

# Accreditation Visit & Accreditation Visit with a School Age Component Pre-Visit Protocol and Procedures

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

There are several steps in the process of attaining, maintaining and renewing NAEYC Accreditation of programs serving young children; see information regarding *NAEYC's Accreditation Process* on the NAEYC Website for details. Each year there are 3 deadlines for programs to submit their candidacy or renewal materials: January 31, May 31, and September 30. Programs submitting on or before each date form a "cohort". NAEYC commits that within 6 months of the candidacy or renewal due date:

- NAEYC staff (**Quality Assessment Associate**) will review the candidacy or renewal materials and either accept or deny the program for an Accreditation Visit;
- an NAEYC assessor will contact the program to schedule an Accreditation Visit; and
- the assessor will conduct the Accreditation Visit.

An accreditation decision is made on the basis of evidence collected during the site visit. If the program becomes accredited or has its accreditation renewed, it receives a 5-year term of accreditation, during which a program *may* receive a Random Visit or a Verification Visit to verify that it is maintaining quality standards.

NAEYC assessors are highly trained and continuously monitored for their reliability in performing the site visit assessment. Assessors must also follow clear and consistent procedures in preparation for these Accreditation Visits (AV). This protocol describes the assessor's tasks to be performed in advance of an NAEYC Accreditation Visit. The *Assessor Protocol and Procedures* is referenced throughout this document; it includes additional details for Assessors describing how a specific protocol is executed. For example, when Assessors are instructed to clear Conflict of Interest (COI) with a program, *Assessor Protocol and Procedures* describes how the Assessor will clear COI through NAEYC's data management system.

When a program's candidacy or renewal documents have been reviewed by an NAEYC **Quality Assessment Associate** and approved for an Accreditation Visit, the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** assigns each program to an assessor. From that point on, it is the assessor's responsibility to contact the program, to collect additional information pertinent to the scheduling of the Accreditation Visit, and to schedule and conduct the Accreditation Visit. The NAEYC **Quality Assessment Specialist** continues to be a point of contact for both the assessor and program if any questions arise as they proceed through the process of planning and conducting the Accreditation Visit.

There are several distinct steps involved in the pre-visit scheduling process, detailed below:

- Receive the assignment.
- Make initial contact with the program and begin scheduling.
- Set the 15-day window, communicate it to the program, and refine scheduling preparations.
- Make a business-day-prior contact with the program to confirm the visit date.

## **Accreditation Visits with a School-Age Component (AV-SAC)**

This protocol applies to initial or renewal Accreditation Visits, and to Accreditation Visits with a School-Age Component. For detailed information regarding School-Age *only* Visits, please see the *School-Age Protocols and Procedures*.

NAEYC accredited programs may choose to pursue accreditation for the school-age classes within their programs. This is a pilot program from NAEYC; program participation is voluntary. If a program wishes to accredit school-age classes within their program, they may do so with an initial School-Age *only* Visit (SAV). Or the program may receive an Accreditation Visit with a School Age Component (AV-SAC) for a discounted price.

During an AV-SAC the school-age classes may be going through initial accreditation or renewing their accreditation. During an AV-SAC the program will be assessed on all sources of evidence (O, PP, CP, TSS, and FS). School-age classes seeking initial accreditation will only be assessed on observable criteria and required criteria; Classroom Portfolios will *not* be assessed for the school-age component going through initial accreditation. If the School-age component of a program is renewing their accreditation, they *will* be assessed on Classroom Portfolios in addition to the observation.

When a program's renewal documents and, if applicable, *School-Age Accreditation Request Form* have been reviewed by an NAEYC **Quality Assessment Specialist** and approved for a visit, NAEYC assigns each program to an assessor. There are several distinct steps involved in the pre-visit scheduling process of an AV-SAC. For details of how this will differ, assessors may contact a **Quality Assessment Specialist**. Assessors may refer to the *Visit Document Master List* for a complete list of pre-visit and visit materials related to AV-SAC.

## 2. ASSESSOR RECEIVES THE ACCREDITATION VISIT ASSIGNMENT

Assessors receive notification of a potential Accreditation Visit assignment from NAEYC. The assessor's first task is to accept or refuse the assignment after considering whether there is a potential conflict of interest or scheduling conflict.

### **Conflict of Interest.**

A conflict of interest may exist if:

- The assessor has previously worked for or consulted with the program, or with a parent organization of the program;
- The assessor has any fiduciary connection to the program;
- The assessor has a direct personal relationship with the program administrator or with other principals of the program or the program's parent organization;
- The assessor knows the program and has concerns about his or her ability to conduct an impartial assessment Accreditation Visit.

These are not the only reasons for a conflict of interest. See the "Assessor Requirements Document", a part of your assessor contract, for more details. Assessors may also view and complete the Conflict of Interest Reflective Tool. If after reviewing these resources the assessor has any doubt about whether there is a conflict of interest, the assessor contacts the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant**, discusses his or her concerns, and reaches a resolution.

If there is not a conflict of interest, the assessor may accept the visit assignment and move forward with the pre-visit process. The assessor must still communicate with the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Specialist**, within 5 business days, to formally "clear" conflict of interest and to accept the assignment.

### **Assessor Procedures**

To review conflict of interest:

1. Log into the assessor section of DMS, the data management system of NAEYC, at: [http://www.accreditation.naeyc.org/Assessor/Assessor\\_Login.aspx](http://www.accreditation.naeyc.org/Assessor/Assessor_Login.aspx). Assessors have a log-in ID and password that allows them to access the information screens relevant to assessor tasks.
  - If logging in from an Android tablet, the Mozilla Firefox browser (available as a free download from the Android Market) is recommended to connect to DMS through the internet. If using an Apple tablet, the Safari browser is sufficient.
2. In the navigation menu on the left-side of the screen, select Confirmed Assigned Visits. A window will open showing all currently assigned programs. Each program listed has a checkbox to the left and right of the program information.

3. Select the checkbox to the left of the program name for each program you are working on, then scroll to the far right side of the screen and look for three “radio buttons” labeled Conflict of Interest, No Conflict of Interest, or Request Discussion with NAEYC.
  - If there is a clear conflict of interest, select the Conflict of Interest button. Also email the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** directly and let him/her know you cannot accept the assignment if a program is already within their 15 business day window.
  - If there is NO conflict of interest, select the No Conflict of Interest button. Proceed with the other scheduling tasks described below.
  - In the case that conflict of interest is uncertain make no selection. Email the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** to discuss any questions or concerns you have about accepting the assignment. Return to this page when you have resolved the question, and select one of the choices above.
4. Select the <Submit> button at the bottom of the page to record the selections. Log off of DMS at this point or go to other screens to work on other program scheduling tasks (see below).

**Other Reasons to Refuse an Assignment.** There may be additional circumstances that prevent an assessor from being able to accept a visit. If an assessor believes he or she will be unable to complete the Accreditation Visit within the 6-month window for the candidacy cohort date, the assessor must contact the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** to explain and discuss. It is important that the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Specialist** is contacted within 5 business days so that the visit can be reassigned to another assessor and the visit scheduling process can proceed.

