



**CIRCLE**  
INFANT & TODDLER  
TEACHER COMPETENCIES

**Observation & Notetaking Form**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Center \_\_\_\_\_

Coach \_\_\_\_\_

School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Observation Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_



## CIRCLE INFANT & TODDLER TEACHER COMPETENCIES

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Center \_\_\_\_\_

Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Obs. Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

PL=Priority Level    OB=Observed    NS=Observed but Needs Support

PL	Teaching Behavior		Evidence / Notes
<b>LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>PROVIDING RICH LANGUAGE</b>			
1	<b>Labels objects, concepts, and actions</b> throughout the day.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
1	<b>Describes objects</b> (how they look, feel, smell, etc.), <b>experiences</b> (e.g., "that was a long walk"), <b>or feelings or internal states</b> (e.g., "she looks tired").	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
1	<b>Makes comparisons</b> by talking <b>about</b> how <b>things</b> are the same (or not the same) and by talking about opposites (e.g., big/small).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
2	<b>Explains how things work</b> or <b>why things are done a certain way</b> (e.g., "We are going to walk quietly because the babies are sleeping").	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
2	<b>Links new objects, ideas, or concepts by making connections</b> to something the child already knows or has experienced (e.g., "That cat is black, just like the one we read about in the book yesterday.")	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
2	<b>Narrates what is happening</b> (e.g., "Ava is eating green peas today. Here comes the spoon!").	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
2	<b>"Thinks aloud" by saying his or her perspective out loud</b> (e.g., "My favorite fruit is banana. I wonder if there will be bananas in this story?").	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
<b>ELICITING LANGUAGE</b>			
2	<b>Elicits language from children by asking</b> a variety of both closed- and open-ended questions.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
2	<b>Encourages two-way conversation</b> by pausing, making eye contact, asking questions, and allowing children to both initiate and respond to conversational topics.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	
3	<b>Provides opportunities</b> for children <b>to participate</b> both verbally and nonverbally in group activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS	

PL	Teaching Behavior	Evidence / Notes
RESPONDING CONTINGENTLY		
2	<b>Paces interactions with children</b> by speaking and moving at rates that match children's speed and pausing <b>to allow turn-taking in conversation</b> (including with nonverbal children).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Extends children's interest by adding new content or ideas</b> to broaden children's understanding or vocabulary (e.g., child points to a plane, teacher says "That's plane flying in the sky. Planes can go really fast. I wonder where that one is going?").	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Accepts children's incorrect communication and gently rephrases it</b> , modeling the correct grammar and pronunciation or adding words to make a complete sentence.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Provides an upward scaffold</b> in response to children's correct and complete verbalizations and gestures <b>by providing additional details</b> to deepen children's background knowledge and vocabulary.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Provides a downward scaffold</b> in response to children's incorrect, incomplete, or missing verbalizations and gestures by using techniques such as <b>simplifying the question, starting a word or phrase, and prompting for imitation</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
EARLY LITERACY		
BOOK READING		
1	<b>Reads with an enthusiastic or dramatic voice</b> and moderates tone based on the content of the book.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Shares control of the book</b> by letting children hold it, turn the pages, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Begins book reading by capturing children's attention</b> and inviting their interest in the book. (for infants, positioning / for toddlers, rounding them up, excited).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Pauses to talk</b> and ask questions <b>about pictures in the book</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Encourages participation in book readings</b> (e.g., encourages children to touch/hold books; points to pictures, responds to questions, acts out the story).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Sings songs and recites rhymes</b> , and encourages children's participation.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Uses props and/or extension activities</b> that are linked to book content (e.g., puppets, dramatic play around book plot).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Links book content to children's own experiences</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS

