

DSS Topic Areas—How to Decide What's What!

The Department of Social Services (DSS) Division of Child Care Licensing Regulations identifies specific topic areas for training that meets the annual requirements. Below is a description of each topic area:

1. **Curriculum Activities** for children encompasses training that guides teachers in setting up a learning environment and using appropriate classroom materials and activities that meet the learning needs of children within the age group they teach. Training in this category may also include how to use a specific curriculum model, i.e. the Creative Curriculum or High/Scope. Some topics are music, activities to promote development, indoor/outdoor activities, learning centers, room arrangement, art, and children's literature.
2. **Child Growth and Development** covers topics associated with children's developmental domains including physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development. Examples include stages of infancy, gross motor development, and brain development research.
3. **Child Guidance** is training in guidance and classroom management techniques. Strategies used to guide children's behavior can also be addressed. Some examples include positive guidance techniques, anger management for children, reducing conflict and aggression, and specific issues relating to behaviors such as biting, hitting, or tantrums.
4. **Health and Safety** focuses on training in health and safety issues with young children. Some examples include blood borne pathogens, fire safety, hygiene practices, playground safety, infection and illness control, and sanitation procedures.
5. **Professional Development** is training that allows teachers to gain knowledge that enhances their ability within the field of early childhood education. Some examples include stress management, reporting child abuse and neglect, involving families and communities in your program, communicating with parents, and ethics in the early childhood profession.
6. **Program Administration** meets the needs of directors as they learn ways to manage their child care centers or family/group homes. This training is targeted specifically for directors and may encompass trainings in Child Care Regulations, tax laws, record keeping, staff supervision, human resources management, scheduling, and emergency preparedness.
7. **Nutrition** includes training that guides teachers in proper nutrition for children and food preparation guidelines. Some examples include training on the food pyramid, healthy snack options, and menu planning.
8. **Special Needs** includes training that helps teachers identify atypical development in young children. Examples may include how to refer children for further assessment, make classroom adaptations for differing needs, and communicate with and support parents in providing for children's individual needs.

The DSS regulations refer to the topic area of Early Childhood Education. This is not a specific topic area for the training system as all training needs relate to early childhood education. Primarily, children between the ages of birth and five years attend child care programs. After that age, DSS only regulates them in licensed after-school programs.