

Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised

Additional Notes for Clarification

Last revised August, 2008

<p>Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale</p>	<p><i>Much of the day:</i> If children (or any child) who are ready to play are prevented from reaching and using materials for a total of 20 minutes during an observation, then “much of the day” cannot be given credit. The 20 minutes can be calculated as one 20-minute time period, or may be calculated as a combination of smaller time periods that equal 20 minutes. “Much of the day” should be considered separately for each item where the requirement appears. Special attention should be paid to individual children who may not have the same access to materials as do the other children. For example, non-mobile children or children who are confined in a playpen may not have the same access to play materials as the other children in a group. A cranky baby who needs close physical contact to be soothed may not be “ready to play” and thus not require access to materials during the “cranky” times.</p> <p>In some items, <i>all</i> materials required for “much of the day” do not have to be accessible all of the time, as long as some are accessible at any one time. See specific item notes to see whether all materials required must be accessible for the full time.</p> <p><i>Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, School-agers:</i> When referring to “very young children,” especially with regard to safety, we mean children under 3 years of age.</p> <p><i>Play:</i> “Play,” or “play activities,” require that children are actively involved, able to use toys or other play materials, and are able to interact with others if they wish. Play activities should not be confused with more passive group times (such as circle times, when children mostly listen to a “teacher” or spend time watching TV or videos), or times when children are required to work on specific non-play tasks, such as coloring alphabet ditto sheets, and did not get to choose to do the activity. Play is characterized by the child being engaged. Routine care times are not counted as play, even if they are done playfully. Play activities can be part of free play, teacher- or child-initiated, either indoors or outdoors, offered with many choices of things to do or with a more limited selection, done individually, in small groups, or in a large group, and can be active or quiet.</p>
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<p>1. Indoor spaced used for child care</p>	<p>5.2 The direct lighting must be in the space(s) used for child care for more than 50% of the time children are allowed to attend. Natural light is not required in spaces used for nap, but those spaces must have enough light to allow adequate visual supervision of children.</p> <p>7.1 Ventilation should be able to be controlled in all spaces used for children (e.g., through heating/air conditioning systems, windows, opening doors, ceiling fans, etc).</p>
<p>2. Furniture for routine care, play and learning</p>	<p>1.1, 3.1 To give credit, furniture must be used for routine care, and not simply be present--not used or used for other purposes.</p> <p>1.2, 3.2, 5.4 To give credit for shelves, they must be used for storing materials that the children can reach and use. Shelves that are used only to store toys/materials that the provider accesses are given credit in 5.4. There should be enough low, open organized storage—shelves, containers, or crates—as long as the storage allows easy access without excessive crowding or rummaging for toys.</p> <p>1.1, 3.1 In scoring these indicators, score 1.1 “No” if most of the furniture needed for routine care is observed and used, even though one item may be inadequate to meet the needs of the children or is missing completely. Score 1.1 “Yes” only if many of the furnishings needed are not observed. Generally, the <i>cubbies</i> must be large enough to hold all the possessions of an individual child, without touching other children’s things. If cubbies are large enough to hold possessions, but there is a minor amount of touching of other children’s possessions, (such as coat sleeves touching in winter) then give credit, but consider the contamination issues in the Health item. Each child must have his or her own storage space (such as a cubbie, diaper bag or back pack on an individual hook, a laundry basket, or several different personal storage containers that together, hold all his/her things). No shared spaces should be used because of contamination issues. When a diapering table is not used, an <i>alternative diapering surface</i> is considered adequate if the surface is non-porous, and can be cleaned and sanitized. In addition, the surface must be long and wide enough to accommodate the child’s whole body, from head to foot. The diapering surface must minimize the chance for contamination of surrounding surfaces. Such a diapering surface is acceptable only if diapering can be completed without contamination of surrounding areas.</p> <p>3.3, 5.1 To give credit for 5.3 when booster seats are used, the seats must allow children to sit safely. However, if booster seats are not steady in the chairs, credit can be given for 3.3 as long as children seem to be able to manage without being in immediate danger.</p> <p>When picnic-tables are used, consider how comfortable they are for the</p>

