

IMPORTANT TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THE SCALES

ITERS-R TERMS

Accessible: Children can reach and are allowed to use toys, materials, furnishings and/or equipment. Toys on open shelves must be within easy reach of children. No barriers can be present to prevent children from reaching them. For example, toys are not accessible if they are in containers with lids that the children cannot manage, unless staff show signs that they regularly make the toys accessible to the children, by opening various containers during the observation. If materials are stored out of reach, they must be placed in children's reach to be counted as accessible. For example, if they are stored out of a non-mobile infant's reach, the baby must be moved to reach them, or the materials must be placed close to the non-mobile infant. During an observation, if there is evidence that staff regularly provide access to the variety of toys required for an item, credit can be given for "accessible."

Appropriate: Used in various terms to mean age and developmentally suited for the children in the group being observed.

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ECERS-R TERMS

Accessible: (ECERS-R) Accessible means children can reach and use materials, furnishings, equipment, and so forth. This does not mean that every child has to have access at all times. For example, access may be limited to a certain number of children in an area or limited to certain times of day. Generally, for materials to be counted as accessible to children at the Minimal (3) level, children must be able to reach and use the materials for a period of 1 hour a day in a program of 8 hours or more. The one hour can be provided at one time or as a combination of several periods throughout the day.

Substantial Portion of the Day: (SPOD) Means at least one-third of the time the children are in attendance. Calculate SPOD based on what is observed, plus what the teacher says is usually done during the rest of the time.

Staff: Generally refers to the adults who are directly involved with the children – the teaching staff. In the scale, staff is used in the plural because there is usually more than one staff member working with a group. When individual staff members handle things differently, it is necessary to arrive at a score that characterized the overall impact on children of all the staff members. In all items involving any type of interaction, "staff" refers to those adults who are in the classroom and who work with the children daily (or almost daily), for a SPOD. This can include volunteers, if they are in the classroom for the required amount of time. Adults who are in the classroom for short periods of the day, or who are not a regular daily part of the classroom, do not count in evaluating the requirements of the item are met. For example, a therapist, parent or director of a program comes into the classroom and interacts with children, for short or irregular periods, these interactions do not count unless the interaction is very negative.

Weather Permitting: Is used in several items of the scale with regard to when children can participate in outdoor activities. Weather permitting means almost every day, unless there is active precipitation, extremely hot or cold conditions, or public announcements that advise people to remain indoors due to weather conditions such as high levels of pollution and extreme cold or heat that might cause health problems. Children should be dressed properly and taken outdoors on most days. This might require that the schedule be changed to allow children outdoor play in the early morning if it will be very hot later in the day. Or it might require that the program ensure that children have boots and a change of clothes for a day when the grass is wet. After bad weather, staff should check the outdoor play area, dry off equipment, sweep away water, or block off puddles, and so forth as needed before children go outside.

Handwashing: Each child and teacher must wash their hands using soap and running water for 10-15 seconds followed by drying with a paper towel. Must turn off water with paper towel.

Same Sink Handout – Please review it!!!!!!!!!!!! Very Important!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sanitation: apply the following requirements any time that disinfectant or sanitizer is needed. For the sanitizing solution to be effective it must be allowed to dry for minimum of 10 seconds. A drying period of 2 minutes is recommended and complete air drying is ideal.

Free play means that the child is permitted to select materials and companions, and as far as possible manage play independently. Adult interaction is in response to the child's needs. Situations in which the children are assigned to centers by staff, or staff select the materials that individual children may use do not count as free play.

Having sufficient free play is important in early childhood programs because it is during this type of activity that children learn to make their own choices, interact with others socially, and use their imagination. It is also during free play that children can choose to play and learn in the way that is most effective for their own personality, following their own interests and working on the skills that they really need to develop.

Free play does not mean a "free for all" with no rules and "anything goes." Instead, free play requires an organized structure, where the choices are clear to children, safe options are plentiful and staff supervise carefully to ensure productive and engaged behavior. These provisions ensure that a wide range of learning opportunities can take place.

Characteristics of Free Play

- ❖ Children playing in various activity areas or centers of the room or outdoor play space, with access to all areas.
- ❖ Children are playing in self-selected small groups or individually. They can move from one social group to another when they wish.
- ❖ Children can choose toys, other materials, or equipment to use either indoors or outdoors.
- ❖ Children can move from one area to another when they wish to.

However, when staff tell children what they must play with, for how long, and with whom, free play is not being provided to the children.

During free play, supervision should be provided that helps and facilitates children's play, but without intruding.

Examples:

1. Showing children how to use new materials.
2. Pretending with them.
3. Talking with children socially during play.
4. Stopping negative interactions among children.

One step further than just supervision that facilitates play is supervision that is used as an educational interaction.

Examples:

1. Have children explain what they are doing or thinking about during play.
2. Ask questions and give comments that will help expand play by encouraging them to remember and apply past experiences.
3. Add new words and ideas to what they are doing.
4. Add reading, writing, and math opportunities when they fit well with the play.