NAFCC Accreditation
The Benefits and Overview of the Process
Presenter’s Handbook
About the NAFCC Accreditation Presentation

This presentation is designed to give an overview of the benefits of accreditation and the accreditation process.

- **Presenter’s Handbook** is designed with notes for each slide of the presentation

- **Presentation** is available as a PowerPoint Slide Show. If you are having difficulty opening the file please email us at accreditation@nafcc.org

- **Handouts** are provided with instructions for use. Please see the next page

- **Brochures** are available for you to print. Fliers are available to be mailed to you. Please submit your request with an appropriate shipping address in writing to accreditation@nafcc.org.
About the Handouts for “NAFCC Accreditation” Presentation

The Accreditation Process

This is an overview of the process to be handed out at the beginning of the session. Refer participants to this handout at slide #9 in the PPT.

Why Providers Like Accreditation

Refer participants to this handout at slide #15 in the PPT.

Optional: Eligibility Requirements

Refer participants to this handout at slide #11 in the PPT. This information is available at nafcc.org and using it during the presentation is optional.

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Eligibility Requirements for NAFCC Accreditation

In addition to demonstrating compliance with the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation, a provider must meet the following eligibility requirements to be considered for accreditation by NAFCC:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Have a high school diploma or GED
- Provide care to children for a minimum of 15 hours per week
- Provide care to a minimum of three children in a home environment. At least one child must not reside in the provider's home
- Be the primary caregiver, spending at least 80% of the operating hours actively involved with the children. Co-providers must spend at least 60% of the time actively involved with the children
- Have at least 12 months experience as a family child care provider before the observation visit
- Meet the highest level of regulation to operate a family child care program by the authorized regulatory body
- Be in compliance with all regulations of the authorized regulatory body
- Have a favorable state and federal (FBI) criminal history (also applies to assistants, substitutes, and other adults living in the family child care home)
- Be in good health in order to provide a nurturing and stable environment for children (also applies to assistants and substitutes)
- Maintain a current CPR and Pediatric First Aid certification (also applies to assistants and substitutes)
- Adhere to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct
- Complete at least 150 clock hours of documented family child care related education/training within the 3 years prior to submitting the accreditation documentation. Please refer to the NAFCC Accreditation training requirements for more information.

*Includes requirements for assistants and other adults in the home WHERE INDICATED.
NAFCC Accreditation

The Benefits and Overview of the Process
NAFCC works on behalf of the one million family child care providers operating nationwide.

What is NAFCC?

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) is the only national professional association dedicated to promoting high-quality early childhood experiences in the unique environment of family child care programs.

Our Mission
To support and leverage a nationwide network of providers and partners in expanding and promoting the power of family child care.

Our Vision
Influential voice that attracts members and supporters, and ultimately improves the quality and state of early childhood education and development.

Our Values
First and foremost, our focus is on providers.
We work as a team, each role in concert with the whole, in pursuit of our vision.
We provide equal opportunity for any who wish to advance the mission with us.
We consistently ask WHY.
We determine WHAT is right, then HOW to do it. Our decisions and our message are founded in credible data.

About Us
Started in 1982, the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) is the only national professional association dedicated to promoting high-quality early childhood experiences in the unique environment of family child care programs. NAFCC works on behalf of the one million family child care providers operating nationwide.

NAFCC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership association. The NAFCC team operates in Salt Lake City, Utah, Miami, Florida and Washington, DC.

About Family Child Care
Research shows that opportunities in the early years matter for success in school and in life, and family child care providers like NAFCC members are leading the way.

Family child care is the work of child care provided in a professional caregiver’s home. Across the country, family child care homes provide high-quality programs for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, school age, and children with special needs. Building the supply of high-quality family child care is essential for families, for communities, and for expanding early learning opportunities for young children.

Across the country, eleven million children under age five are in child care. There are three million children in family child care. There are approximately 1 million paid providers caring for children in a home-based setting. The supply of licensed family child care is declining when it should be rising to meet the needs of working families and the urgency of early learning opportunities for young children.

Where policy opportunities permit, family child care providers partner to deliver publicly-funded preK and participate in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems. Family child care is an important partner in Head Start, and 600 family child care providers are in Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. Family child care programs enroll families who pay with assistance (subsidy), and support families who are often challenged to find high-quality, reliable child care, including those in need of care in “nontraditional” work hours and in rural communities.

Commitment to Quality: Family Child Care Accreditation
NAFCC has lead the family child care accreditation program for over 25 years. The standards are research-based and demonstrate principles of child growth and development as well as current best practices in the early childhood field.
Accreditation is not just a mark of quality, but a demonstration of commitment to continuous quality improvement.

