

The logo for NAEYC, featuring the lowercase letters "naeyc" in white on a blue square background.

Early Learning Program Accreditation

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Program News: December 2025

Welcome to the December 2025 edition of **Program News**, your source for up-to-date info on NAEYC Early Learning Program Quality Assessment and Accreditation! This month, we are sharing newly available resources that supports early learning programs in preparing for new system site visits. Check out the resources we have available to support the transition to the new system and to help prepare your program for success.

Now Available: NAEYC Revised Code of Ethics

NAEYC has released a new version of the **Code of Ethics for Early Childhood Educators**. This much-anticipated position statement revision affirms that early childhood educators who work in homes, centers, and schools have professional, ethical responsibilities that go along with their core knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions— and which together guide the ethical decision-making and behaviors that support each and every child’s healthy development, learning, and well-being.

[Read the Revised Code](#)

Explore Our New Accreditation System

NAEYC has redesigned its Early Learning Program Accreditation System to better support programs in achieving and maintaining high-quality early education. The new Early Learning Program Quality Assessment and Accreditation System is:

- **More inclusive, flexible, and streamlined**, reflecting the current early learning environment.
- **Grounded in Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)** and aligned with NAEYC’s Early Childhood Program Standards.
- Designed to make it **easier for all types of programs** to demonstrate and sustain quality.

[Get to Know Our New Accreditation System](#)

Updates for NAEYC Accredited Programs

New System Site Visits Have Begun – Be Prepared!

NAEYC has officially launched new system site visits, including random visits for programs at the Accreditation and Accreditation+ tiers. Programs at these tiers are eligible for random visits at any time, so it's important to stay ready.

To help you prepare and succeed, we've created resources designed to make the process smooth and transparent:

- **Site Visit Protocols** Explains what programs can expect from NAEYC during site visits that include observation-based assessment items (2025).
- **Observation Tool** Includes the Accreditation observation-based assessment items and guidance that is used by NAEYC assessors when completing any type of site visit under the new system.
- **Site Visit Readiness Checklist** A high-level tool designed for program administrators to help prepare for a successful site visit.
- **Site Visit Forms** Detailed documents used by Assessors during the site visit, including interview questions for orientation and closing meetings.

Access these resources today and ensure your team is confident and prepared for every step of the process.

Visit [our webpage](#) to explore all new system resources.

New Required Item Related to Pediatric First Aid & CPR

NAEYC required assessment items are essential to program quality and must be met to earn and maintain NAEYC Recognition or Accreditation. Programs rated “No” on any required item during an application review or site visit will receive a “Defer” decision, regardless of performance on other items or best practices.

In the **2025 Assessment Items**, a new required item is present that requires at least one educator with current pediatric CPR and first aid training in the learning environments where children are present. O.6.13 (All Ages)

- **Required Item Expectations**

- [List of Required Items](#)


Accreditation+ Renewal: What You Need to Know

Programs may begin their Accreditation+ renewal up to one year before their Valid Until Date (VUD) once the fourth annual report is submitted and the annual fee is paid.

The renewal application is available in the Early Learning Hub (under the Quality Journey widget) for a six-month window — from 12 to 6 months before the VUD. Programs are encouraged to start early and use the [Self-Assessment Tools](#) to prepare.

After submission:

1. The application is reviewed and scored.
2. Upon a successful decision on the application, programs receive an invoice for the Site Visit Fee.
3. Once paid, a six-month window for the site visit is set.
4. A decision is issued within 45 days after the visit.
5. Upon a successful decision, the annual fee for the first year of the new 5-year term is due.

 **Tip:** Submitting early helps ensure your renewal is complete before your VUD. If needed, extensions may be granted to allow time for the visit and decision.

[Access the Accreditation+ Renewal Guide](#)

*Programs that do not wish to renew at Accreditation+ should contact the NAEYC Support Team to request a change of status.

New Resources for Accredited Programs

[Early Learning Hub Overview – Recorded Webinar](#) – Overview of the new accreditation portal, the Early Learning Hub

Accreditation+ Renewal Guide – Overview of the Accreditation+ Renewal Process

Accreditation Application Resource Guide – Includes the intent, rationale, and recommendations across Accreditation Document-based items that included in the new system Accreditation initial and renewal application.

Site Visit Readiness Checklist – A high-level tool designed for program administrators to help prepare for a successful site visit.

Support Guide – Guidance on what to do in specific scenarios or how to access support.

Accreditation Document-Based Self-Assessment Tools (UPDATED) – Includes guidance from the electronic application. This explains item language and provides scoring guidance to help programs submit the appropriate evidence.

Check Out Our New System Resources

Do you have feedback?

We look forward to your feedback on how to make our new system even stronger. We are continuously challenging ourselves to innovate and to hold ourselves accountable to our stated values. To share your feedback with us, please follow the link to complete our survey.

Complete the Survey



Resources For Families

You can find great articles and resources for families on our website. **Check it out!**



Get Connected!

Connect with us on social media, and NAEYC members can share ideas on **HELLO!**

Follow us on Social Media!
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