

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements for Success

Slide #1 Welcome

Welcome to this course titled, **“Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements for Success.”**

This course is developed as part of the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) alignment process, to prepare providers and licensors in their understanding of the “why”, the “what” and the “how” of complying with the updated Foundational Quality Standards for Early Learning Programs (referred to in each course as the Foundational Quality Standards).

Slide #2 Helpful Hints

WA DCYF is pleased to present this e-Learning course! To help provide a positive learning experience for you, please take a moment to review the following “Helpful Hints” summary, detailing what you can expect from this course. A complete listing of Helpful Hints has been added to the Resources section of your learner’s screen for reference.

- If you would like to access and review the full course text, please visit the Resources section of your learner’s screen. You can view, print, or download a full version of the course text that is narrated within each module. The full text will be included in each course and listed as the first resource in the Resources section of your course frame.
- The time to complete the course will depend on the course topic and the pace at which you advance through the slides.
- To help you get the most out of the course, settings are in place to prevent users from skipping ahead through the slides. You can advance through the course when the narration for each slide concludes by selecting the “Next” button, or, go back to review material already presented by selecting the “Previous” button.
- Web links and additional resources will be utilized in some of the courses to enhance your learning experience. We hope you will take time to explore them to further develop your knowledge about the topics being presented.

Slide #3 Introduction

This course is designed to introduce you to the updated Washington Administrative Code or WAC, as well as outline strategies and examples of WAC compliance. Updated WACs will be detailed in each course as a reference and a full listing of the WAC is included in the Resources section of your learner’s screen. You can print or download this resource at any time, either as a reference while you complete this course, or as a resource after the course is completed.

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Slide #4 Learning Outcomes

This course will help early learning professionals understand how to meet, assess for, and demonstrate ongoing compliance with the Foundational Quality Standards.

Upon completion of this course, participants will:

- Understand who is allowed to have unsupervised access to a child in care in a family home early learning program
- Know the requirements for staff-to-child ratios for all early learning activities
- Recognize how active supervision positively impacts the safety of children in care
- Be familiar with how capacity is determined for family home early learning program indoor space

Slide #5 Guiding Principles

As we cover the material in this course, please keep in mind the following Guiding Principles. We will revisit these at the end of the course to “check in” with you and give you an opportunity to assess your understanding and application of the course content.

Guiding Principles

- Family home early learning programs must always consider capacity, group size, and staff-to-child ratio throughout daily routines and off-site activities.
- Active and engaged supervision by early learning providers is essential in keeping children safe.
- Water activities place children at a higher risk for injury and require an increased level of supervision to ensure child safety.

Slide #6 Terms and Definitions

Take a moment to review and familiarize yourself with the following terms and definitions. For your reference, a listing of these terms has been added to the Resources section of your learner’s screen. You can access the list at any time by visiting the Resources section of your learner’s screen. You can download the file to keep as a future reference or print as a desk guide.

Active supervision or **actively supervise** means a heightened standard of care beyond supervision. This standard requires an early learning provider to see and hear the children they are responsible for during higher risk activities. The provider must be able to prevent or instantly respond to unsafe or harmful events.

Capacity means the maximum number of children an early learning provider is authorized by the department to have in care at any given time. This includes any children on-site at an early learning program and any children in transit to or from the

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

program or other activities such as field trips while the children are signed in to the care of the program.

Early learning professionals are all early learning providers, child care licensing staff, and other professionals in the early learning field.

Early learning program space means the licensed indoor and outdoor space on the premises approved by the department for the purpose of providing licensed child care.

Early learning program staff refers to all persons who work, substitute, or volunteer in an early learning program during hours when children are or may be present, excluding licensees.

Early learning provider or **provider** refers to an early learning licensee or designee who works in an early learning program during hours when children are, or may be, present. Designees include center directors, assistant directors, program supervisors, lead teachers, assistants, aides, and volunteers.

Family home early learning program means an early learning program licensed by the department where a family home licensee provides child care or education services for twelve or fewer children in the family home living quarters where the licensee resides as provided in RCW 43.216.010 (1) (c) (family day care provider).

Family home early learning program licensee or **family home licensee** means an individual licensee authorized by the department to operate a family home early learning program within the licensee's family living quarters.