**NAFCC Policy Priorities**
NAFCC is working to prioritize the role of family child care and promote access, affordability and quality of early care and education. Key issues in 2016 include investment and implementation of the Child Care and Development Block Grant; Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships; the Child and Adult Care Food Program in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization; strengthening the early childhood workforce; and building the supply of high-quality child care in rural communities; for infants and toddlers; and for families who work non-traditional hours.
NAFCC Accreditation:

• Encourages high quality care

• Is designed specifically for family child care providers

The purpose of accreditation is:

• To ensure quality programs through the use of standards and rigorous evaluation criteria
• To stimulate programs toward higher levels of quality and efficiency
• To provide a system for public trust and accountability
NAFCC Accreditation:

• Defines
• Helps
• Promotes
• Serves

• Defines standards of quality for the field of family child care
• Helps parents and policymakers recognize high-quality family child care
• Promotes providers’ self-assessment and professional development
• Serves as a cornerstone in state professional development systems
Accreditation is both a status and a process:

- As a status, accreditation provides public notification that a program meets standards of quality set forth by an accrediting agency

- As a process, accreditation reflects that the program is committed to seeking ways to enhance the quality of services provided
The NAFCC Accreditation Process Includes:

- Standards
- Self-Study
- Peer Review
- Decision

No matter what type of program pursues accreditation, there are some commonly accepted criteria for the process itself:

- A set of standards, often developed by the specific field
- A self-study component during which candidates make quality improvements related to the standards
- A peer review, sometimes referred to as an on-site evaluation
- A decision regarding the candidate’s status

Additionally, accreditation procedures include criteria for monitoring the program during the accreditation period and for update or reaccreditation to ensure that the accreditation status continues to be valid (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

NAFCC Accreditation is awarded to family child care providers who meet the eligibility requirements and the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation. Accreditation reflects a high level of quality through a process that examines all aspects of the family child care program. Once family child care providers become accredited, they agree to abide by the standards set forth and to be measured against those standards with periodic integrity and compliance reviews.
The Quality Standards
for NAFCC Accreditation

The Quality Standards are divided into 5 content areas:
• Relationships
• The Environment
• Developmental Learning Activities
• Safety and Health
• Professional and Business Practices

The NAFCC Quality Standards are built around the concept that relationships are a critical component in providing high quality care. The relationships that a provider develops with individual children, those that are formed among the children themselves, and the relationships with each family are all important factors in how well the program meets the needs of both the provider and the families served.

NAFCC accreditation standards allow providers the flexibility to meet the standards in ways that are meaningful to them and their clients. There are no preconceived expectations about what the family child care environment should look like or how the provider should manage a particular activity. Providers are encouraged to plan a program that fits their needs and their community without using a “cookie cutter” approach.
“Living and breathing the accreditation standards makes my family child care program run more smoothly.”

“The standards allow me to critique and improve my program.”

“There are many right ways a standard can be met. That concept helps me to look at things from new perspectives. Through a kaleidoscope, one turn shows a different picture!”
The NAFCC Accreditation process is designed to be a continuum of quality.

For re-accreditation, providers skip the self-study step because they have maintained their eligibility by completing an annual update.

Refer participants to Overview handout.
Enrolling in self-study is the very first step towards becoming accredited. This is a two-part process:

1. Mastering the standards
2. Collecting information to document you are meeting the eligibility criteria

A complete list of the standards and the eligibility requirements are available at nafcc.org in English and Spanish. (Optional: Eligibility Requirements Handout)

Self-study is the heart of the accreditation process. It is a time for providers to:

- Evaluate themselves and their programs
- Understand the standards
- Make quality improvements
- Gather required documentation for the next step

Providers receive a self-study kit designed to provide the tools needed to be successful in self-study and/or throughout their career as an accredited provider.
Going through the kit contents is optional. If you have time it is highly recommended.

If you have a sample kit, this is a good opportunity to showcase the following items. If you do not have a kit with you can just describe them.

The self-study kit includes:
- Provider Guide to Achieving NAFCC Accreditation
- NAFCC Benchmarks to Quality
- Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation
- Information to share with parents
- NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

The Provider Guide to Achieving NAFCC Accreditation takes candidates through each step of the process. They learn expectations and what must be done to complete each step.

Additionally it includes:
- Forms and charts to record and track professional development and quality improvement goals
- A place to store documents for the application step and for the observation visit
- A guide for developing an option professional portfolio that can be used to market their program
  -Note: if they ask if this is similar to the portfolio they develop for their CDA, the answer is no. It is not required by us and its purpose is to provide a way for them to highlight standards in their program in a way that might be attractive to potential families.

The Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation references the standards in their 5 content areas: Relationships, The Environment, Developmental Learning Activities, Safety and Health, and Professional and Business Practices.