**Length of Visit and Use of Co-Assessors.** Assessors should spend no more than 2 days on site at any program. Based upon the number of classes to be observed, a visit may take one or two days, and a co-assessor may be needed. The number of observations that are required generally determines the number of days and assessors needed for an AV; general guidelines are provided in the table below. However, number of days and assessor can also be influenced by the program’s hours of operation, the schedules of individual classes, and the possibility that assessors are conducting reliability checks or collecting research data in addition to the basic rating data.

| <b>Length of Visit Guidelines<sup>1</sup> for Accreditation Visits<sup>2</sup></b>   |  |
|--|--|
| This many observation(s) in the visit...   | ... will require ...                       |
| 1, 2 or 3 observations   | 1 Assessor for 1 Visit Day                 |
| 4 observations   | 1 Assessor for 1 or 2 Visit Days <b>OR</b> |
|  | 2 Assessors for 1 Visit Day                |
| 5, 6 or 7 observations   | 1 Assessor for 2 Visit Days <b>OR</b>      |
|  | 2 Assessors for 1 Visit Day                |
| 8 observations   | 1 Assessor for 2 Visit Days <b>OR</b>      |
|  | 2 Assessors for 1 or 2 Visit Days          |
| 9 or 10 (max) observations   | 2 Assessors for 2 Visit Days               |
| <sup>1</sup> <i>These are guidelines; there may be exceptions made by the NAEYC on a case-by-case basis. Contact the NAEYC for approval.</i> |  |
| <sup>2</sup> <i>For length of visit guidelines for Reliability Visits, please see the Reliability Visits section of this protocol.</i>       |  |

The assessor will be provided with an initial estimate of how many visit days and assessors are needed for each visit. If the provided information does not show the need for a co-assessor but you wish to use a co-assessor on the AV, call the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Specialist** for approval. This also allows NAEYC staff to assign the additional assessor to the program, and to keep track of how many visits each assessor has assigned to them. Special considerations are made for assessors conducting visits overseas. If an assessor is completing an 8 to 10 observation visit alone, overseas, please contact the NAEYC for further instruction.

### 3. INITIAL ASSESSOR CONTACT WITH THE PROGRAM

The program should have already received notification from NAEYC that they were approved as a candidate, or that their renewal materials were approved, so they should be expecting to be contacted by the assessor. The first step in scheduling is to confirm days and dates when a visit may *not* be conducted. This initial contact with the program includes both a phone call and an email including a Visit Scheduling Form. The assessor may determine if the phone call or email will be initiated first. The following section describes the processes, protocols and content related to the phone call and email. Assessors, see the *Master Document List* in the Assessor Google Site for the location(s) of any document referenced in this protocol.

**Program Visit Information.** Before making initial contact with the program, assessors must review the program's Visit Information. The Visit Information contains information provided by the program during enrollment, application, candidacy stages, and renewal of the accreditation process. This includes information about the program's location, its primary and secondary contact persons, its hours of operation, the number and type of classes it serves, and other pertinent information. If there are any questions about what is stated in the Visit Information contact NAEYC or the **Quality Assessment Specialist** directly.

#### Assessor Procedures

Assessors may choose to print the Visit Document; but must always store a PDF version on their tablet so that it can be accessed electronically during the visit. To do this:

1. log into the DMS assessor portal via Safari or Mozilla Firefox browser.
2. Select *Generate Visit Document*, then enter the 6-digit program ID for the program in question and touch the <View> button. The visit document is typically 20 pages or larger and may take a few seconds to load.
3. Open the visit document with a PDF reader app; then save the visit document as a PDF file.

**Prompt Contact with Programs.** Assessors initiate contact, via phone or email, with programs within 5 business days of their assignment to begin gathering the information needed to schedule the AV.

If the assessor has received several program assignments in the same geographic area, he or she should attempt to coordinate visit scheduling to save time and expense. This may cause some delay in setting the exact dates for the visits; however, it should not delay the initial contact with the program.

**Pre-Visit Worksheet.** Assessors must use a pre-visit worksheet when making all pre-visit telephone calls and contacts. Assessors may use the *Pre-Visit Worksheet* prepared by NAEYC, or assessors may create a pre-visit worksheet in their preferred format, but it **MUST** include all required information. A digital copy of the completed pre-visit worksheet must be sent to NAEYC following the Accreditation Visit, in addition to all other visit materials.

Sending the Visit Scheduling Form. A *Visit Scheduling Form* will be provided to the program via email to assist in determining days and dates when a visit may not be conducted. Assessors may decide whether to send the *Visit Scheduling Form* before or after the initial phone call with the program. This may occur for a variety of

reasons such as the assessor's previous experience, or multiple unsuccessful attempts to speak with the primary or secondary contact.

The *Visit Scheduling Form* can be sent to the program up to 2 business days prior to the initial phone call with the program. If the form is sent after the initial phone call, the assessor has up to two business days to send the form, however, it is recommended that it be sent immediately after the phone call to avoid confusion and delays in the scheduling process.

The program has up to 5 business days to return the *Visit Scheduling Form* to the assessor. The due date is calculated beginning with the date that the form is sent. If a program administrator indicates that it will be difficult to meet the deadline the assessor should call the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** for approval of a deadline extension.

Regardless of how the *Visit Scheduling Form* is sent to the program, the program's Visit Window begins on the date indicated on the *Visit Scheduling Form*. The program's visit window ends 6 months after the program's candidacy or renewal due date within which the visit will take place. The visit may be scheduled no later than the end of the 6-month period after the candidacy/renewal due date.

Additional details may be found in **Appendix 1 – Scheduling Calendar Form**.

### Assessor Procedures

When assessors are weighing the options as to whether to send the *Visit Scheduling Form* either prior to, or after, the initial phone call consider the following:

1. Consider the comfort of the program. Candidacy programs who are unfamiliar with the visit process may benefit from having the initial phone call first. A phone call could lessen their anxiety and help build relationships. Renewal programs have prior knowledge of the accreditation process and may be comfortable moving straight into the pre-visit process. However, it is important to remember that even though a program is renewing their accreditation, the administrator may be unfamiliar with the accreditation process.
2. Consider your schedule. How will factors such as location (i.e. Wi-Fi and cell reception) and your availability impact other scheduling considerations (i.e. the due date, other programs)?

Once the considerations have been weighed, decide how to initiate contact with the program.

Difficulty Contacting the Program. If the assessor has difficulty reaching the primary or secondary contact via phone, follow these directions:

- If the assessor cannot reach the primary or secondary contact on the first attempt leave a message at both contact numbers.
- If the assessor cannot reach the primary or secondary contact on the second attempt, leave messages at both contact numbers and send a follow-up email to the primary and secondary contacts.
- After the third unsuccessful attempt to speak with the primary or secondary contacts, leave messages at both contact numbers with the 15 business day window dates.

Allow at least 1 week between the first attempt and the third attempt. Note a log of these communication attempts on the Pre-Visit Worksheet. If there still has been no communication from the program by the time the scheduling calendar is due, call NAEYC.

**Confirming Visit Information.** It is very important to understand the structure of the program before scheduling the visit. Therefore, the initial phone call includes a review of program description information provided during the program's enrollment, application and candidacy/renewal submissions. Assessors confirm the following:

Classes and Class Changes: Assessors must observe at least 50% of the eligible classes operating in a program at the time of the visit, except in programs with more than 20 eligible classes. Such programs receive 10 observations. Assessors must also observe at least one class from each eligible age category (Infants, Toddler/Twos, Preschool, and Kindergarten) the program serves. If the program has satellite locations, the assessor must observe at least one class from each program location. The assessor should confirm the *number* of classes, *names* of the classes, *age categories* included in each class, *daily operating* hours of each class, and the *physical address* of each class.

Assessors also ask if there have been any recent changes to classes, such as:

- a class has been added or discontinued;
- a class is not meeting at this time of year (e.g., summer);
- a day or time has been added to (or taken away from) an existing class;
- classes have been merged such that the age range of a class is different.

If the number of classes has changed from what is reported in the Visit Information, or if a new age category that was not previously served is added, – **the assessor should contact Quality Assessment by email [assessor@naeyc.org](mailto:assessor@naeyc.org) to submit the changes. A Quality Assessment Specialist will make the changes and email the assessor to confirm the changes.** If the change impacts the number of visit days, the assessor should also contact NAEYC by e-mail [assessor@naeyc.org](mailto:assessor@naeyc.org) with the subject line “Assessor - Class Changes Program ID <ID number>”.