Infant is a child birth through eleven months of age.

Preschool-age children means children thirty months through six years of age not attending kindergarten or elementary school.

School-age children means a child not less than five years of age through twelve years of age who is attending kindergarten or elementary school.

Toddler means a child twelve months through twenty-nine months of age.

RCW means Revised Code of Washington.

WAC means Washington Administrative Code.

Water activities means early learning program activities in which enrolled children swim or play in a body of water that poses a risk for drowning for children. Water activities do not include using sensory tables.

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Slide #7 Course Introduction

Across the State of Washington, there are more than 3,280 licensed and certified family home early learning programs, providing approximately 32,824 child care slots for children birth through twelve years of age.

The Office of Child Care at the Administration for Children and Families, the ACF, reports that “family child care is a critical component of the national child care system” and they provide the numbers to support this statement.

The ACF reports that one in four children receiving child care funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program are cared for in family child care programs. An additional statistic supporting this statement comes from a group of 21 states and territories, 30 percent or more of children receiving CCDF program funds are in family child care.¹

While most of the aligned WAC has been written to encompass both family home and center early learning programs, this content area of the WAC contains requirements that are specific to each individual type of early learning program.

DCYF recognized that family home and center programs have some strong differences in this area, with different group sizes and age mixing, as well as physical set up of the programs. As a result, the content areas of supervision, capacity, ratio, and group size have WACs written specifically to address the uniqueness of each provider type. These Foundational Quality Standards contain important details and information for all family home early learning providers and their staff, as well as for licensors. Quite comprehensive in scope, they provide a wealth of straightforward information about how to demonstrate, and assess for, compliance with the WAC.

The following WACs will be reviewed in this learning module:

- WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children
- WAC 110-300-0350 Supervising children during water activities
- WAC 110-300-0354 Indoor early learning program space capacity
- WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size

Slide #8 WAC 110-300-0345

Supervision is an indicator of quality² in child care early learning programs. It is also a primary foundational service early learning programs provide to children in their care.

¹ Family Child Care <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/family-child-care>

² <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/13-indicators-quality-child-care-research-update#Supervision>.

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Caring for Our Children³ states the importance of supervision very clearly in Standard 2.2.0.1 Methods of Supervision of Children: “Supervision is basic to safety and the prevention of injury and maintaining quality child care”.

Slide #9 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

WAC 110-300-0345 specifies which persons an early learning provider may allow to have unsupervised access to a child in their care. Let’s review section (1) to find out more about this.

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(1) An early learning provider must only allow the following persons to have unsupervised access to a child in care:

- (a) That child's own parent or guardian;**
- (b) Licensees or early learning program staff authorized by the department in chapter [110-06](#) WAC;**
- (c) A government representative including an emergency responder who has specific and verifiable authority for access, supported by documentation; and**
- (d) A person authorized in writing or over the phone by that child's parent such as a family member, family friend, or the child's therapist or health care provider.**

Preventing unauthorized persons from having unsupervised access to children creates a safeguard that protects children while in the care of an early learning program. It is the responsibility of the family home early learning program staff to be familiar with these requirements to ensure that only approved individuals are allowed to be unsupervised with children in their care.

Slide #10 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

The section of the WAC referenced in subsection (b) relates to DCYF background checks. For more information on this topic, select the Background checks link to review the complete chapter.

³ Caring for Our Children, 3rd Edition. National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs http://nrckids.org/files/CFOC3_updated_final.pdf

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

DCYF also has a page on their website dedicated to background check information. Navigate to the [DCYF.wa.gov](https://www.dcyf.wa.gov) site for additional information about requirements, fingerprint processing, and payment.⁴

Slide #11 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

Research shows staffing ratios and group size are some of the best indicators of quality child care, and they significantly affect many other health and safety issues.⁵

Section (2) of this Foundational Quality Standard begins by informing early learning providers that they must meet capacity, group size, mixed age grouping, and staff-to-child ratios when children are in their care.

Subsections (a) through (g) go on to list some of the specific situations where these requirements must be met. Capacity and staff-to-child ratios are dependent upon many factors in a family home early learning program, such as usable floor space, the amount and types of materials available, and ages of the children in care.

Slide #12 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

Let's review the requirements contained in this section.