	<p>children, and whether children can sit safely. If only one child has difficulty, or if the furniture is used infrequently as compared to the other furnishings being considered for this indicator, do not score “No.” If tables and chairs cause safety risks, consider this in item 12. Safety.</p> <p>5.2 To give credit, all furnishings must be well-cared for, including examples provided plus any other care required for other furnishings.</p> <p>5.3 When the two provisions that encourage self-help are observed as required, score “Yes” even if many toys are stored out of children’s reach. Consider the lack of access to specific toys in applicable items.</p> <p>5.5, 7.3 If age groups are separated (i.e., infants and older children cared for in different spaces) one example of adult furniture is required for each group. If groups are sometimes combined, one example is still required for each group.</p>
<p>3. Provision for relaxation and comfort</p>	<p>3.1 If the home has a soft furnishing accessible during play, and children are obviously free to use it, but no child chooses to do so, give credit for this indicator. If in doubt ask the provider a question about this during the interview. <i>Ask:</i> Which soft furnishings in your home are the children allowed to use?</p> <p>5.2 The intent of this indicator is that children should not be interrupted or disturbed when using the soft furnishings credited in 5.1. If children walk, or even run, past without disturbing the child, then this is acceptable.</p> <p>5.3 Many soft toys do not have to be accessible all at the same time to meet the requirement for much of the day. However at least half of the required number must be accessible during any short periods when all are not accessible.</p> <p>7.1 Softness in this indicator refers to soft furnishings. Soft toys are not consider to meet this requirement.</p> <p>7.3 The soft furnishings must provide a substantial amount of softness to get credit.</p>
<p>4. Arrangement of indoor space for child care</p>	<p>1.1 To score this indicator, consider <u>all</u> play <u>and</u> routine care spaces used. The indicator’s example represents a many-faceted problem with the space arrangement. Score 1.1 “Yes” only when there are very crowded conditions that make routine care and play needs extremely difficult to meet.</p> <p>1.3 For a score of 1, restricting children in the use of space must be severe to score “Yes.” The score will depend on the appropriateness of the activity, how engaged or enthusiastic the children are, and whether a child can leave if he or she wishes after a reasonable time. No specific amount of time is required to make the decision. When a child is carried, by the provider, in a “snuggly” or other type of infant carrier, consider the developmental level and needs of the child. For a very tiny infant, being kept in a snuggly would be acceptable in terms of use of space as long as the baby seemed to require this type of closeness, while for an older infant it would be overly restrictive. Considered</p>

	<p>this issue related to accessibility of play materials, but remember that a cranky baby who needs close physical contact to be soothed may not be “ready to play” and thus not require access to materials during the “cranky” times.</p> <p>3.3 Any hazards in the indoor space(s) used for child care should be considered in this indicator as well as in item 12. Safety.</p>
<p>5. Display for children</p>	<p>3.3, 5.3 Score “Yes” to 3.3 if there is a very large piece of work that several children have worked on. However, this would not count to meet the requirements of 5.3 where other displayed work would also have to be observed.</p> <p>5.3, 7.2 NA is permitted for these two indicators if there are only children under 1 year of age enrolled in the group.</p>
<p>6. Space for privacy</p>	<p>1.1 If it is impossible for any child to play alone without intrusion by others, (consider both indoors and outdoors) score “Yes.”</p> <p>3.2 Consider the developmental level of the child(ren) and their impulsivity when determining a score. Momentary lapses in supervision are allowed when scoring as long as children are in a safe space, the provider checks on them frequently, and the children are not involved in high-risk activities.</p> <p>5.1 Infants/toddlers do not necessarily need a space “set aside” for them to play alone or with a friend, but to give credit they should be able to play without intrusion from others.</p>
<p>7. Greeting/departing</p>	<p>1.1, 3.1 To count as a greeting, the person being greeted must perceive the greeting. Simply saying hello, to a child/parent who does not notice that he or she has been spoken to, does not count as being greeted. There is no specific definition of a “warm” greeting, but the recipient must perceive the interaction as being positive and welcoming. The greeting can be verbal or through welcoming body language, such as a smile that the parent/child responds to, or a hug for a child. Simply taking a child from a parent, without an obvious warm interaction that is perceived by the child, would not count as a greeting, even though the provider might physically hold the child.</p> <p>3.3 Give credit as long as parents come into any part of the home where children spend any part of the day. The space used by the children for any part of the day must, at least, be visible to the parent. Parents cannot be prohibited from going into any of the child care areas.</p> <p>3.4 The sharing of child related information must happen as the child is being dropped off at the family child care home. To give credit, it is not necessary to observe the sharing of information by every parent, but it must obviously be the usual practice (at least 50% of the time), and be observed at least once unless no greeting is observed. When only one parent is observed being greeted, the</p>

