



Project PlaySmart 2017 Application Guidance

Project Overview

Who is Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge?

Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge (VOAGBR) is a locally governed, chartered affiliate of Volunteers of America, one of the nation's oldest and largest human services organizations. Established in Baton Rouge in 1921, VOAGBR serves 19 parishes in South Louisiana.

Partnerships in Child Care (PICC) is a division of VOAGBR, and PICC's programs have been serving early childhood educators and families with infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children since 1996.

What is Project PlaySmart?

Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge uses funds raised from Louisiana's School Readiness Tax Credits to make Project PlaySmart possible. This funding is provided through the generous donations of local businesses and community members to support helping children get ready to succeed in school and in life.

To support the enrichment of children's early learning environments, this year's eligible child care centers (see below for requirements) can apply to receive classroom, outdoor, and administrative resources through the 2017 Project PlaySmart Makeovers.

Project PlaySmart Makeover applications from eligible child care centers will be accepted by the Partnerships in Child Care office through **noon on Friday, February 24, 2017**. A blind panel of early childhood experts will determine three winners:

- 1 grand prize winner will receive a center makeover of up to a \$10,000 value;
- 2 runners-up will each receive center makeovers of up to a \$5,000 value.

In addition, this year, to provide additional support to centers impacted by the August 2016 flooding, VOAGBR will be offering Flood Recovery Grants. Centers that flooded in August 2016 may choose to apply only for a Flood Recovery Grant OR to apply for both a Flood Recovery Grant and a Project PlaySmart Makeover Prize.





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 located in the parish of East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, St. Helena, West Baton Rouge, or West Feliciana
- have been in business for at least 3 consecutive years (other than temporary closure due to the August 2016 flood)
- be licensed for at least 25 children
- serve at least one at-risk child
["At-risk" means children who are served by CCAP or the foster care system, who are experiencing homelessness, who have a disability, or who are second-language learners.]
- be an active member of your Early Childhood Education and Care Community Network
- have completed the PICC "Application for Coaching" in 2016 or 2017 and be committed to the PICC Coaching Technical Assistance
- attend one informational session about the 2017 Project PlaySmart application
- agree to all of our Partnership Agreement Terms

Note:

- Centers that did not flood in August 2016 are eligible to apply for Project PlaySmart Makeovers.
- No more than 1 center application will be accepted from the same owner. *All* owners must be listed in a center's application.
- Neither 2016 Project PlaySmart winners, nor 2014 and 2015 Grand Prize Project PlaySmart winners, are eligible to apply for a Spring 2017 Makeover.
- Repeated significant Licensing Deficiencies may disqualify a center from eligibility.

Key Dates to Remember

Wednesday, January 18, 2017: Application is released to child care centers.

Saturday, January 21 and Thursday, January 26, 2017:

PICC holds information sessions for applicants. Information sessions are *mandatory* for those applying for Project PlaySmart Makeovers; information sessions are *optional* for those applying only for Flood Recovery Grants.

(Potential applicants should only attend one session. Call PICC at 926-8005 to register.)

Monday, February 13, 2017: Flood Recovery applications are due to PICC no later than noon.

Friday, February 24, 2017: PlaySmart Makeover applications are due to PICC no later than noon.

April 2017: PlaySmart Makeover winners are announced.





Technical Assistance

To answer questions about the application, PICC staff will hold informational meetings for interested applicants. Information sessions are *mandatory* for those applying for Project PlaySmart Makeovers; information sessions are *optional* for those applying only for Flood Recovery Grants.

Potential applicants should only attend one session, on EITHER Saturday, January 21, 2017, from 9:00-10:00 am, OR on Thursday, January 26, 2017, from 6:15-7:15 pm. Call PICC at 926-8005 to register to attend an information session.

Centers may use the Partnerships in Child Care Resource Center computer room during PICC business hours to complete this application. For additional questions or technical assistance with completing this form, call the Partnerships in Child Care office at (225) 926-8005.

What to Expect If Awarded a PlaySmart Makeover

The makeovers will take place over a “transformation weekend,” with a “reveal” of the new space the following Monday. During the “transformation weekend” winning centers will have the following responsibilities:

- to clear the installation space (whether the classroom or the particular outdoor area) on the Friday afternoon/evening before the makeover and
- to have the center Director and Lead Teacher(s) for the space(s) to receive the Makeover present on the assigned Saturday, for the entire duration of the makeover, to provide assistance.

VOAGBR/PICC will also have staff and volunteers present at each makeover, to help with each makeover installation. VOAGBR/PICC will have guests present at the center for the “reveal” on Monday morning.





Submitting Your Application

All applications must be submitted electronically to playsmart@voagbr.org OR by hand delivery to the Partnerships in Child Care office (4521 Jamestown Ave., Suite 5). Applications must contain answers to all questions and all required attachments. No late applications will be accepted. Applications must be typed: no hand-written applications will be accepted.

The contact listed on your application will receive a 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 (225) 926-8005.

Deadline to submit *Flood Recovery* application is noon, Monday, February 13, 2017.

Deadline to submit *PlaySmart Makeover* application is noon, Friday, February 24, 2017.

Application Checklist

Please use this checklist to ensure that you have completed all parts of the application before submission:

- I have reviewed and meet ALL the eligibility requirements for a 2017 VOAGBR Flood Reimbursement Grant and/or Project PlaySmart Makeover.
- My application has been TYPED into the 2017 Application form.
- I have completed all information under application Section 1, “Center and Contact Information.”
- I have completed all questions under application Section 2 if I am applying for a Flood Recover Grant; I have completed all questions under application Section 3 if I am applying for a PlaySmart Makeover.
- If applying for a PlaySmart Makeover, I have attached my requested makeover items in the VOAGBR-provided template.
- If applying for a PlaySmart Makeover, I have attached 3-5 photos of the space(s) for which I am requesting a makeover (and the photos do not show children).
- If applying for a PlaySmart Makeover, our Center Director has initialed every statement on and signed the Section 4, “Participation Agreement Terms,” page of the Application.