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(2) An early learning provider must meet capacity, group size, mixed age grouping, and staff-to-child ratios while children are in care. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Indoor and outdoor play activities;**
- (b) Off-site activities;**
- (c) During transportation;**
- (d) Meal times;**
- (e) Rest periods;**
- (f) Evening or overnight care; and**
- (g) When children are on different floor levels of the early learning program.**

⁴ Background Check Requirements, Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/background-checks>

⁵ Fiene, R. (2002). 13 Indicators of Quality. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and Health Resources and Services Administration/Maternal and Child Health Bureau U.S. Department of Health and Human Services <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/13-indicators-quality-child-care-research-update>

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Each of these activities and situations will require a family home early learning provider to be continually aware of many factors, including how many children are present and in care, the ages of the children in care, and the type of activity or situation the children are engaged in.

Slide #13 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

The purpose of supervision is to minimize the risk of harm to a child. When the family home provider is aware of and involved with children and their environment, they are better able to anticipate and intervene to safeguard the well-being of children in care. Let's review section (3) for detailed guidance on supervision of children in care.

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

- (3) An early learning provider must supervise children in care by:**
- (a) Scanning the environment looking and listening for both verbal and nonverbal cues to anticipate problems and plan accordingly;**
 - (b) Visibly checking children on many occasions with little time in between;**
 - (c) Positioning him or herself to supervise all areas accessible to children;**
 - (d) Attending to children and being aware of what children are doing at all times;**
 - (e) Being available and able to promptly assist or redirect a child as necessary; and**

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

- (f) Considering the following when deciding whether increased supervision is needed:**
 - (i) Ages of children;**
 - (ii) Individual differences and abilities of children;**
 - (iii) Layout of the indoor and outdoor licensed space and play area;**
 - (iv) The risk associated with the activities children are engaged in; and**
 - (v) Any nearby hazards including those in the licensed or unlicensed space.**

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Slide #14 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

The days of family home early learning providers can be full of demands, often requiring providers to balance supervision of children with the many other responsibilities they have. Subsection (4) provides guidance on when an early learning provider may temporarily undertake other activities while still attending to children.

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(4) An early learning program staff member may undertake other activities for a temporary time period when not required to be providing active supervision required under subsection (5)(c) of this section. Such activities include, but are not limited to, cleaning up after an activity or preparing items for a new activity. This early learning staff member must remain in visual or auditory range and be available and able to respond if needed.

Slide # 15 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

For example, a family home early learning provider needs to clean off the table and surrounding area after lunch. The provider settles all the children on their nap mats, giving them books to look at quietly. While the children are looking at their books, the provider quickly works to clean off the table and set up the afternoon art activity, keeping the children within sight or hearing at all times. Once the table has been cleaned and the art activity set up, the provider returns to the nap area to observe the children.

Slide #16 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

According to the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness, active supervision “requires focused attention and intentional observation of children at all times.” The document containing this information recommends and describes the following strategies to implement active supervision:

- Set up the environment
- Position staff
- Scan and count
- Listen
- Anticipate children’s behavior
- Engage and redirect

This document also provides three vignettes that early learning professionals can use to practice identifying active supervision opportunities, a self-reflection tool, and an active

supervision implementation plan. You can download a PDF version of this resource at eclkc.ohs.gov.⁶

Slide #17 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

There are times in a family home early learning program when children need, and are required, to be actively supervised. DCYF has defined active supervision, or actively supervise, as meaning a heightened standard of care beyond supervision. This standard requires an early learning provider to see and hear the children they are responsible for during higher risk activities. The provider must be able to prevent or instantly respond to unsafe or harmful events. This is important as it allows the early learning provider to anticipate and be ready to intervene in situations where higher risk factors are involved.

Please refer to WAC 110-300-0270 for supervision requirements for overnight care. This WAC will be covered in a future learning course.

Let's explore section (5) to learn more about active supervision requirements.