	<p>sharing of information must be observed. If two parents are greeted, sharing of information must be observed in one of those greetings. .If no greeting is observed, be sure to ask how this aspect of care is handled. The provider should elicit information from the parent if parents do not share information spontaneously.</p>
8. Nap/Rest	
9. Meals/snacks	<p>1.1, 3.1 Meals/snacks should be served to infants, toddlers, and preschoolers every 2-3 hours unless children are sleeping.</p> <p>3.2 With regard to drinking water being offered between meals/snacks to children consuming solid foods, score “No” if during the observation water is not offered to at least some of the children who cannot access their own water. Also score ‘No” if water is not available to children who can ask for it or get their own.</p>
11. Health practices	<p>3.4 Over the counter medications, such as pain relief medications, ointments, etc. are included in this indicator, in addition to those available only through prescription from a medical practitioner.</p> <p>5.4 Consider all aspects of how a provider models any issues of health practices that are observed. Do not base score on only one aspect of being a good health model. Consider, for example, whether the provider eats healthful foods, practices good hygiene habits in front of the children, wears appropriate clothing for the weather, washes hands when needed.</p>
12. Safety practices	
13. Helping children understand language	<p>3.1 To score “Yes” there can be no child obviously ignored with little or no talking from the provider at all. Some children may receive less verbal interaction, but all must get some.</p> <p>5.1 If no play time is observed, score this indicator “No.” See definition of “play” in Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale.</p> <p>5.4, 7.1 “Descriptive words for objects and actions” requires that the specific words are usually used rather than the less specific words such as “it” “this”, “that”, him,” “her, etc.” In other words, the nouns and verbs should be used rather than the pronouns. The words that describe the characteristics of objects and actions (adjectives and adverbs) are not required in 5.4, but they should be heard frequently during the observation to give credit for 7.1.</p>

14. Helping children use language	3.1 To score “Yes” there can be no child obviously ignored with little or no positive response from the provider at all. Some children may receive less positive response, but all must get some.
15. Using books	1.1, 3.1, 5.1 To give credit for much of the day, the numbers of books required in these indicators must be met. 3.4 If children are required to participate, but they quickly become engaged in the activity, obviously enjoying it, then score “Yes.” Score “No” only if the children are not engaged or enjoying the activity and there is no alternative of leaving and doing something else.
16. Fine motor	5.1 Many fine motor materials do not have to be accessible all at the same time to meet the requirement for much of the day. During any short period when all are not accessible, at least half of the required number must be accessible for infants/toddlers, and half of the required number, (with at least one material of each of the four types), must be accessible for preschoolers and older children.
17. Art	1.1, 3.1, 5.1 Crayons or other drawing materials (e.g., pencils, markers, chalk) are considered art materials in this item if used with plain paper or another plain surface, such as a chalk board. They are not counted as art materials when used with coloring book pages or other pre-determined projects. When used with coloring books, etc, they are considered in item 16. Fine motor but not to meet the requirements for the Art item. 1.2, 3.2 Family child care homes often have mixed age groups, up through school-aged children. Consider the developmental appropriateness of the materials, and the way in which they are used, for the age group using them. Be aware that infants and toddlers should have no access to any materials that pose dangers for them, while older children use the materials. Glitter is considered a safe, appropriate material for preschool- and school-aged children but not for infants/toddlers. Styrofoam packing pieces are not appropriate for use by younger children under 3 years of age, while they are appropriate for older children. 3.3 If children are required to participate, but they quickly become engaged in the

	<p>activity, obviously enjoying it, then score “Yes.” Score “No” only if the children are not engaged or enjoying the activity and there is no alternative of leaving and doing something else.</p>
<p>18. Music and movement</p>	<p>1.3 Some traditional children’s songs such as Three Blind Mice contain frightening or offensive lyrics. If songs with such lyrics are used with the children, score this indicator “Yes.” Music with religious content is considered appropriate as long as it does not contain frightening, violent, or negative content. Be sure to listen to the lyrics in order to judge the appropriateness.</p> <p>3.1, 5.1, 5.2 Music played on the radio, CD player, wind-up swing that plays music, etc., that is managed by the provider counts as only 1 music material. There must be at least one other material that children can reach and use to give credit for 3.1.</p> <p>3.2 Songs initiated by the provider, such as a Clean-up song, or a prayer sung at meals, count to meet the requirement of this indicator.</p> <p>3.3 If children are required to participate, but they quickly become engaged in the activity, obviously enjoying it, then score “Yes.” Score “No” only if the children are not engaged or enjoying the activity and there is no alternative of leaving and doing something else.</p> <p>5.2 To give credit for much of the day, the numbers of music materials required in this indicator must be met.</p> <p>7.2 If not observed, ask the provider to explain whether this is done, as she answers the question for 1.1, 3.2, 5.4.</p>
<p>19. Blocks</p>	<p>1.1, 3.1, 5.1, 7.1 Because the intent of this item is to allow children to build sizable block structures, an acceptable set must have enough large blocks to make this possible. Only consider block sets in which the majority of blocks are at least 2 inches in length/width. Consider smaller block sets to meet requirements in item 16. Fine motor.</p> <p>3.2 At least 5 examples of accessories are required, and not all of the same type (people, vehicles, animals).</p> <p>5.1 To determine whether the requirement for “many” blocks is met, double the number of blocks required for “some” in indicator 3.1. “Many accessories” requires enough for each age group to play without undue competition. Consider ages and abilities of children when determining whether there are many. Many blocks do not have to be accessible all at the same time to meet the requirement for much of the day. During any short period when all are not accessible, at least half of the required number must be accessible.</p> <p>5.3 The requirement for enough space depends on number of children, ages, what you would expect them to be able to build. Obviously, preschoolers need</p>