If classes merge and unmerge at different times of day, or some classes meet for only a few hours a day, it can be difficult to determine if they should be considered as separate classes for the purposes of the Accreditation Visit observation. If this appears to be the case, e-mail [assessor@naeyc.org](mailto:assessor@naeyc.org) with the subject line “Assessor Class Question Program ID <ID number>” to request a discussion with a **Quality Assessment Specialist**. The **Quality Assessment Specialist** can help the assessor arrive at a determination of the number and type of classes to be observed. If through the pre-visit conversations you determine that the program may have more than 20 classes and you may need to employ the 10-observation cap, contact NAEYC ASAP for confirmation.

Other Changes: If you become aware of any of the following items during the pre-visit process, **instruct the program administrator to complete a Self Report. Then email [assessor@naeyc.org](mailto:assessor@naeyc.org) and a Quality Assessment team member will follow up with the program.**

- Change in ownership or vendor
- New designated Program Administrator
- Change in the primary or secondary contact for the program or related contact information
- Change of location
- Change to the physical facility or ground (due to damage, renovations, etc.)
- Addition or deletion of a Satellite Location
- Court order or legal action

Timing: Assessors need to know the overall daily operating hours of the program in order to schedule arrival and departure times for the visit. The assessor must also be aware of the days and times when each class

operates, and must be aware of nap hours for each class (if applicable) in order to schedule class observations effectively. Therefore, during the initial phone call with the program, confirm the program's (and each individual class's) operating days and hours.

**Language:** Verify the primary language used by the program administration AND by the staff and children in the classrooms. Programs conducted in Spanish should have been identified by the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** and assigned to a Spanish bilingual assessor. If it appears that the program is conducted in a language in which you are not proficient, contact the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Specialist** immediately.

**Security:** For some programs you must be aware of security issues and/or parking issues. Especially for military and other government sites:

- You may have to request access several weeks in advance of the visit;
- You may be registered and inspected at the facility's visitor gate;
- You may have to present photo ID. In some cases there may be request to photocopy your driver's license, or you may even be asked to surrender your identification while you are at the site;
- You may also have to be met at the security checkpoint and escorted to the childcare center. At high security facilities, you may be escorted while in the facility housing the child care center.

Sometimes these procedures can add considerable time to your arrival or can restrict your ability to leave the facility during the day to get lunch. Ask about these factors so you can plan accordingly. If you have concerns about the program copying and/or retaining your drivers' license or other identification, call NAEYC.

**Satellite Locations:** For AV and AV-SAC, if the program has satellite locations, assessors should ask about travel time between the primary location and the satellite locations. Also confirm at which location you can expect to find the documentary evidence you need to assess: NAEYC Family and Teaching Staff Surveys, classroom portfolios, and program portfolios (including documents supporting required criteria 5.A.03 and 10.B.04). Request that these documents all be in a single location on the day of the visit. SAV may include observations at just one site, even if the program has multiple sites. See *Appendix 2 – Classroom Selection and Randomization* for details regarding class selection in satellite locations.

Record the Visit Contact Information as indicated in Assessor Procedures.

| <b>Assessor Procedures</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| When the initial phone call has been completed, a record of the contact is recorded in DMS.  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Log into DMS.</li> <li>2. Select <i>Visit Scheduling</i></li> <li>3. Enter the program ID number. On the <i>Visit Scheduling Detail</i> page enter the following information:</li> </ol> |   |
| <b>Field</b>   | <b>Information</b>  |
| Regional Assessor Contact With Program Date:   | <i>Enter date of initial phone call.</i>                                  |
| Regional Assessor Due Date to Program:   | <i>Enter due date given to the program to return Scheduling Calendar.</i> |



## 4. SETTING THE 15-BUSINESS-DAY WINDOW FOR THE VISIT

After the program's non-operational and exclusion dates for the months when the Accreditation Visit may occur are finalized, it is up to the assessor to set the date for the visit. The date is based on assessor availability and coordination with other Accreditation Visits in the area. The exact visit date is not communicated to the program until one business day before the visit occurs. However, the program is notified of a 15-business-day (Monday through Friday) "window" within which the visit will occur. This notification should be made by the assessor as soon as the dates can be determined, so the program knows when to be prepared for the visit. The 15 business day window does not include weekend days; therefore it may span a 3 or 4 week period. The 15 days include all Mondays through Fridays from the first date through the last date of the window. There may be federal, non-operational, or exclusion dates within the window. These dates do not lengthen the 15-day business day window; it is understood that the visit will not occur on federal, non-operational, or exclusion dates.

**The 15-Business Day Phone Call.** The assessor calls the program's primary or secondary contact person to notify them of the 15- business day window. Besides giving the 15-day window dates, the assessor uses the call to tell the program administrator more about what to expect on the day of the visit. The conversation provides an opportunity for the assessor to develop rapport with the administrator before arriving on site, and to answer any questions the administrator may have about the visit.

After giving the dates of the 15-business day window, the assessor confirms the number of days the visit is expected to be and the number of assessors who will be conducting the visit. If needed, assessors may discuss how the number of days and/or assessors was determined. Assessors should only discuss the factors that apply to the specifics of the visit at hand. Within 2 business days, program staff can expect to receive confirmation of visit details discussed during the 15- business day window call. An *Administrator Information Packet* will also be available, providing information about forms that may be used during the visit.

If the number of visit days or the number of assessors changes after the 15-business day phone call the assessor contacts the program to communicate these changes before the day of the visit. Confirm the actual site address of the program. Ask about directions to the program, or confirm directions you may have already downloaded online. Confirm details about parking and security access at the site. Discuss general timing details of the visit: when you will arrive (confirm the program's opening time again); how long you expect to be there; the need for an administrator or other responsible person to be there at arrival for the Orientation Meeting and at the end of the visit for a Closing Meeting.

Confirm again the number and age composition of classes. Remind the administrator that you will observe half the total number of classes (to a maximum of 10 observations) and all eligible age categories served by the program. Check again for class or staff changes and email any recent changes to [assessor@naeyc.org](mailto:assessor@naeyc.org)

It is also important to confirm at this time whether the program serves infants. Ask the program administrator if ANY classes in the entire program serve infants. If the program serves infants in any classes, briefly explain that compliance with regulations regarding safety of infant sleep surfaces is related to Required Criterion 5.A.12, Indicator a. Explain that you will need the *Infant Sleep Equipment Acknowledgement Form* to be completed in order for the program to fully meet Required Criterion 5.A.12, Indicator a. If the program has questions regarding how to meet this required criterion or about the form itself, ask them to contact their Program Support Specialist for more information. Please see the *Infant Sleep Equipment Acknowledgment Form: Cover Page* (in the *Administrator Information Packet*) for details.

Ask about a work space that you can use during the visit. Explain that you will need enough space to review and rate the portfolios and access to electrical outlets. Inform the program that privacy and adult size

furnishings (table and chair) are not required, but would be greatly appreciated as you will be working for several hours at a time.

Discuss what to expect about the class observations: length of observations, use of measurement tools, assessor demeanor during the observations, and desire not to disrupt normal class schedules or operations.

Discuss the contents of the *Administrator Information Packet (AIP)*. Explain that the AIP will contain information and samples of the forms that may be used throughout the course of the visit. Encourage the administrator to carefully review the forms. Let the administrator know that you can answer any questions during the Business Day Prior Call, and that you may ask them to refer back to this packet during the visit. Inform the administrator that you will be completing these forms electronically, as needed, throughout the visit. It is not necessary that they print off their copies, but they can choose to do so.