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(5) An early learning provider must:

- (a) Not use devices such as a baby monitors, video monitors, or mirrors in place of supervision, unless used pursuant to WAC [110-300-0270](#) (5);**
- (b) Be able to hear when doors in the immediate area are opened to prevent children from leaving unsupervised;**

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(c) Actively supervise children when the children:

- (i) Interact with pets or animals;**
- (ii) Engage in water or sand play;**
- (iii) Play in an area in close proximity to a body of water;**
- (iv) Use a safe route to access an outdoor play area not immediately adjacent to the early learning program;**
- (v) Engage in planned activities in the kitchen;**
- (vi) Ride on public transportation;**
- (vii) Engage in outdoor play; and**
- (viii) During field trips.**

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

- (d) Ensure no infant or child is left unattended during:**
 - (i) Diapering;**
 - (ii) Bottle feeding; or**
 - (iii) Tummy time.**
- (e) Provide developmentally appropriate supervision to children while bathing.**

Slide #18 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

Let's explore Subsection (5)(b) a little bit. This subsection states that an early learning provider must be able to hear when doors in the immediate area are opened to prevent children from leaving unsupervised. This WAC language is different than the current rules, which require a family home early learning provider to have a method on exit doors to alert the licensee or staff when an exit door is opened, and states the licensee may use a chime, bell, alarm, or other device as an alert method.

Slide #19 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

Family home licensees and licensors may find themselves asking, "Will alerts still be required on an exit door in a family child care home when this WAC goes into effect?"

While WAC 110-300-0345(5)(b) does not specifically require an alert on an exit door, or on doors in the immediate area, it does require that the provider be able to hear when doors in the immediate area are opened. Family home providers who have had success with using door alarms or other methods to sound an alert on exit doors may find it makes sense to continue to use this method to ensure they are able to hear when doors in the immediate area are opened.

If a family home provider chooses to use another method to be able to hear when doors in the immediate area are being opened, they will need to be able to demonstrate to licensors how they are meeting this requirement.

Slide #20 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

When licensors are conducting site visits and are observing for compliance with this requirement, there are several steps they can take to assist with this. Licensors can begin by asking the family home provider and their staff what method they are using to be able to hear when doors in the immediate area are being opened.

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

If the staff report that the door is squeaky and they can always hear when it is opened, the licensor can ask the staff to demonstrate. The licensor should pay attention to how far the door opens before the squeaking begins or stops, checking to see if children might have a chance to slip out unnoticed before the squeaking begins or ceases.

The licensor may also want to pay attention to how easy or difficult it is to hear the squeaking during various activities, such as during quiet time, circle time, music time, outdoor play time, etc.

The next step is for the licensor to take time to observe the program in action, checking to see if and when the provider is able to hear and notice the door being opened.

If the licensor notices that the provider heard parents or staff entering or leaving through a door in the immediate area during quieter activities, but failed to notice this exit during louder activities, the licensor can use this as an opportunity to provide technical assistance. The provider may not have been aware that he or she was able to hear doors open only during quieter activities, and this feedback and technical assistance can provide them with an opportunity to make some changes to their environment to ensure that they are able to remain compliant with this requirement.

Slide #21 WAC 110-300-0350

Water play can be an enjoyable and engaging activity for children, promoting gross motor skills and offering a great form of exercise. At the same time, water can also pose a serious safety hazard to children.

On their HealthyChildren.org website, the [American Academy of Pediatrics.org](http://AmericanAcademyofPediatrics.org) states that drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death in children between ages one and four. The CDC reports the following statistics on their Unintentional Drowning: Get the Facts webpage:

“Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates. In 2014, among children 1 to 4 years old who died from an unintentional injury, one-third died from drowning. Among children ages 1 to 4, most drownings occur in home swimming pools. Drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1-4 than any other cause except congenital anomalies (birth defects). Among those 1-14, fatal drowning remains the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death behind motor vehicle crashes.”

Slide #22 WAC 110-300-0350 continued

Another startling statistic presented by the CDC is that “For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.”⁷

DCYF recognizes the importance of water safety in family home early learning environments. In the updated Foundational Quality Standards, you will find a WAC dedicated solely to the supervision of children during water activities.

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Section (1) of WAC 110-300-0350 mandates that early learning providers meet all of the supervision requirements that were just reviewed in WAC 110-300-0345, as well as the requirements of this section we are going to be reviewing next.

WAC 110-300-0350 Supervising children during water activities.

(1) During water activities, an early learning provider must meet all supervision requirements of this section and WAC [110-300-0345](#).