	<p>enough space to build substantial independent structures, while toddlers, who tend to stack blocks, would need less space. Watch to see if conflict arises due to space limitations.</p>
20. Dramatic play	<p>5.2 Many dramatic play materials do not have to be accessible all at the same time to meet the requirement for much of the day. During any short period when all materials are not accessible, materials for at least one theme must be accessible, and the materials should be sufficient to allow children to carry out play in a meaningful way.</p> <p>7.1, 7.2 The term <i>provided</i> is interpreted as <i>accessible</i>.</p>
21. Math/number	<p>5.2 The many and varied materials credited in 5.1 do not all have to be accessible at the same time to meet the requirement for much of the day. During any short period when all are not accessible, at least half of the required number must be accessible for each age group of children.</p>
22. Nature/science	<p>1.1, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1 Displayed pictures/photographs are considered only if easily seen and reached by the children.</p> <p>5.1 Many nature/science materials do not all have to be accessible at the same time to meet the requirement for much of the day. During any short period when all are not accessible, at least half of the required number (with at least two of the four categories) must be accessible.</p>
23. Sand and water play	<p>Do not score NA if mixed age groups include children under 18 months of age, in addition to older children who are not over 6 years of age.</p> <p>3.2 The note for clarification given for this indicator applies to mixed age groups that include infants or toddlers.</p>
24. Promoting acceptance of diversity	<p>5.1 All of the materials, including books, pictures and other materials, must be located in the major spaces used by the children for much of the day. This does not require that all the materials are present at the same time. Some may be in one place, while others are in another space. Flannel board pieces, showing diversity, are given credit as materials if children can reach and use them. Flannel board pieces that children can only look at, as part of the display, are given credit as pictures.</p> <p>5.1, 5.2 No credit can be given twice for any materials considered in 5.1 and 5.2.</p> <p>5.2 An example of diversity requires that there is a contrast between two props. For example, one white doll, contrasted with one African American doll represents one example, as does one play food item of a taco contrasted with a play food</p>

	<p>item of beans with rice. Four examples must be observed (each consisting of two props). Once an item is counted in one example, it cannot be counted in contrast with another prop to form a second example.</p> <p>Dolls are required as at least one of the examples. Small toy people used with doll house or blocks can be used to meet the doll requirement.</p>
25. Use of TV, video, and/or computer	
26. Active physical play	<p>1.1, 3.1 When outdoor space is not used (for example because of bad weather) score 1.1 “No” if any space is used indoors, such as for dancing, exercising, or marching.</p> <p>1.2, 3.2 Score 1.2 “Yes” only when the complete space is very dangerous, with little room for children to move freely without facing major hazards. <i>Generally safe</i> means that no major safety hazard is observed or only a few minor safety hazards are observed. If there are specific hazards in a space that also has a large amount of safe space for children to participate in active physical play, score 1.2 “No”, and 3.2 “No.”</p> <p>3.3 “Some” means that the children can use the material/equipment without having to wait with no other gross motor material or equipment option.</p>
27. Supervision of play and learning	
28. Provider-child interaction	
29. Discipline	<p>3.3 If the basic play needs of children in any age group are rarely met, resulting in children spending long periods with nothing interesting to do or to learn, score 3.3 “no.”</p>
30. Interactions among children	<p>1.1. When age groups are separated and never mix, (e.g., infants cared for in one room with one provider and older children cared for in another space with a second provider) consider this indicator NA if there is only one child in a space. Ideally, two separate observations would be done when there are two separate groups. See page 7, Instructions for using the FCCERS-R, under 1.</p> <p>3.1 No specific amount of time is required for the interactions to be encouraged. Observe to see whether encouragement is a regular practice, depending on the ages of the children, their moods, etc. Some encouragement should be seen for at least part of the observation, with more time required for children who are older.</p>

31. Schedule	
32. Free play	3.2 Consider relative dangers, developmental level of the child, and ease of quick access to the child when deciding whether supervision is extremely lax. For example, allowing a toddler to play outdoors, unsupervised for 10 minutes of the observation would be considered extremely lax supervision of free play, even if other parts of free play were supervised well.
33. Group time	1.1, 1.4, 3.3 “Whole group” refers to all the children who are required to do the same activity. The term “whole group” applies even when some children, such as a baby or school-aged child” are exempt from participating in the required activity. 5.3 Alternate activities must be accessible for <i>any</i> child who does not wish to participate.
34. Provisions for children with disabilities	