How well does your infant/toddler setting meet the environmental challenge? Think about your setting and then respond to these observations. Write Yes or No next to each item. Then go back and circle all “no” answers for appropriate attention.

My child development setting...

1. _____ uses soft, neutral colors for backgrounds, with color accents added.
2. _____ has soft furnishings for comfort in several areas.
3. _____ has a variety of textures.
4. _____ has a mixture of natural and full spectrum lighting.
5. _____ has plenty of fresh air and good circulation.
6. _____ provides contact with the natural world.
7. _____ has no tall furniture to block views.
8. _____ has noise control through carpeting, acoustic tiles, or baffles.
9. _____ has clearly defined spaces.
10. _____ has an open area for physical play.
11. _____ provides quiet spaces for children.
12. _____ has quiet and active play areas separated.
13. _____ has clear pathways around activity areas.
14. _____ has a place for parents and a place to share information with parents.
15. _____ includes secure, unbreakable mirrors and display at floor or child’s level.
16. _____ has comfortable adult seating for holding infants and toddlers.
17. _____ has adult storage inaccessible to children.
18. _____ includes multilevel surfaces.
19. _____ provides convenient, accessible storage for toddler playthings.
20. _____ is equipped with child-size furniture with rounded corners for safety.
21. _____ presents a changing selection of age-appropriate playthings.
22. ____ offers multipurpose materials.
23. ____ ensures that all playthings are in excellent condition with no small parts.
24. ____ reflects the cultural make-up of the children.

How well did your infant and toddler setting do?
If you identified areas where there is room for improvement, set goals and focus on making those improvements. Start with two or three significant and attainable goals, such as going on a daily walk, adding soft elements to the room, or displaying children’s artwork at their eye level. Then gradually work on more difficult or costly tasks. Keep working until your infant and toddler setting is all that it needs to be – nurturing, organized, functional, and attractive.