

The Opening Day *Checklist*

A quick, practical rundown of what actually needs to be true before any preschool, Head Start, or CBO classroom opens its doors.

Whether you're opening a brand-new site or starting a new program year, these are the essentials — pulled from **20+ years running programs** across private schools, Head Start, Early Head Start, and CBOs.

CLASSROOM & SPACE

- ☐ **Space is set up for the actual age group enrolled**
Not a generic room — furniture, materials, and layout matched to the children who'll be in it.

- ☐ **Safety and licensing walkthrough completed**
Final check against your local licensing checklist, not just your own judgment.

STAFFING

- ☐ **Ratios confirmed against actual enrollment**
Based on real headcount, not projected numbers.

- ☐ **All clearances and required trainings on file**
Completed, not just scheduled.

- ☐ **Coverage plan exists for absences**
You know exactly who steps in if someone calls out on day one.

FAMILIES

- ☐ **Welcome communication sent before day one**
Families know what to expect — don't let opening day be the first time they hear from you.

- ☐ **Required forms collected, not chased**
Health forms and enrollment paperwork in hand before the first day, not during it.