PL	Teaching Behavior	Evidence / Notes
<b>PRINT AND WRITING</b>		
2	<b>Encourages play with drawing, painting, or writing tools</b> that promote fine motor skills.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Models writing as opportunities arise</b> (e.g., writing children's names on artwork; dictating children's vocalizations) (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	Takes advantage of incidental opportunities to <b>point out environmental print and letters of the alphabet</b> (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
<b>COGNITIVE SKILLS</b>		
<b>OBSERVING AND THINKING SKILLS</b>		
2	Draws attention to details of objects, actions, and events to <b>encourage observation</b> ; encourages toddlers to verbalize their own observations.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Demonstrates and explains how things work</b> to help children understand cause and effect.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Talks about sequence</b> including steps to complete a task, repeated patterns, a daily schedule, or time concepts (e.g., today, tomorrow, before, next).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	Promotes <b>flexibility in thinking</b> by playing games that include <b>small surprises</b> or <b>hide-and-find</b> , offering <b>open-ended materials</b> and encouraging <b>multiple uses</b> (e.g., using a block as a phone), or <b>explaining schedule changes</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Models "thinking aloud"</b> by talking as s/he <b>thinks through a problem, considers options</b> , or reflects on an outcome.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
<b>HANDS-ON LEARNING</b>		
1	Offers <b>opportunities and experiences</b> for infants and toddlers to <b>explore using all five senses</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Follows children's lead to <b>maintain their attention</b> and support their interests.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Encourages imitation</b> when demonstrating skills and extending play.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Encourages continued effort, persistence</b> , or hard work on a task or problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Models and joins in pretend play</b> (with or without props) (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Engages children in math activities</b> such as shape recognition, counting, measuring, sorting, or classifying (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS

PL	Teaching Behavior	Evidence / Notes
<b>SCAFFOLDING LEARNING</b>		
3	Scaffolds children's learning by <b>simplifying</b> (e.g., <b>breaking down task into smaller steps</b> ; demonstrating and <b>prompting for imitation</b> ; <b>starting a task for child to finish</b> ; giving <b>hand-over-hand</b> assistance; giving <b>clues</b> or prompts; <b>simplifying a task by narrowing choices</b> ; offering a simpler version of a toy).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	Scaffolds children's learning by adding <b>challenge</b> (offering a more <b>difficult task</b> ; offering <b>more choices</b> ; suggesting a <b>new challenge</b> .)	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
<b>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>BUILDING TRUST AND EMOTIONAL SECURITY</b>		
1	<b>Responds promptly and sensitively</b> (warmly and with genuine concern/understanding) to children's verbal and nonverbal signals, feelings, interests, and needs.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Expresses warmth and affection</b> through positive nonverbal behaviors such as getting down to <b>child's eye level</b> , <b>smiling</b> , <b>cuddling</b> , <b>using reassuring touch</b> , <b>gentle tone of voice</b> , and <b>pacing</b> that matches the child's energy level.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Provides comfort</b> to children in distress by responding quickly and calmly to provide <b>physical comfort</b> , or simply using <b>gentle, soothing words</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Is <b>consistent and predictable</b> in responsive behaviors, following through with commitments to children, and being consistent in classroom management and setting limits on behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Follows a <b>consistent daily schedule and routines</b> (may be shown by including <b>signals for transition routines</b> , references to visual daily schedule, talks about schedule, talks about change in daily routine when needed).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Explains what comes next</b> using simple reminders, especially before and during transitions.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	Models <b>respect for diversity</b> including culture, ethnicity, gender roles, special needs, and home languages, includes reading books or using materials that reflect diverse backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
<b>PROMOTING EMOTIONAL UNDERSTANDING</b>		
2	<b>Labels feelings</b> and emotions expressed by infants and toddlers, and may also <b>label teacher's own feelings</b> in an appropriate way.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Encourages</b> children to <b>talk about their feelings</b> ; may include modeling talking about own feelings, feelings of peers and/or characters in a story, and inviting children to continue such conversation (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	Makes <b>connections</b> between children's or storybook characters' <b>emotions, actions, and events</b> (e.g., "Joey stomped his foot because he felt mad"; "The pig was scared when the wolf blew his house down").	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Plans activities</b> to support children's <b>understanding of emotions</b> through songs, book readings, pretend play, or other teacher-initiated activities (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS

PL	Teaching Behavior	Evidence / Notes
<b>SUPPORTING COOPERATION AND SELF-REGULATION</b>		
1	Uses descriptive, <b>specific praise</b> to encourage positive behavior (includes praising children's actions, ideas, cooperation with peers, following directions, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Offers a positive behavior to replace a child's negative or undesired behavior;</b> tells and/or models what children should do instead (e.g., "Let's draw on this paper instead of the wall," or "Use gentle hands like this." Substitute a toy/activity when a child wants a toy that is already in use).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Offers choices</b> between two or three things to allow children to practice independence and build self-confidence. <i>Excludes choices offered to redirect behavior.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	Offers verbal and physical <b>clues for self-control</b> such as <b>gestures, songs/rhymes</b> that remind children to use specific behaviors, modeling <b>how to ask for help</b> , or <b>offering alternative behavior choices</b> (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
<b>SUPPORTING SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>		
1	Engages in <b>back-and-forth play</b> , (e.g., peek-a-boo, rolling a car or ball back and forth) including <b>sharing control</b> and giving child enough time to take a turn.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Models prosocial behaviors</b> throughout the day, including using <b>polite manners, offering comfort, modeling turn-taking</b> and <b>sharing</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	Helps children <b>share space</b> by finding places for them to sit or stand when needed, providing enough materials, and modeling cooperative play.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Supports turn-taking</b> by modeling, explaining why and how to take turns, prompting, and specifically praising taking turns.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Plans small or large group activities for peer interactions</b> by creating opportunities to engage in back-and-forth peer play, work together on a task, or group songs/games/dances.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	<b>Prompts children for peer interaction behaviors</b> such as words and gestures for greetings, polite manners, invitations to play, requests to peers, and responses to questions from peers.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
3	Helps <b>resolve conflicts with peers</b> by staying close during play times, remaining calm, giving children words and actions they can use with each other, setting limits to keep children safe, offering help, and encouraging empathy.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS

PL	Teaching Behavior	Evidence / Notes
<b>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>SUPPORTING FINE AND GROSS MOTOR SKILLS</b>		
1	Engages <b>infants</b> in <b>tummy time activities</b> (infants only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Provides <b>supported sitting for infants</b> (e.g., in lap, various kinds of seats) (infants only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Promotes <b>gross motor skills</b> (crawling, pulling to stand, jumping, dancing, ball play, running, climbing, balancing, etc.) with <b>games, toys, and songs</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Promotes <b>fine motor practice</b> (e.g., grasping skills, building with blocks, lacing, simple puzzles, fill-and-empty activities); supports <b>hand-eye coordination</b> and/or <b>using both hands together</b> . <i>Excludes drawing, painting, or writing tools; see Early Literacy domain.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
<b>PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b>		
1	<b>Responds</b> promptly to <b>signals of physical needs</b> , including pain, discomfort, need for diaper change/potty; hunger or feeding cues; sleepiness.	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	Teaches <b>correct words</b> for <b>body parts</b> and their <b>functions</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Models and encourages independence in hygiene routines</b> (e.g., washing and drying hands, wiping face, blowing nose, covering cough, brushing teeth) (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Supports and encourages independence in feeding skills</b> (e.g., holding bottle, using fingers and/or utensils) (older infants and toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Supports and encourages independence in dressing/undressing</b> (e.g., taking off shoes, unzipping jacket, putting arms through sleeves) (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
1	<b>Supports and encourages independence in toileting routines</b> (e.g., pulling pants down and up at potty time, flushing) (toddlers only).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Talks about</b> and <b>offers nutritious food</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	Teaches <b>words and actions</b> related to <b>safety</b> (e.g, hot, dirty, safe/not safe, danger, stop, spit it out).	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS
2	<b>Models and encourages expression of internal states</b> by <b>verbalizing observations</b> of physical needs (e.g., hunger, fullness, sleepiness, pain, needing a diaper change/potty) and encouraging children to <b>express their needs</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/> OB <input type="checkbox"/> NS