See Assessor Procedures for information regarding NAEYC Self-Assessment Family and Teaching Staff Survey data.

### **Assessor Procedures**

Confirm with the administrator that the NAEYC Self-Assessment Family and Teaching Staff Survey results have been completed and tallied by asking the administrator to confirm that the words “Self-Assessment” appear in the top right corner of the surveys that were distributed to the families and teaching staff. Inform the program that you will need to obtain a copy of the tallied results for both the Teaching Staff and Family surveys. NAEYC would prefer to receive this information in digital format, so pursue the following 2 options in order:

1. Ask the administrator to e-mail the results spreadsheets (or alternative format) for the NAEYC Self-Assessment Family and Teaching Staff Surveys, if possible, within 2 business days. Let the program know that if you have not received the Self-Assessment Survey data in the 2 business days following the call that you will request printed copies on the day of the visit.

Documents in Excel, Word or PDF formats are all OK if the program is able to send electronic versions of the NAEYC Self-Assessment Family and Teaching Staff survey results. Review the results to ensure that you have received the correct Self-Assessment version, rather than the Self-Study version. Scan the results for the following:

- The document clearly states “Self-Assessment”, rather than “Self-Study”
- Responses options on the Self-Assessment versions are limited to ‘YES’, ‘NO’, ‘DK’, and ‘NA’.
- Response options on the Self-Study versions are ‘Yes’, ‘Yes, but’ ‘No’ and ‘NO, but’.

Once you have received the NAEYC Family and Teaching Staff Self-Assessment survey results, e-mail the program a confirmation that you received the summaries, and save them onto the tablet to be included with the rest of the visit materials and forms for use during the visit.

If it is apparent that either of the survey summaries received are results from the NAEYC Self-Study surveys, or there is missing/incomplete data, you will request the NAEYC Self-Assessment surveys and/or any other missing and/or incomplete data during the Accreditation Visit.

If it is clear that you have received the correct NAEYC Family and Teaching Staff Self-Assessment survey results, and all data appears to be complete, you may complete the relevant checkboxes in the Evidence Check Form at this time. e.g., The Self-Assessment versions were used, and that the summary sheet(s) are complete.

2. If the program cannot send electronic versions of the NAEYC Self-Assessment Family and Teaching Staff Survey Summary Forms, inform them that you can accept printed copies on the day of the visit.

Regardless of whether you receive the results electronically prior to the visit or in paper format on the day of the visit, confirm with the administrator that the physical copies of the returned NAEYC surveys must be available during the visit to confirm results. If the program sent out the NAEYC surveys to teaching staff and families via an on-line survey service, inform the program that you will need to see a printout that shows the individual responses to each question for all respondents. If a printout is not provided or does not include the necessary information to confirm results, inform the program that you will need access to a computer and the necessary log-in credentials to verify the results on-line. A detailed instruction of this process is outlined in the *Accreditation Visit Protocol*.

Inform the administrator that the next contact will be a business-day-prior call; explain clearly what that means: The primary and secondary contact persons must be available at, or checking messages at, their telephone numbers and email addresses at least daily starting on the business day prior to the start of the 15-business day window. The program staff must assume responsibility for being available to be contacted.

Details about sending Visit Confirmation and the AIP can be found in Assessor Procedures.

**Assessor Procedures for Accreditation Visit (AV) only.  
See the next table for AV with School Age Component (AV-SAC).**

DMS Data Entry and the Confirmation Email. The 15-business day window phone call is accompanied by an e-mail communication to the program generated by DMS, the data management system. The communication is sent within two business days before or after the phone call. This DMS Confirmation Letter includes the dates of the 15-business day window and links to Administrator Information Packets. One letter is generated for a variety of visit types, so there are several links.

In order to generate the email the assessor must:

1. Log into DMS.
2. On the left-side navigation menu, select Visit Scheduling
3. Enter the program ID number. You'll go to a window titled *Visit Scheduling Information*. Enter the following information:

| Field                    | Information   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Regional Assessor ID     | <i>(If applicable) Enter the ID of any co-assessors for the visit</i>   |
| Exclusion dates          | <i>Enter any dates marked off as non-operational and/or exclusion dates on the Visit Scheduling Form</i>                |
| 15 business day window   | <i>Enter first and last dates of the 15-day window</i>  |
| Visit date(s)            | <i>The date(s) you will do the visit (unknown to program)</i>   |
| Date visit was confirmed | <i>Enter the date of your 15-day-window phone call</i>  |
| Confirmation Letter Sent | <i>Enter the date you are making this entry. You will send the confirmation letter after updating this information.</i> |

4. Select the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page after entering information on this screen.
5. Go back into the Visit Scheduling Information screen. Select the "Generate Confirmation Letters" button that will appear on the updated screen. This will generate a letter in DMS.

- Select the “View” link on the left-side of the screen next to the *Visit Confirmation Letter for Programs*; verify that all information is correct.
  - Select the “View” link on the left-side of the screen next to *Visit Confirmation Supplemental Information*; again verify that all information is correct. If the information found in the *Visit Confirmation Letter for Programs* or *Visit Confirmation Supplemental Information* is incorrect, return to the *Visit Scheduling Information* page to correct the information entered. If the incorrect information is not information you have entered but is information provided on the *Visit Scheduling Information* page by NAEYC, contact your Program Support Specialist. Once all corrections have been made return to step 4 above.
6. Select the “Email” link next to the “View” link to send the *Visit Confirmation Letter for Programs*. It will be sent within 24 hours to the program’s primary and secondary contacts. A copy should be sent to any co-assessors as well. The Confirmation Letter includes the dates of the 15 day window and web links to Administrator Information Packets, so assessors no longer need to send a separate AIP email.

### Assessor Procedures for Accreditation Visit with School-Age Component (AV-SAC)

School-Age Request Form (SARF): When you are first assigned a school-age accreditation visit, you will receive the program’s SARF from NAEYC if there is one available. If the program’s SARF is unavailable, the Visit Document for the program will include pertinent information to conducting the school-age component of the visit in the form of a note from the Program Support Specialist.

If available, the program’s SARF and/or the program’s Visit Document will indicate the total number of eligible school-age classes the program has reported. This information should be compared to information regarding the total number of eligible infant, toddler/two, preschool, and/or kindergarten classes the program has reported.

It is possible that programs may double-report classes that contain a mix of kindergarteners and school-agers. During the 15-day window call, assessors must be sure to ascertain if any classes were double reported on the SARF.

Scheduling. The date by which a program requests a school-age visit will determine the 6-month visit window within which the School-Age Accreditation Visit will occur. Requests will be accepted on a rolling basis. Eligible programs will receive a visit according to the following schedule.

| School Age Accreditation Request Form submission before: | Visit Window         |
|--|----------------------|
| January 31   | February 1 - July 31 |
| May 31   | June 1 - November 30 |
| September 30   | October 1 - March 30 |

DMS Data Entry and the Confirmation/AIP – SAV Email. The assessor follows up after the phone call with an email to the program (sent from the assessor’s NAEYC email, not DMS system email) confirming the dates of the 15-day window and providing samples of the forms. Do this no later than 48 hours after the call. Before sending the email the assessor must:

1. Log into DMS.
2. On the left-side navigation menu, select Visit Scheduling
3. Enter the program’s ID number. A window titled Visit Scheduling Information appears. Enter the following information:

| Field  | Information  |
|--|--|
| Regional Assessor Contact With Program Date: | <i>Enter date of 15-day window phone call.</i>   |
| Regional Assessor Due Date to Program:       | <i>Leave blank</i>   |
| Exclusion dates                              | <i>Enter any dates marked off on the form</i>  |
| 15 day window                                | <i>Enter first and last dates of the 15-day window</i>   |
| Visit date(s)                                | <i>The date(s) you will do the visit (unknown to program)</i>  |
| Date visit was confirmed                     | <i>Enter the date of your 15-day-window phone call (same date as 'Regional Assessor Contact with Program Date'.)</i>   |
| Confirmation Letter Sent                     | <i>Enter the date you are making this entry. You will send the confirmation email after updating this information.</i> |

4. Download the *Administrator Information Packet E-mail Template* onto your tablet.
5. Customize the e-mail with program specific information. The email template contains a link to the *Administrator Information Packet*.
6. Complete all writeable fields within the 15 Day Window Confirmation Letter, and attach the completed letter to the e-mail. Ensure that the link to the School Age *Administrator Information Packet* is working within the body of the e-mail.
7. Send the email from your NAEYC email to the primary and secondary contacts.
8. Note the date the email was sent on the Pre-Visit Worksheet.