DCYF defines water activities as early learning program activities in which enrolled children swim or play in a body of water that poses a risk for drowning for children. Water activities do not include using sensory tables.

Slide #23 WAC 110-300-0350 Continued

Section (2) focuses on the requirements for supervision of infants, toddlers, and children with special needs during water activities. Subsection 2(a), ensuring a one-to-one staff-to-child ratio with infants, complies with Standard 1.1.1.5 from Caring for Our Children.

WAC 110-300-0350 Supervising children during water activities.

(2) During water activities, an early learning provider must:

- (a) Ensure a one-to-one (1:1) staff-to-child ratio for infants;**
- (b) Hold or have continuous touch of infants, nonambulatory toddlers, and children with special needs as required; and**
- (c) Keep toddlers within arm's length.**

(3) An early learning provider must have written permission for water activities from each child's parent or guardian.

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/water-safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html>

Slide #24 WAC 110-300-0350 continued

Requiring written permission for water play activities is important for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, this allows parents to remain the primary decision maker about the level of risk they are willing to allow their child to engage in when they are not the primary caregiver.

This also opens communication between the family home early learning program and the parents, allowing the provider to share with parents that they recognize any water activity comes with additional risk, and gives the provider an opportunity to inform parents of steps that will be taken to ensure child safety during water play activities.

This also allows parents to share any concerns they may have and gives them an opportunity to ask questions.

Written permission also provides documentation of parental consent for a child to participate in a water activity, which will be important to have in the event that a child sustains an injury while engaged in water play. This is documentation that licensors will want to be sure and look for when conducting site visits and reviewing child files.

Slide #25 WAC 110-300-0350 continued

Lifeguards and additional staff members provide further layers of protection for children when they are engaged in water play or water activities.

The additional staff members lower the staff-to-child ratios, increasing supervision capabilities. Research has found lower child-to staff ratios are associated with fewer situations involving potential danger.⁸ The presence of a lifeguard ensures professional-level assistance is ready and available should a water rescue become necessary.

⁸ <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/13-indicators-quality-child-care-research-update>.

WAC 110-300-0350 Supervising children during water activities.

(4) For water activities on or off the early learning program premises, where the water is more than twenty-four inches deep, an early learning provider must ensure:

(a) A certified lifeguard is present and on duty; and

(b) At least one additional staff member than would otherwise be required is present to help actively supervise if the children are preschool age or older.

(5) An early learning provider must have life-saving equipment readily accessible during water activities if a pool is six feet or more in any direction and two feet or more in depth. Life-saving equipment may include a ring buoy and rope, a rescue tube, or a throwing line and a shepherd's hook that will not conduct electricity.

Slide #26 WAC 110-300-0350 continued

Section (5) aligns with Standard 6.3.2.1 from Caring for our Children which states “Each swimming pool more than six feet in width, length, or diameter should be provided with a ring buoy and rope, a rescue tube, or a throwing line and a shepherd’s hook that will not conduct electricity.”

Slide #27 WAC 110-300-0350 continued

Not only does water play increase the risk of harm to a child, Caring for Our Children states “injuries are more likely to occur when a child’s surroundings or routine changes. Activities outside the facility may pose increased risk for injury.” Section (6) addresses supervision requirements for family home early learning programs when taking children off-site where a body of water is accessible.

WAC 110-300-0350 Supervising children during water activities.

(6) If an early learning provider takes children off-site to an area with an accessible body of water more than four inches deep (for example, a park with a lake or stream) but children are not engaging in a water activity, there must be:

(a) At least one more staff person than required in the staff-to-child ratio; and

(b) At least one attending staff person must be able to swim.

Capacity, Ratio and Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements

Slide #28 WAC 110-300-0350 continued

The requirements for demonstrating and assessing for compliance with this WAC are specific, detailed, and thorough. Before engaging children in any onsite or offsite water activities, family home early learning providers MUST ensure they have the ability to meet all of the specific supervision requirements of this section.

Let's add to your toolbox! Visit HealthyChildren.org and the [American Academy of Pediatrics.org](http://AmericanAcademyofPediatrics.org) websites. Bookmark or download at least one document from each site that provides useful safety information. Early learning providers can share this information with parents or other family home early learning providers, while licensors may find useful information to share with providers and other licensors.

Slide #29 Test Your Learning!

