DEFINITION of FAITH-BASED PROGRAM

Faith-based programs are those which integrate the tenets of their faith into the curriculum of the program. Faith-based programs may be housed in a variety of locations such as churches, synagogues, or other religious settings, private centers, or family child care homes. All should include the following basics:

1. Concepts of the religious faith taught in the program should be publicized throughout the program’s promotional materials. The following is an example of an appropriate statement:
   “In our program we teach the moral/spiritual tenets of the Christian faith. We celebrate Christmas, Easter, and other Christian holidays.” Another example might be: “In our program we teach the moral and spiritual tenets of the Jewish faith. We celebrate Yom Kippur, Hanukah, Passover, and other Jewish holidays.”

2. Specifics of the religious faith taught in the program should be detailed in the parent and staff handbooks. An appropriate sample would include the following type of information:
   “Our three- and four-year-olds will learn that God created them, made them unique, and has a special plan for their lives. They will learn that Jesus was God’s Son. He came into the world to tell us of God’s love and expectations. Traditional Bible stories will be linked to the moral values of the Christian faith.”

3. Programs should implement their faith-based philosophy as described to parents and staff and as communicated to the public.

Note: Generally, Faith-based programs are primarily licensed. However in many states faith-based programs which are a part of a church, synagogue or parochial school have the option to be religious-exempt. Some have chosen this option. These programs should advertise to the public the religious agency (if any) through which they are exempt from licensure and should display their certificate of exemption in a prominent location frequently used by parents.