

Project PlaySmart 2025 Application Guidance

Partnerships in Child Care (PICC) is a division of Volunteers of America South Central Louisiana (VOASCLA). PICC's programs have served early childhood educators and families since 1996. Project PlaySmart makeovers allow eligible child care centers to apply to receive needed classroom resources.

Project PlaySmart applications are **due by noon on Friday, February 21, 2025**. A blind panel of early childhood experts will determine four winners: 2 grand prize winners who will each receive \$15,000 makeovers and 2 runners-up who will each receive \$10,000 makeovers.

Please note that at least 50% of the total grant award should be spent on classroom furniture/fixtures.

Please note winning centers may choose the makeover 1 or 2 classrooms. If the center chooses to makeover 2 classrooms, 75% of the total grant award must be spent in the Primary Classroom and 25% of the total grant award must be spent in the Secondary Classroom.

For application questions or assistance, contact a Partnerships in Child Care team member.

Eligibility and Application Requirements

To apply, your child care center must

- be licensed as a Type III center by the state of Louisiana and be in good standing
- be an active member of the Early Childhood Network served by VOASCLA
- have been in business for at least 2 consecutive years (not counting temporary closures due to hurricanes, flood, or Covid)
- have a 2023-2024 Performance Profile rating of Approaching Proficient, Proficient, High Proficient, or Excellent
- be licensed for at least 25 children
- serve at least one at-risk child
 - ["At-risk" means children who are served by CCAP, B-3, or the foster care system, who are experiencing homelessness, who have a disability, or who are second-language learners.]
- have lead teachers who hold or are working toward an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate
- agree to all our Partnership Agreement Terms
- choose a 1 or 2 classrooms that show a high need for educational enhancements
 - if 2 classrooms are chosen, 75% of the budget must be spent in Classroom 1 and 25% of the budget must be spent in Classroom 2

Notes:

- No more than 1 center application will be accepted from the same owner. All owners must be listed in a center's application.
- 2018 - 2024 Grand Prize winners and 2024 Runners-Up are ineligible to apply for Project PlaySmart 2025.

- o 3 current photographs of the classroom needing the makeover must accompany the application for the application to be considered complete.
- o Repeated significant Licensing Deficiencies may disqualify a center from eligibility.
- o Centers who received coaching and TA from VOASCLA will be prioritized.

What to Expect If Awarded a PlaySmart Makeover

The Grand Prize makeover will take place over a “transformation weekend,” with a “reveal” of the new space the following Monday. During the “transformation weekend,” the Grand Prize-winning center will have the following responsibilities:

- to clear the chosen classroom(s) on the Friday afternoon/evening before the makeover
- to have the center Director, Makeover Classroom Lead Teacher, and two additional staff members present on the assigned Saturday to assist, for the entire duration of the makeover.
- In addition, VOASCLA-PICC will also have contractors, staff, and volunteers present at the makeover to help with the makeover.
- VOASCLA-PICC will also have staff members and guests present at the center for the “reveal” on Monday morning.

Submitting Your Application

- All applications, budget forms, and photographs must be submitted via JotForm.
- Only complete ONE tab on the budget form, Complete Tab A if you plan to makeover 1 classroom or complete Tab B if you plan to makeover 2 classrooms.
- Applications must contain answers to all questions, completed budget form, and photographs.
- Application is due: **by noon on Friday, February 21, 2025**. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Applications must be typed: no hand-written applications will be accepted.

The contact listed on your application will receive confirmation via e-mail when your application has been received. Note: If you do not receive that confirmation within 24 hours of submission of your application, contact Partnerships in Child Care at Baton Rouge (225) 926-8005.

Project PlaySmart Funding

Project PlaySmart 2025 is made possible by the generosity of local businesses’ School Readiness Tax Credit donations.