Before we continue, let's test your learning. Review the question and select the best response.

During which activities must a family home early learning provider actively supervise children in care?

- A. Water play
- B. During outdoor play
- C. When interacting with animals
- D. All of the above

Slide #30 Test Your Learning! continued

Family home early learning providers are never allowed to take children in or near water.

- True
- False

Slide #31 WAC 110-300-0354

WAC 110-300-0354 addresses the requirements for indoor early learning program space capacity and defining how capacity is determined for an early learning program.

Please note that (1)(a) is a requirement specific to child care centers. We will focus on (1)(b) through (d) at this time.

WAC 110-300-0354 Indoor early learning program space capacity.

(1) To define capacity, licensed indoor early learning program space must have a minimum of thirty-five square feet per child in attendance and further comply with the requirements of this chapter.

(a) Center early learning program space must provide fifteen additional square feet for each infant or toddler using a crib or playpen if the crib or playpen is located or placed in the sleeping or play area.

WAC 110-300-0354 Indoor early learning program space capacity.

(b) Floor space under tables, desks, chairs, and other equipment used as part of children's activities must be included in the overall capacity.

(c) Office or kitchen space that is inaccessible to children and not intended for their use must not be included in the overall capacity.

(d) Napping areas may be used as early learning program space if mats and cots are removed when not in use and children have free access to the area.

Slide #32 WAC 110-300-0354 continued

There are certain areas within a family home early learning program that are not counted as usable space for children in care. These are spaces that serve other purposes or may be unsafe for children. Let's review what these areas are.

WAC 110-300-0354 Indoor early learning program space capacity.

(2) The following indoor space must not be counted in the overall capacity:

(a) Unlicensed space;

(b) Hallway space that is used for emergency evacuation or is not approved to be used for program activities;

(c) Bathrooms and diaper changing areas (including twenty-four inches surrounding diaper changing areas and handwashing sink, unless the diaper changing area has a two foot high barrier);

WAC 110-300-0354 Indoor early learning program space capacity.

- (d) Laundry areas;**
- (e) Closets;**
- (f) Stairways; and**
- (g) Floor space occupied by shelves, built-in cabinets, file cabinets, desks, or other office equipment not intended to be accessible to children.**

Slide #33 WAC 110-300-0354 continued

Play is essential for the growth and development of young children. When it is not possible for children to play outdoors, the alternative is to play indoors. One way to offer indoor gross motor play opportunities is to license a large, indoor space designed to supplement the requirements of outdoor play space. Section (3) addresses how this space is used for determining overall capacity of an early learning program.

WAC 110-300-0354 Indoor early learning program space capacity.

- (3) A large, licensed indoor gross motor activity space may be used to supplement the requirements of outdoor program space, pursuant to WAC [110-300-0145](#), but must not be counted in the overall capacity if:**
- (a) The space provides seventy-five square feet per child for the maximum number of children listed on the license or the provider rotates groups of children; and**
 - (b) The space is safe and appropriate for activities otherwise performed in an outdoor play space.**

Let's add to your toolbox! Visit the National Association for Family Child Care www.nafcc.org website to locate valuable resources and information.

Slide #34 WAC 110-300-0355

The final Foundational Quality Standard that will be covered during this learning session is WAC 110-300-0355.

This WAC addresses family home capacity, ratio, and group size. Due to the comprehensive and detailed nature of this WAC item, it has been divided into smaller sections for review.

Slide #35 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

Let's get started with the first two sections, which detail information that is stated on a family child care license, and what factors are taken into consideration in determining capacity.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(1) The department issues initial or nonexpiring family home licenses for up to twelve children. The department will not issue a family license to care for more children than permitted by the rules in this chapter but may issue a license to care for fewer than the maximum allowable enrolled children. Family home licenses state:

- (a) The maximum number of children that may be in care at any one time (total capacity); and**
- (b) The age range of children allowed in care.**

(2) The department determines capacity for a family home early learning program after considering:

- (a) Square footage of the early learning program;**
- (b) An early learning provider's years of experience in licensed child care (experience must be from working as a center director, program supervisor, lead teacher, family home licensee, or another similar role in a child care setting);**
- (c) A provider's education and ongoing training;**
- (d) The age range requested or approved by the department;**

(2) The department determines capacity for a family home early learning program after considering:

- (e) The amount of developmentally appropriate equipment, materials, and toys an early learning program can provide children to use;**
- (f) A provider's licensing history with the department; and**
- (g) The number of qualified staff available to meet staff-to-child ratios.**

Slide #36 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

It is important to point out that subsections (e) and (f) of section (2) are high-priority updates for DCYF. These two subsections address the amount of developmentally appropriate equipment, materials, and toys an early learning provider should have

Capacity, Ratio & Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements for Success

available for children to use and an early learning provider's previous licensing history with the department.

