



Guidelines

Program information for child care facilities

What do you get when you ask child care providers, government officials, doctors and parents to come up with an idea on how to recognize exemplary, environmentally-safe child care facilities? In Indiana, you get teamwork and Indiana's Five Star Environmental Recognition Program for Child Care Facilities!

How It Works

IDEM awards stars to child care facilities that exceed state requirements for environmental health and safety. Each star builds on the previous star's accomplishments. For example, a child care facility must meet the three-star requirements in order to apply for five stars. Star ratings remain in effect for three years. Participants must re-apply to keep their status.

Application submittal due dates are April 1, August 1 and December 1. Applications are evaluated three times per year.

Eligibility

Participating child care facilities must:

- Be licensed or registered (operate more than four hours a day, 10 consecutive work days and care for more than five children);
- Be in compliance with all applicable state rules and regulations (Head Start facilities also must be in compliance with applicable federal regulations);
- Meet all criteria for the star category in which they will apply; and,
- Submit a complete and accurate application.

How Do You Start

At first glance, the application process may seem complicated, but don't give up! The best way to start is by reading through the application, deciding how many stars you'd like to apply for, and completing the self assessment booklet. Once you've checked off the items that are already completed, please call IDEM at (800) 451-6027. We will help you determine if you need a lead risk assessment and will be able to provide it for free. We'll also help you determine the next steps toward submitting the application.



Call **(800) 451-6027** or visit www.idem.IN.gov/childcare to learn more.



Benefits

Here are just some of the benefits you get for taking steps to protect children:

- **Free advertisement!** Participating facilities are recognized on the IDEM Web site. IDEM also works with your local press to promote your facility's accomplishments to newspapers, radio, and television stations.
- **Recognition on CareFinder!** Your success in the Five Star Program is listed on CareFinder for parents looking to find quality child care.
- **Free educational materials!** Once you apply, you'll receive information for parents on lead, mercury, and other environmental hazards. You'll continue to receive additional materials throughout your membership.
- **Free lead risk assessment!** Licensed lead risk assessors are available to test your paint, dust, soil, and drinking water for lead hazards. If a lead hazard is found, the assessor will work with you to develop options to minimize the hazard at minimal cost.
- **Free training opportunities!** Participating facilities receive notices of opportunities to attend training on lead, asthma, and other environmental health issues. Most opportunities are offered at no cost.
- **Free environmental educators presentations!** Environmental educators from IDEM conduct free programs for children at Five Star member facilities. Programs are 15–60 minutes long and include recycling, worms, water, and landfills.
- **Free "No Idling" signs!** These outdoor metal signs remind parents to turn their cars off and according to members, have been very effective.
- **Free radon test kits!** These do-it-yourself kits are simple and free. Results are sent directly to you.



- **Free "No Smoking" signs!**
- **First in line for scholarship and grant opportunities!** When scholarships or grants become available, historically, Five Star Members receive extra bonus points or receive first dibs for certain opportunities from the State.

Ready To Apply?

1. Go to www.idem.IN.gov/childcare to find the application form (Five Star Program Criteria) and determine the star category in which you will apply.
2. Completely and accurately fill in the information requested and gather the requested documentation, as applicable.
3. Mail your completed application and documentation to IDEM.



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