For locations of the documents listed above please see the *Master Document List*.

If the number of visit days or the number of assessors changes after you have made the 15-business day phone call and sent the Visit Confirmation Letter, contact NAEYC at [assessor@naeyc.org](mailto:assessor@naeyc.org) . A **Quality Assessment Specialist** will contact the program to confirm the change with the program and with the assessor. The Visit Scheduling window of DMS should reflect the change. At this point, assessors should NOT reconfirm the change with the program again prior to the visit as this tends to cause confusion all around.

## 5. RANDOMIZATION

A random selection of classes for observation is necessary to maintaining the validity of the NAEYC Accreditation system. Random selection is a research-based practice that allows for confidence in the assessment system by assuring that no human bias factors potentially contribute to the decision as to which classes are observed.

Determining which classes and how many classroom classes are observed during an Accreditation Visit depends upon the following guidelines:

- Observe at least 50% of the total number of classes in the program, to a maximum of 10 observations in all;
- Observe at least one class from each eligible age category (infant, toddler/two, preschool, kindergarten, and school age as applicable);
- In multi-site programs, observe at least one class from each site.

Within each age category, use random selection to pick specific classes to observe. For detailed instructions on randomization including multi-age classes and multi-site programs, see *Appendix 2 – Classroom Selection and Randomization*, within Assessor Procedure. To randomize, use the *Randomizer and Classroom Selection Worksheet* included as part of the *Worksheets Document*.

## 6. PREPARING THE ACCREDITATION VISIT SCHEDULE

After the random selection of classes for observation has been completed, an NAEYC Visit Schedule should be created using the appropriate Visit Schedule Template. Assessors must follow all items and directions outlined in the Visit Schedule Template.

### Visit Scheduling Requirements:

- Account for nap times when scheduling class observations. However, infant class observations generally may be scheduled in the afternoon when other classes may be napping.
- Arrive between 7:00 am and 7:15 am if the program opens at 7:00 am or earlier; otherwise arrive within 15 minutes after the program's opening time.
- If the program opens between 6:00 am and 7:00 am, assessors may decide to arrive as early as 6:00 am to accommodate other scheduling needs.
  - *If, by starting the visit after 6:00, the visit would change from a 1 day visit to a 2 day visit, the assessor must start at 6:00 am.*
- Visit Schedules should not span weekends, non-operational, or exclusion dates. Multi-day visits should take place on contiguous business days in the same week. If an assessor finds it difficult to create a schedule within these constraints, he or she should contact a Quality Assessment Specialist for consultation and approval of the visit schedule.
- Leave the names of the teaching staff assigned to each randomly selected class off of the schedule. Enter staff names onto the schedule on the day of the visit, during the Orientation Meeting.

### Visit Scheduling Considerations:

- Don't schedule class observations too early in the day.
- Assessors do not have to arrive at the opening hour of a program on second (or other subsequent) visit days—only on the first day.

Once the schedule has been finalized, print paper copies for you and the program administrator to have during the site visit. It is important to ensure that co-assessors receive a copy of the Visit schedule in advance. This allows co-assessors to download and prepare the necessary tools and documents on their tablets prior to the visit. Make sure the schedule indicates the age categories of each class to be observed, and which assessor is doing each task. It is important that co-assessors confirm prior to the visit that all necessary files are prepared and accounted for.

## 7. BUSINESS-DAY-PRIOR NOTIFICATION

Call the primary contact person on the business day prior to your scheduled visit.

- If the visit is to start on a Monday, then call on Friday.
- If the program is not open on Fridays and the visit is to start on Monday, then call on Thursday.
- If the visit is to start on the day after a federal holiday, non-operational, or exclusion date, then call on the last fully operational day.

If you are unable to reach the primary contact by telephone, leave visit information on their voice-mails or with the staff person who answered the phone (note the person's name with whom the message was left, and the time). Ask the contact person to call you if they have questions, and let them know you will attempt to call the

secondary contact. Call the secondary contact if you are unable to reach the primary contact. Leave a second message with visit information. Assessors should make every attempt to conduct the business day prior call as early as possible however, assessors have until the program's close of business to contact the program. If you are unable to speak to someone at the program or leave a voicemail, call a **Quality Assessment Specialist** for next steps.

If during the Business-Day-Prior call with the program, or at any point before your arrival, the program informs you of an unplanned or emergency closure (i.e., weather, building problems, etc), inform the program that you will notify NAEYC and attempt to reschedule the visit within the existing 15-day window. If it is not possible to reschedule the visit within the existing 15-day window, NAEYC will contact the program to discuss next steps. When this happens, you must contact the **Quality Assessment Assistant**.

## **8. POSTPONING THE VISIT OR WITHDRAWING FROM THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS**

Assessors may be the first to hear from a program that they wish to halt the visit process, either temporarily or permanently. If that happens, Assessors should tell them that programs must officially request a withdrawal or postponement by submitting a form to the NAEYC. The policies and forms for withdrawing and postponing can be found on the NAEYC Website.

**Withdrawal.** Programs can notify NAEYC of intent to withdraw from the accreditation process at any time. A program that has been approved as a candidate but now wants to stop the visit scheduling process and withdraw from the accreditation process must submit a *Withdrawal Form*. The program will receive notification from NAEYC, confirming their request and stating the appropriate fee for withdrawing.

If a program states to the assessor an intention to withdraw from the accreditation process, the assessor should also promptly contact the NAEYC **Quality Assessment Assistant** with the information. Assessors should continue with the scheduling process (i.e., do not cancel flights, hotel bookings, etc.) until they have confirmation from an NAEYC staff member that the withdrawal was finalized.

**Postponement.** Programs may request a postponement of an Accreditation Visit by submitting the postponement form and applicable fee once they are notified of the 15 - day window. Postponement request will not be accepted after the program has received a business day prior call. If the scheduling of an Accreditation Visit is postponed, NAEYC is no longer bound to provide a visit within six months of the candidacy/renewal due date. In order to stop the Accreditation visit after a program receives the business day prior call, the program must withdraw from the process. Assessors should continue the scheduling process (i.e., do not cancel flights, hotel bookings, etc.) until the postponement has been confirmed by NAEYC.

Here are the steps in the Postponement Process:

- Program submits Postponement Request Form and payment
- Program / Assessor receives an approval email from NAEYC with a new 3-month calendar attached
- Program has 5 business days to complete the new 3-month calendar and return to NAEYC
- NAEYC sends Assessor updated 3-month calendar
- Program receives a new 15-day window
- Program receives a business day prior call to confirm the visit date

The assessor can contact the program and set a new 15-day window at any time during the postponement period, but the new 15-day window must be established for a date AFTER the postponement has ended. The non-operational and exclusion dates selected by the program at the time of the initial phone call will remain in effect after the postponement period has ended.