DCYF added these updates based on an overall perspective that, without these key components fostering a child's healthy growth, a child could suffer indirect harm to their overall development and future success.

DCYF also recognized that equipment, materials and toys are required in sufficient quantity to meet the basic needs of the children, and a previous licensing history provides a sound indicator for future success.

Slide #37 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

The next two sections of this WAC specify how children are to be counted in a family home early learning program's capacity at any given time. It is important to note the language regarding the age of children in care, the ages of providers' own children, and requirements for caring for older children with special needs.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(3) A family home licensee must not exceed the total capacity or age range stated on the child care license at any time except as provided in this section. All children on the premises, signed in to child care, on an off-site trip from the early learning program, or being transported by the early learning program staff are counted in capacity including the children of staff.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(a) A family home licensee must receive department approval to care for a child with special needs, pursuant to WAC [110-300-0300](#), if the child is older than the maximum age identified on the license. A child with documented special needs may be in care up to age nineteen and must be counted in both capacity and staff-to-child ratio.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(b) A child with special needs who requires individualized supervision pursuant to WAC [110-300-0300](#) counts towards capacity but does not count in the staff-to-child ratio.

(c) A child who turns thirteen years old permitted by chapter [110-15](#) WAC and who must be counted in both capacity and staff-to-child ratio.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(4) Any child birth through twelve years old on the premises, signed in to the child care, on an off-site trip from the early learning program, or being transported counts in capacity. This includes a family home licensee's own children, children of staff, or visiting children not accompanied or supervised by an adult.

Slide #38 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

Subsection (3)(b) references the WAC that outlines the requirements of an Individual Care Plan for children with special needs who are enrolled in an early learning program. You can review WAC 110-300-0300 for more information about Individual Care Plan requirements.

Subsection (3)(c) references chapter 110-15 WAC, which is regarding the Working Connections and Seasonal Child Care Subsidy Programs. You can find out more about each of these programs by accessing the following website dshs.wa.gov.

Slide #39 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

Let's add to your toolbox! Navigate to WAC [110-300-0300](http://www.wa.gov/wac/110-300-0300), review the requirements of an Individual Care Plan, and bookmark the page for future reference.⁹

Now navigate to WAC [110-15](http://www.wa.gov/wac/110-15), review the information on the Working Connections and Seasonal Child Care Subsidy Programs, and bookmark the page for future reference.¹⁰

Slide #40 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

Sections (5) and (6) of this Foundational Quality Standard provide general requirements informing the family home provider that qualified staff must be provided to meet staff-to-child ratios, and that additional staff are required when children are playing in or near water. Sections (7) through (11) break down how capacity, ratios and group sizes are calculated, based on licensee experience and education, and lays out how many qualified staff are needed for each grouping.

¹⁰ Working Connections and Seasonal Child Care Subsidy Programs, WAC 110-15, <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=110-15>

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(5) A family home licensee must provide qualified staff to fulfill the staffing requirements and staff-to-child ratios during operating hours, including off-site activities and when transporting children in care.

(6) A family home licensee must provide additional staff, pursuant to WAC [110-300-0350](#), when children are participating in water activities or activities near water.

Slide #41 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(7) When applying for an initial or nonexpiring family home license, a family home licensee with less than one year of experience may request from the department a capacity of up to six children, birth through twelve years of age.

(a) A maximum of three children may be under two years of age.

(b) If there are three children under two years of age, one of these children must be able to walk independently.

Slide #42 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(8) When applying for an initial or nonexpiring family home license, a family home licensee with at least one year but less than two years of experience and:

(a) Working alone may request a capacity of up to eight children ages two through twelve years of age, with a maximum of four children under three years of age.