NAFCC Benchmarks to Quality organizes the Quality Standards into four levels, allowing candidates to break self-study into manageable pieces. Candidates track their own progress as they move closer to completing self study. It also helps candidates set realistic professional development goals and offers recognition milestones to celebrate accomplishments during self-study. Each level builds on the previous level(s) so that by the time the candidate has completed Level 4, she will fully meet all of the standards, as well as all of the accreditation process requirements.

Information to share with parents includes information that answers the following questions:
- What is NAFCC?
- What is Accreditation?
- Why does my provider want to be NAFCC Accredited?
• How will accreditation benefit my family?
• How can I help my provider achieve NAFCC Accreditation?

*The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct & Statement of Commitment* - NAFCC has a firm commitment to uphold the highest ethical standards and therefore has adopted the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct. The Code “offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the ethical dilemmas encountered in early care and education...” (NAEYC 2005)
When candidates believe they have made the necessary professional development and quality improvements, they demonstrate their commitment to completing the process when they submit the Accreditation Application.

Upon receipt of the application, NAFCC assesses candidate eligibility for completing the accreditation process. Candidates should submit an application only if they are ready for an observation.
When the application step is complete a trained NAFCC Observer visits the program. This step validates compliance with the NAFCC Quality Standards.

This is the provider’s opportunity to shine! They have already completed all the hard work. Now it is the observer’s job to be the eyes, ears, and face of NAFCC Accreditation and record all the great ways the NAFCC Quality Standards are engrained in the provider’s program.
Observation materials are compiled, scored and reviewed by the NAFCC Accreditation Commission to determine the accreditation decision.

If accreditation is awarded it is valid for 3 years pending the completion of an update.

If the provider does not meet enough standards to become accredited, they are deferred for up to one year while they continue to work on self-study.

The update is due 18 months after accreditation is awarded. After 3 years providers demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the profession of family child care by applying for re-accreditation. They will submit an application and have an observation visit. Self-study is not required for providers that maintained their accreditation for the 3 year award period.
Direct participants to the handout “Reason Why Providers Like NAFCC Accreditation”

Presenter’s choice-In lieu of reading the handout back to participants, choose about 5 of your favorites and share the corresponding quotes.

**Providers learn from the process** -NAFCC has allowed me to come full circle. From learning at the beginning of my career and preparing me to be a quality provider to now teaching others how they too can offer this high quality of care as well. I don’t think I’d be where I am now in the early childhood field without the inspiration that NAFCC accreditation started in me 8 years ago. Bonnie-California

**Accreditation increases providers’ self-esteem** -Accreditation sets you above the average provider. It shows that you really care about your business. It shows that you are into quality. I like the challenge. I want to be the best and accreditation, I feel, puts me at the top of my field and my profession. Catherine-California

**Accreditation helps providers feel professional** -The biggest benefit of being a nationally accredited provider is that when parents walk through my door they will already have a sense of assurance in the quality of my program and everything I do from then on only strengthens my program. Angie-Hawaii
It gives a more concrete definition of quality in family child care - I now feel experts agree I am doing my work correctly. Before accreditation I was a one-woman show always hoping I was doing well enough, but never certain. Wanchalee-Colorado

Accreditation keeps providers excited about their work - I love being accredited for many reasons. Being accredited always keeps me in top form. I always want to live up to the title I have earned so that I can display my accreditation certificate and ribbon with pride. Bonnie-Maryland

Accredited providers become leaders in the field - The most important benefit of accreditation is that it has enabled me to change the perception of my community about family child care through my outreach efforts. I can be a voice for the children and continue to inform the public about quality early care and education in a family child care home through example and action as I teach and educate our future society. Angela-Pennsylvania

Accreditation helps some providers earn more - Becoming an NAFCC Accredited provider has defined me as a professional in the family child care field. I feel more confident about my program and my abilities, and this accreditation helps me to communicate my commitment, expertise and professionalism to parents, families, and other providers. Julie Ann-New Jersey

Accreditation is good for providers, for families, and for children It’s a concept that families understand - Changes that I have gone through in my family child care are making it the best program that it needs to be for the children. Celeste-Wisconsin

Accreditation helps providers develop important community partnerships - Being a family child care provider allows me to have a great network of close support. Angie-Hawaii

Accreditation strengthens the family child care profession - I knew that the process of preparing for the accreditation was allowing me to make changes and the commitment to continue to meet the high standards that the accreditation criteria set for family child care providers. Trudy-NY
Getting started on your NAFCC Accreditation Journey is easy.

You may review the standards at nafcc.org.

NAFCC highly recommends becoming a member to take advantage of significant accreditation fee savings and additional benefits such as advocacy, training, and business resources.
If you are interested in more information please take out your phone and email us RIGHT NOW!