Assessors must complete the Accreditation Visit within 3 months of the new eligible-for-a-visit date. This means the visit may be extended beyond the initial 6-month window; programs understand that their accreditation may lapse if they choose to postpone. However, if a program’s accreditation will lapse, assessors are asked to make a good faith effort to schedule the visit before the lapse will occur. If additional federal holidays, non-operational or exclusion dates are required in any months outside of the initial 6-month window, assessors should contact a Quality Assessment Specialist at NAEYC for further instruction.

## 9. OTHER ASSESSOR PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT

### Preparing Assessment Tools and Forms

Prior to any visit you should ensure that you have downloaded onto your tablet computer all the assessment tools, forms and worksheets required for each visit. There are also a few forms that still exist in paper versions; you should have digital copies AND printed supplies of these forms as well.

### Reliability Visits

Some visits may include an Assessor Reliability component. During these visits 1 or more assessors may join a visit to conduct additional reliability tasks in addition to standard visit tasks. Reliability visits may be conducted for a variety of reasons, such as the annual reliability check. All reliability visits must include at least 1 joint observation and at least 1 of the Program Portfolio reliability sections. Assessors may be asked to complete additional reliability work which may include additional joint observations, Program Portfolio sections, Classroom Portfolios, and/or Program Observable Evidence.

Reliability raters will assess the necessary sources of evidence using the following tools:

- GOE-Reliability Tool
- CP-Reliability Tool

For each source of evidence on which reliability is being conducted, at least 1 is required; additional are optional. There is also a POE-Reliability Tool, used only by special request.

The PP, CP and GOE reliability calculator forms are built into the reliability tools.

Since Reliability Visits include additional tasks, some visits are not suitable for reliability. Use the chart below for scheduling Reliability Visits.

| <b>Length of Visit Guidelines<sup>1</sup> for Reliability Visits</b>  |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| This many observation in the visit...   | ... will require...                 |
| 1, 2, 3, or 4   | 2 Assessors for 1 Day               |
| 5 or 6  | Not suitable for Reliability Visits |
| 7 <sup>2</sup> , 8, or 9  | 2 Assessors for 2 Days              |
| 10  | Not suitable for Reliability Visits |
| <sup>1</sup> These are guidelines; there may be exceptions made by NAEYC on a case-by-case basis. Contact NAEYC for approval. |                                     |
| <sup>2</sup> A seven-observation visit is not ideal but can be used if needed.  |                                     |



**Travel Policy.** Refer to the *NAEYC Assessor Travel Policy* document when booking air travel, hotels and rental cars. If you have any questions about allowable travel expenses contact NAEYC's Director of Quality Assessment and Assurance.

## Appendix 1: Visit Scheduling Form

### This Appendix applies to Accreditation Visits (AV) and Accreditation Visits with a School Age Component (AV-SAC).

A *Visit Scheduling Form* is created by NAEYC staff for each cohort. The form is in writable PDF format to be compatible with digital data collection methods. The *Visit Scheduling Form* includes every month in the 6-month window applicable to each cohort. Due to the nature of the Candidacy/Renewal Material review process, it is likely that the scheduling process for a visit will begin well into the 6-month window. Programs should fill out the form based on the remaining applicable months in the cohort.

**Visit Scheduling Form.** The assessor will provide the program with the *Visit Scheduling Form* via email as part of the Pre-Visit Procedures. The *Visit Scheduling Form*, and the email template that accompanies it, can be found within the Assessor Google Site. Edit the email template to reflect only those instructions that are applicable to the program.

NAEYC does not conduct Accreditation Visits on Saturdays, Sundays, or federal government holidays. NAEYC does not conduct a visit on 'non-operational dates' or 'exclusion dates'.

- Non-Operational Dates include dates that the program is closed, not serving children, or dates when 1 or more of the age categories included in the program's accreditation are not present.
- Exclusion Dates are dates, up to 1 per month, which the program selects as non-visit days.

Further details and examples are provided below.

*Step 1 - Non-Operational Dates:* Programs indicate dates when the program is closed or one or more age categories (included within the program's accreditation) are not present, and briefly describe why. They'll indicate those days in the appropriate box on the form. The types of days could include:

- Religious holidays when the program will be closed.
- State holidays when the program will be closed.
- Other dates the program will not be serving children (e.g., spring break week, staff in-service training day).
- Dates when one or more age categories served at the program will not be at the program (e.g., preschool field trip).

*Step 2 - Exclusion Dates:* The program may choose up to 1 exclusion date for each month remaining in the 6-month window. An exclusion date may be any date when the program is open, but would not want a site visit to occur; for example, a day the director is scheduled to take leave, or "picture day" at the program.

If the program has a religious affiliation, religious holidays are considered to be non-operational dates, even if they serve children on those dates.

If the program has identified the 1 allowable exclusion date in a given month but still has dates that may not be convenient, the program will note the additional date(s) on the form and explain why. You, the assessor, may be able to schedule around these dates but NAEYC does not guarantee that will happen.

The program has 5 business days to return the *Visit Scheduling Form* to the assessor, indicating non-operational dates, exclusion dates, and other calendar considerations. The assessor will specify this "Due Date" on the Form. If the program does not return the *Visit Scheduling Form* by the due date indicated by the assessor on the form, it will be assumed that there are no non-operational dates or exclusion dates and the assessor will move forward with the visit scheduling process.

## Appendix 2: Classroom Selection and Randomization

### This appendix applies to Accreditation Visits (AV), Accreditation Visits with a School Age Component (AV-SAC), and School Age Visits (SAV).

The number of classes to be observed on a visit is based upon the number and distribution of all of the program's classes, including all ages served. Accreditation Visits include observations of all eligible age categories served at the program including Infant, Toddler/Twos, Preschool and Kindergarten. When applicable, Accreditation Visits may also include a School-age Component.

There are two types of visits that may include School-Age observations:

1. School-Age Visits (SAV) – occur during a program's current term of Accreditation and will include observation of eligible School-Age classes only.
2. Accreditation Visits with School Age Components (AV-SAC) – occur during a program's pursuit of Accreditation Renewal and will include observation of all eligible age categories (Infant, Toddler/Two, Preschool, Kindergarten, and/or School-Age).

Selection of classes is determined using the following guidelines:

For School-Age only Visits:

- Observe the number of school-age classes that would be observed as if they were part of a full accreditation visit;
- Observe no more than 3 School-Age classes;
- In programs with satellite locations, it is NOT necessary to observe at least one class from each location;
- When there are multiple School-Age classes, use random selection to pick the specific class(s) to be observed.

For Accreditation Visits and for Accreditation Visits with School Age Components:

- Observe at least 50% of the total number of classes in the program, except in programs with more than 20 eligible classes. In such programs conduct no more than 10 observations;
- Observe at least one class from each eligible age category (infant, toddler/two, preschool, kindergarten, school-age (if applicable));
- In programs with satellite locations, observe at least one class from each location; and
- Within each age category, use random selection to pick specific classes to observe.

There are special considerations for mixed-age classes, developmental age versus chronological age, and for programs with satellite locations. These are detailed below.

Random selection of classroom classes for observation is necessary to maintaining the validity of the NAEYC Accreditation system. Random selection is a research-based practice that allows for confidence in the assessment system by assuring that no human bias factors potentially contribute to the decision as to which classes are observed.

### Step 1: Determining How Many Classes to Observe

Use the appropriate *Classroom Selection and Randomizer Worksheet* to complete the following steps.