(b) Working with a qualified assistant may request a capacity of up to nine children birth through twelve years of age with a maximum of four children under two years of age.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(9) When applying for an initial or nonexpiring family home license, a family home licensee with at least two years' experience and:

(a) Working alone may request a capacity of up to ten children ages three years through twelve years of age;

(b) Working alone may request a capacity of up to twelve children for school age children only; and

(c) Working with a qualified assistant, may request a capacity of up to twelve children birth through twelve years of age with a maximum of six children under two years of age with two children being able to walk independently.

Slide #43 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

Before we move on, let's stop for a minute and talk about why staff-to-child ratios and group size are important in early learning programs.

Children learn in the context of relationships, and they benefit from social interactions with their peers. Research finds smaller groups are generally associated with more positive interactions and developmental outcomes.

One researcher states it well: "Group size and ratio of children to adults are limited to allow for one to one interaction, intimate knowledge of individual children, and consistent caregiving."¹¹

Slide #44 WAC 110-300-0355 continued

Let's finish our review of this section of the Foundational Quality Standards.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

(10) A family home licensee, with two years of experience, may request a license for birth to twenty-four months of age with a maximum group size of eight when:

(a) There are two staff present with the group consisting of one staff who meets the qualification of the licensee and another who meets the qualifications to be counted in ratio;

(b) The staff-to-child ratio is 1:4;

¹¹ Bradley, R. H., D. L. Vandell. 2007. Child care and the well-being of children. *Arch Ped Adolescent Med* 161:669-76.

Capacity, Ratio & Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements for Success

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

- (c) Fifteen additional square feet are provided for each infant or toddler; and
- (d) A second staff member is present whenever:
 - (i) More than two children in care do not walk independently; or
 - (ii) When there are more than four children in care.

WAC 110-300-0355 Family home capacity, ratio, and group size.

- (11) The staff-to-child ratio is determined by the ages and number of children in care. Two early learning program staff are required anytime:
- (a) More than six children are in care and any child in care is under two years of age;
 - (b) More than eight children are in care and any child in care is under three years of age; or
 - (c) More than ten children are in care and any child is under school age.

Slide #45 Test your Learning!

As we wrap up, let's test your learning! Review the question and select the best response.

Family home early learning providers must maintain specific ratios of adults to children, depending on the ages of the children in care.

- A. True
- B. False

Slide #46 Test Your Learning! continued

A family home early learning provider must receive DCYF approval before caring for a child with special needs, if the child is older than the ages specified on the family home early learning provider's license.

- A. True
- B. False

Capacity, Ratio & Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements for Success

Slide #47 Guiding Principles

This concludes the content portion of this course! Thank you for your participation!

Before this course ends, please take a moment to reflect and set personal goals related to the following Guiding Principles and ways that each of the principles relate to early learning professionals.

Guiding Principles

- Family home early learning programs must always consider capacity, group size, and staff-to-child ratio throughout daily routines and off-site activities.
- Active and engaged supervision by early learning providers is essential in keeping children safe.
- Water activities place children at a higher risk for injury and require an increased level of supervision to ensure child safety.

What take-a-ways do you have? How will you change your practices because of participation in this learning module?

Slide #48 Course Evaluation

Please take a moment to answer the following end-of-course evaluation questions by selecting the appropriate choice.

This course improved my understanding of the course content.

- True
- False

Slide #49 Course Evaluation continued

The information presented in this course was clearly connected to the session and Learning Outcomes.

- True
- False

Slide #50 Course Evaluation continued

There are opportunities for application of this course content in my role as an early learning professional.

Capacity, Ratio & Supervision in Family Home Early Learning Programs-Key Elements for Success

- True
- False

Slide #51 Course Evaluation continued

I would recommend this course to others who work in the field.

- True
- False

Slide #52 End of Course

This concludes this course! If you have questions following this session, please contact your supervisor or licensor. We hope this course has been helpful in providing information about the WAC and how programs can meet the new standards with compliance.

Our goal is that all early learning professionals viewing this course have left with an increased understanding and knowledge of the updated WAC, and that you will be able to either assess programs for compliance or be able to maintain and demonstrate compliance. Be sure to visit the Learning Management System to review and select additional learning modules that are part of this series.