environments in which to explore and move freely – no walkers, bouncers, infant gyms, or other mechanical devices are necessary.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

## VII. Self Development

1. The approach to child guidance uses various components of the L.O.V.E. Approach to Discipline and/or other forms of creative discipline.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. I/We recognize the importance of having a daily inner practice such as prayer or meditation and taking care of physical health through diet, exercise and drinking enough water.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

3. I/We continue studies of child development, in particular the insights of Rudolf Steiner and contemporary child development theorists whose ideals resonate with Steiner's developmental insights.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

4. I/We attend an early childhood conference every year, making sure that at least every other year, it is a Waldorf/Steiner-inspired conference.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

5. I/We recognize that caring for young children and supporting growing families requires a continual process of personal growth and development. I/We will continue to work on the above-mentioned qualities or actions over time.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

### **VIII. Administration**

1. Our center/home/program is financially healthy with a balanced budget.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

2. Our debts are paid off in an acceptable and timely manner.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

3. We have a respectable reputation within our local community.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

4. We meet local and state licensing requirements.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

5. Our center has a strong board to support our work (this is for organizations that are incorporated).

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

6. All primary caregivers and the director have completed the LifeWays training.

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Want to Improve  Do Not Agree With This Practice

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form. Please send it, along with a copy of your daily/weekly schedule and/or brochure if you have one, and your Representative application if you have not already sent it. Please mail to Rose Rock School % Shanah Ahmadi, 1515 W. Main St., Norman, OK 73069 or email to [roserockschool@gmail.com](mailto:roserockschool@gmail.com)

## Helpful Suggestions for Equipment in Child Care

### ***Regular Furniture (like in a home)***

Rocking Chair

Tables (coffee, end tables, etc.)

Chests of drawers for children's spare clothes

Lamps

Rugs or carpets for some areas

Shelves

Framed fine art prints and/or simple sculptures

Couch

Dining table and chairs or benches (comfortable for adults as well as children)

House plants

### ***Children's Furniture***

Children's play kitchen

Play Climbing Stairs/Rocking Boat

Children's play table and chairs

Protected area for Infant

Wood Work Bench

Containers for water play or allowed to play in sink or tub

### ***Sleep Related***

One crib for every child under one

Natural fiber bedding (sheets,blankets)  
Cribs or porta-cribs for children one to two  
Cots for children over two  
Lambskins for under bedding  
Cot Dividers for making canopies (simple play frame)  
Fabric for the canopies (some centers opt not to have the canopies)  
Baby monitor

### ***Dining Related***

Highchairs (prefer wooden) for children 6-18 months (must have strap)  
Dishes  
Booster Seats (optional)  
Cloth napkins  
Washing cloths for faces and hands  
Bibs  
Table cloths and/or placemats  
Candles  
Kitchen Stove  
Candle Holder, Snuffer  
Dishwasher  
Cooking Utensils  
Refrigerator  
Pots & Pans

### **Helpful Equipment Suggestions Cont.**

### ***Dining***

Mixing bowls/cake pan  
Labels for foods  
Refrigerator thermometer for licensing  
Food storage containers  
Posting place for menus  
Crumb catchers  
Table settings – plates, cups, utensils, etc.

### ***Play Equipment***

Dolls  
Silk cloths/cotton cloths for play and decorating  
Pull toys  
A few age appropriate games  
Art supplies  
Lambskins  
Simple puppets  
Musical instruments  
Hollow blocks  
Things for toddlers to stack and to fill & dump  
Dress-up clothes  
Cotton cloths (like handkerchiefs) for infants to play with  
A few simple baby rattles  
Books – just a few special ones  
Large wooden trucks  
Cardboard boxes of varying sizes to play with

## ***Outside***

Gardening supplies – rakes, shovels, spades, hoes, etc. (adult- and child-sized)  
Swings – that children can get in and out of themselves  
Beginner bicycles without pedals  
Enough strollers for taking infants on walks  
Buggies/prams for outside - large enough for a child to sleep in  
Outside wagons  
Mound for climbing – dirt hill or rock hill  
Wheelbarrow  
Trees and bushes for climbing and hiding  
Hammock  
Fort-building materials like old lumber and tree limbs  
Picnic tables  
Sandbox and buckets and shovels, etc.  
Outdoor adult chairs  
Water pump  
Fence

## **Helpful Equipment Suggestions Cont.**

### ***Housekeeping***

Toilet bowl brush  
Washing Machine and Dryer  
Buckets  
Washtub & wash board  
Tubs for washing  
Clothes line and clothespins  
Brooms and mops (adult and child sized)  
Adult Ironing Board/Iron  
Microfiber cloths for spills and big messes  
Natural dishwashing soap (not antibacterial)

### ***Nurturing Care***

Healing basket with ointments, band aids, treasures, etc.  
Wash basin for foot baths  
Hair brushes  
Toothbrushes  
Spare natural fiber undershirts and long-sleeve shirts  
Other spare outdoor clothes (hats, mittens, rain boots, etc.)  
Cotton, wool or silk baby caps  
Diapering pads for each child  
Individual washcloths and towels  
Acceptable oils and ointments  
Natural hand washing soap – not antibacterial  
Places of beauty, creating a place for the eye to rest and be nurtured, corner by corner until the whole room speaks comfort and peace, order and form, practical intention *and home sweet home.*