Prior to developing the schedule for the visit, you need to consider the number of classes in the program and the classes' distribution across age categories. After consulting the program's Visit Document, School-Age Accreditation Request Form (if applicable), and confirming the information in a pre-visit call to the program, describe the class structure in Table 1, Column 2.

| <b>1</b>            | <b>2</b>                                      | <b>3</b>                                |
|---------------------|---|---|
| <b>Age Category</b> | <b>Number of Classes in each Age Category</b> | <b>Number of Classes to be Observed</b> |
| Infant              |   |   |
| Toddler/Two         |   |   |
| Preschool           |   |   |
| Kindergarten        |   |   |
| School-Age          |   |   |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>      |   |   |

Once you have the “number of classes in each age category” (column 2), figure out the “number of classes to be observed” (column 3) using these steps:

1. First determine the total number of classes to be observed and enter it at the bottom of Column 3. For programs with 20 or fewer classes, since this number should equal at least 50% of the total classes in the program, it will be half or “half + 1” of the number of classes. *For example*, if there are 8 classes, you will observe 4 classes (half). If there are 13 classes, you will observe 7 classes (half + 1). However, if the TOTAL number of classes in Column 2 is greater than 20, enter “10” in the TOTAL row for Column 3. The maximum number of classes observed in any program is 10.
2. Next, assure that each age category is being observed at least once by entering “1” into each row of Column 3 that has classes of that age in the program. This may increase the projected total number of classes to be observed! *For example*, if a program has 5 classes altogether, you would have projected that you need to observe 3 classes. However, if the program’s 5 classes are spread over 5 age categories, you will have to observe 5 classes. Increase the total if necessary to assure that classes in all age categories are observed.
3. Now add observations within age categories to bring the number of classes observed within an age category nearer to 50%. Start adding observations within the age categories to distribute the observations as proportionally as possible, until you have reached the total number of classes to be observed.
4. Don’t go above your overall projected total of observations just to bring any particular age category up to 50% observed. Just assign observations proportional to the number of classes in each age category, favoring younger classes when it’s a toss-up.

**Here are some examples:**

| <b>Example 1: 26 classes, 10 observations</b> |   |   | <b>Summary</b>   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>1</b>                                      | <b>2</b>                                      | <b>3</b>                                | This is a large program with more than 20 classes, so it will get a maximum of 10 observations. Assign observations to age categories in proportion to the number of classes in each age category. Kindergarten and School-Age categories each have only 2 classes; do one observation for each. The remaining 8 observations are assigned proportionally. |
| <b>Age Category</b>                           | <b>Number of Classes in each Age Category</b> | <b>Number of Classes to be Observed</b> |  |
| Infant  | 7   | 3                                       |  |
| Toddler/Two                                   | 8   | 3                                       |  |
| Preschool                                     | 7   | 2                                       |  |
| Kindergarten                                  | 2   | 1                                       |  |
| School-age                                    | 2   | 1                                       |  |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>                                | <b>26</b>                                     | <b>10</b>                               |  |

| <b>Example 2: 12 classes, 6 observations</b> |   |   | <b>Summary</b>  |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>1</b>                                     | <b>2</b>                                      | <b>3</b>                                | <p>After you have assured that each age category has at least one class observed, you have accounted for 5 observations. But you need to observe 6 classes in all to get above 50% of the total number of classes in the program. Add one observation in the youngest age category that is not already at 50% within the category – Preschool. You are not observing at least 50% of the Preschool classes, but stop adding observations now because you have reached 50% of all classes.</p> |
| <b>Age Category</b>                          | <b>Number of Classes in each Age Category</b> | <b>Number of Classes to be Observed</b> |   |
| Infant                                       | 2   | 1                                       |   |
| Toddler/Two                                  | 1   | 1                                       |   |
| Preschool                                    | 5   | 2                                       |   |
| Kindergarten                                 | 1   | 1                                       |   |
| School-age                                   | 3   | 1                                       |   |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>                               | <b>12</b>                                     | <b>6</b>                                |   |

| <b>Example 3: 11 classes, 6 observations</b> |   |   | <b>Summary</b>   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>1</b>                                     | <b>2</b>                                      | <b>3</b>                                | <p>After you have assured that each age category has at least one class observed, you have accounted for 4 observations. But you need to observe 6 classes in all to capture 50% of all classes. The sole (1) School-age class must be observed as it is the only class in its age category. Kindergarten already has 50% (1 of 2) of its classes observed, so you don't add any there. Clearly, you should add an observation to the Preschool category to bring it closer to 50% observed. You have one observation left to assign, either another Preschool or another Toddler/Two. Favor the younger age category – add an observation to Toddler/Twos. Preschool is now slightly below 50%, and T/T is above 50%, but stop adding, because you have reached 50% of all classes.</p> |
| <b>Age Category</b>                          | <b>Number of Classes in each Age Category</b> | <b>Number of Classes to be Observed</b> |  |
| Infant                                       | 0   | 0                                       |  |
| Toddler/Two                                  | 3   | 2                                       |  |
| Preschool                                    | 5   | 2                                       |  |
| Kindergarten                                 | 2   | 1                                       |  |
| School-age                                   | 1   | 1                                       |  |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>                               | <b>11</b>                                     | <b>6</b>                                |  |

| <b>Example 4: 18 classes, 9 observations</b> |   |   | <b>Summary</b>   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>1</b>                                     | <b>2</b>                                      | <b>3</b>                                | <p>With 18 classes in the program, you need to observe a total of 9 classes. You assign the first 4 observations to assure that each age category has at least one class observed. Now you need to assign 5 more observations. Add observations to age categories proportionally, aiming to get each category as close to 50% as possible. Infants are already at 50% (1 of 2), so add nothing. If you add 3 observations to the Preschool age category, you will be observing 50% (4 of 8) of those classes. If you add 1 observation to the School-age category it will bring it closer to 50% (2 of 5). Assign the last observation by favoring the younger age category, the Toddler/Two category, putting it over 50% rather than putting the School-age category over 50%.</p> |
| <b>Age Category</b>                          | <b>Number of Classes in each Age Category</b> | <b>Number of Classes to be Observed</b> |  |
| Infant                                       | 2   | 1                                       |  |
| Toddler/Two                                  | 3   | 2                                       |  |
| Preschool                                    | 8   | 4                                       |  |
| Kindergarten                                 | 0   | 0                                       |  |
| School-age                                   | 5   | 2                                       |  |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>                               | <b>18</b>                                     | <b>9</b>                                |  |

**Counting Mixed Age Classes:** If a program includes mixed-age classes as part of their program, include each mixed-age class among one of the regular class categories by using the following decision rules:

1. If the mixed-age class includes an age that is not represented in other classes, it must be assigned to the unrepresented category and observed. For example, a program has a mixed-age class of Toddler/Twos and Preschoolers. The program also has a separate Toddler/Two class, but no Preschool class. Count the class as “Preschool” for the purpose of randomization/class selection, and observe it.
2. If the mixed-age class is made up of ages that are all represented in other classes, count the mixed-age class among the age category for the youngest children in the class. For example, a program has separate Toddler/Two and Preschool classes in addition to a mixed Toddler/Two-Preschool class. The youngest age in the mixed age class is the Toddler/Twos, so the room would be counted as a Toddler/Two class for randomization/class selection purposes.
3. If by seeing the mixed age class you are seeing all age categories and you've already met the 50% selection guideline, you don't need to see an additional class. For example, if a program has 3 classes -- a Toddler/Two class, a Preschool class, and a Toddler/Two-Preschool mixed-age class, and the Preschool class and mixed-age class were randomly selected, you would be able to just see those two classes. The Toddler/Two class would not need to be observed as well, because Toddler/Twos are represented in the mixed age class.
4. If a program does not have a Kindergarten class, but does have a mixed-age class of Kindergarten and School-age children that was previously not eligible because it was not composed of 50% or more Kindergartners, randomize it as a School-age class for the Pilot Program only. Do this even if there are other School-age classes. (Otherwise we would lose the School-age class.) However, if a class is a mixed-age Kindergarten/School-Age class and it is composed of 50% or more Kindergarten children, and was therefore eligible for observation and was part of the most recent accreditation visit, follow the above randomization rules and randomize with the youngest age-category.

**Important Note!** A mixed-age class is assessed using the criteria applicable to *all* the age categories included in the class, regardless of how the class was classified for the purpose of randomization/class selection. For example, if a mixed Toddler/Two-Preschool class was randomized as a Toddler/Two class and randomly selected, the assessor will rate the class on both Toddler/Two and Preschool criteria.

**Developmental Age versus Chronological Age in School-Age Classes:**

Some classes include children with special needs, who may be functioning at a developmental age that is different than their chronological age. This could alter the predominant age category of the class from “School-age”, which is the subject of this pilot program, to “kindergarten”, “preschool” or some other age category that is accredited in the context of regular Accreditation Visits.

During your pre-visit phone calls, when you review details about each class, ask these questions:

1. “Are all or some of the children functioning at a developmental age that is different than their chronological age?”

**If no, stop here. If yes, go on.**

2. “For this class, do you use a curriculum and/or equipment geared to kindergarten, preschool or younger ages?”
3. “Are more than half the children in this class functioning at a developmental age that is below that of typically developing school age children?”

If the answer to either of these questions is “Yes”, call an NAEYC Quality Assessment Specialist before proceeding further with visit planning. If the program is engaging in the school-age pilot, but the school-age class is functioning at a younger age, the school-age pilot may not be appropriate for this program.

**Step 2: Generate a Set of Random Numbers**

Once the classes have been sorted into age categories, you must generate a set of random numbers that will let you randomly select which classes to observe. Remember, for School-Age Visits you will never observe more than 3 School-Age classes. For Accreditation Visits with a School Age Component you will need to randomly select the appropriate number of classes from each age category, but no more than 10 total. Go to a randomization web site which allows for easy selection of a random set of numbers; generate one set of numbers for the age categories that are relevant to the type of visit you are conducting. Then match the generated set of random numbers to the list of classes to determine which classes to observe. This web site provides an electronic calculation of the Random Table of Numbers found in the back of statistics books.

Go to <http://www.randomizer.org>

Scroll down the website page and fill out the form like this:

| Question:  | Answer:   |
|--|---|
| “How many sets of number do you want to generate?”   | Always enter the number 1.  |
| “How many numbers per set?”  | Enter the total number of classrooms in the age category set, <i>not</i> the number you plan to observe. It is important to have a randomized order for each classroom in the category. |
| “Number Range”   | Enter the first and last number for the entire set of numbers. So if you have 6 classes, enter “From: <u>1</u> ”, “To: <u>6</u> ”.  |
| “Do you wish each number in a set to remain unique?”   | Select “Yes” from the drop-down menu.   |
| “Do you wish to sort the numbers that are generated?”  | Select “No” from the drop-down menu.  |
| “How do you wish to view your random numbers?”   | Select “Place Markers Off” from the drop-down menu.   |
| Click the “Randomize Now!” button. Print the resulting page. Label which age category it is for. |   |

**Example:** As an assessor you are assigned a program with a total of 11 classes: 9 preschool classes, 1 toddler class and 1 infant class. You have determined that you will be observing 1 infant class, 1 toddler class, and 4 preschool classes. Generate a set of random numbers for the preschool age category.

| Question:  | Answer:  |
|--|--|
| “How many sets of number do you want to generate?”   | 1  |
| “How many numbers per set?”                          | 9<br>Remember, request random numbers for ALL classes in the category, not just the number to be observed. |
| “Number Range”                                       | From: <u>1</u> To: <u>9</u> .  |
| “Do you wish each number in a set to remain unique?” | “Yes”  |

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| “Do you wish to sort the numbers that are generated?”  | “No”                |
| “How do you wish to view your random numbers?”   | “Place Markers Off” |
| Click the “Randomize Now!” button. Print the resulting page. Label which age category it is for. |                     |

Your output will look something like this:

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Research Randomizer Results</b><br/> 1 Set of 9 Unique Numbers Per Set<br/> Range: From 1 to 9 -- Unsorted</p> <p><b>Set #1:</b><br/> 3, 1, 6, 2, 4, 9, 8, 5, 7</p> |
|---|

List the random number set generated for the preschool classes in the preschool category row in Table 3 of the *Classroom Selection and Randomizer Worksheet*. Remember that you need to observe 4 of the 9 preschool classes, so highlight or circle the first 4 numbers:

| Step 3 / Table 3: List Random Number Orders for each Age Category |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Age Category  | Randomized Numbers        |
| Infant  |                           |
| Toddler/Two   |                           |
| <b>Preschool</b>  | 3, 1, 6, 2, 4, 9, 8, 5, 7 |
| Kindergarten  |                           |

Take this set of numbers to the next step, where you match the random numbers to specific classes. You must take a screen shot of each set of random numbers that are generated for each age category and save it to your tablet so that it can be taken on the Accreditation Visit and sent to NAEYC with the *Classroom Selection and Randomizer Worksheet* and other visit data. Alternatively, if you are randomizing on a laptop or desktop computer, you may choose to scan a printed copy of the results and then e-mail the document to the account associated with your tablet.

**Step 3: Random Selection of Classes**

Using Table 2 of the *Classroom Selection and Randomizer Worksheet*, list all the names of the classes within each category. You will see that each class now has a number associated with it in Table 2.

In the program example above, with 1 Infant, 1 Toddler/Two, and 9 Preschool classes, Table 2 might look like this:



| Step 2 / Table 2: Number all classes within each Age Category |            |                          |            |                                     |            |                          |            |
|---|------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Infant Classes  |            | Toddler/Two Classes      |            | Preschool Classes                   |            | Kindergarten Classes     |            |
| #   | Class Name | #                        | Class Name | #                                   | Class Name | #                        | Class Name |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 1          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 2          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 2          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 3          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 4          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 4          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 5          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 5          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 6          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 7          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 7          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 8          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 8          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 9          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 9          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | 10         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 10         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10         |

Check the boxes next to the preschool classes numbered 3, 1, 6, and 2 in Table 2 – the first 4 numbers in your random number list. These classes will be observed. The additional random numbers will serve as back-ups in case one of the selected classrooms has to be replaced. For example, if Class #3 (“Bluebirds”), was out on a field trip all day and not available for observation, you would look to the next number in your random number list, which is “4”. Class #4 in the Preschool list is the “Pink Flamingos”. You would observe them instead.

### **Satellite Locations**

**For Accreditation Visits or Accreditation Visits with a School Age Component:** In programs with a primary location and one or two satellite locations, at least one class at each location must be observed as part of the 50% of the total classes observed during on the Accreditation Visit. You *don't need* one class in *each* age category in each location – just at least one class in *any* age category. When determining the classes for observation in such programs, create one set of random numbers for each age class in the usual way (as instructed above), determining the classes for observation based on the random set of numbers. Then check to see if at least one class from each location is captured as part of the 50% that will receive an observation. If classes from each location are not represented in the first half (50%) of the random set of numbers, remove the last class selected from one of your age categories and keep moving down the random set of numbers until at least one class from each location is included in the sample.

**For School-Age only Visits:** Because programs eligible for the School-Age Accreditation Pilot Program are already NAEYC-accredited, they have already been observed at all satellite locations. Therefore the part of NAEYC's standard Accreditation Visit randomization protocol relating to satellite locations (above) is not relevant to the pilot program and should not be followed. *Additional school-age observations should not be added to account for satellite locations.* If a class at a satellite location is randomly chosen, that class may be observed, and if is the only observation needed, other locations need not be observed.