

Additional Notes for Clarification for the ECERS-3

Be sure to replace older notes with newer notes. **Most recent changes are in orange:**

Release Date	
08-2015	Administration of the Scale, Explanation of Terms, Item 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31
11-2016	Staff, Item 1, 4, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15, 17, 23, 27, 28, 29
07-2018	Item 23, 24, 25
08-2018	Item 7
02-2020	Explanation of Terms, Item 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35
08-2020	Item 25
01-2021	Item 31, 34
01-2022	Accessible (old note replaced with new note)
02-2022	Item 27, 28
03-2022	Item 8
07-2022	Item 27
02-2024	Item 8, 9, 10
10-2024	Explanation of Terms, Item 7, 8, 14, 22, 25
10-2025	Item 6, 22
08-2026	Item 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 24, 27, 31, 33, 34

Administration of the Scale. Item 2, page 7:

The three hours must be completed in one continuous block (e.g., 8:00 to 11:00am, 9:00 to 12:00 pm) at one time, and not broken up into smaller portions (e.g., 8:00 to 10:00am and 2:00 to 3:00pm).

Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale:

Accessible: When calculating the time that materials or spaces are accessible, count only time that all children have reasonable access. When some children have access and other do not, for example when snack is offered as a choice during center time or children are required to leave centers to complete a teacher-planned activity, the time children fail to have access is not counted in calculating time accessible. When snack is offered as a choice during center time, the typical amount of time it takes a child to complete the routine (washing hands, preparing a plate, eating, cleaning up, and handwashing) must be subtracted from the time that centers are open and materials accessible. When children are required to complete a teacher-planned activity, make note of the time it takes for each child to complete the required activity and subtract the longest amount of time for any child from the time that centers are open and materials accessible. Time that is not counted against accessibility of materials includes children using the toilet on individual schedules or when children participate in special activities not offered to the whole group, such as a therapy session or special classes that parents pay for separately. Start timing only when all children have access and no child is waiting, for example, when all children have completed the transition into centers. Clean-up time is not considered access to materials. These requirements hold true for all types of access (e.g., music, art, gross motor, etc).

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. Free play does not mean that all areas of the classroom must be open at one time, with all materials accessible. A more limited number of area choices may be available, since free play takes place if children are allowed to choose where they will play, and with whom, from the choices allowed. The allowed choices must include play areas or interest centers of varied types, where children are allowed to choose what to take from toy storage shelves. Free play is not credited when staff pre-select a material that children are allowed to use in the various play areas or centers, when children are not able to freely access other materials in the play areas/centers if they wish. There must be enough areas open so that children do not have problems with access to materials that interest them.

Staff: This note applies only to ECERS-3 and not to previous editions of the scale: Under some conditions, a special staff member may be observed working, for part of the observation, with children as a whole group or in smaller groups. For example, all children visit an art room or library, and special teachers work with them. Or a music teacher comes to the classroom and children have a choice of participating in the activities she does with them, or all children are expected to participate as a whole group. In this case, if the staff member works regularly with the children (e.g., once a week or more) consider the adult-child interactions as well as the activities in which the children participate when scoring. Do not consider special guests who visit the classroom, such as firefighters, or another community helper unless they are extremely negative with the children.

In addition, part-time staff members who come and go can be considered, such as "floaters" or other regular staff members who provide extra help or breaks for classroom staff. If they are present for only short periods, do not count their interactions as heavily as those of staff who work with the children for longer periods of the observation. However, if it is required that an interaction is observed a certain number of times, and the part-time floater is observed doing what is needed as evidence for the requirement, then this can be counted.

Routines: When the word "routines" is used in the scale, this refers to *personal care routines*, such as toileting/diapering, meals, handwashing, and arrival and nap preparation, if observed. When certain interactions are required during "routines," it refers to these personal care routines and not to other daily activities such as transitions or group times.

Disinfecting sinks between uses for different purposes: According to Caring for Our Children (CFOC), to avoid the spread of disease, separate sinks should be used for food preparation/service, another should be used for toileting/diapering and one more should be used for all other purposes. However, it is unusual for early childhood program classrooms to be equipped with multiple sinks reserved for different uses.

New information from CFOC shows that touching sink faucets after handwashing does not add to a substantial amount of contamination. Therefore, it is no longer required that faucets be turned off with a paper towel. In addition, if sinks are observed to be used for multiple purposes, and only the faucets are touched during handwashing (e.g., no food washed in sink, no touching sink surfaces occurs), it is no longer necessary to disinfect the sinks between different uses, except when soiled or during regular cleaning. Therefore, if a shared sink is used without disinfecting, consider the relative contamination that is observed, and if minimal, consider this a minor problem when scoring the handwashing/sanitation indicators.

1. Indoor space	1.2, 3.2	To score “Yes” to 1.2, more than one of the 4 problems must exist in the room. If any one of the issues listed in 3.2 is a problem, score “No” to 3.2.
	5.2	If the classroom has windows with shades or blinds on all windows that are closed throughout the observation, credit is not given since children do not experience natural light.
2. Furnishings for care, play, and learning	3.1, 3.4	Typographical error. The second and third sentences of the 3.4 note apply to the note for 3.1. They do not apply to indicator 3.4.
3. Room arrangement	3.2, 5.2	Children must be able to freely access the materials that are stored in interest centers but to give credit here, it is not required that the center contains the “many and varied” materials that are required at the higher levels of quality in specific items.
	5.2	The term <i>used</i> carries the same meaning as <i>accessible</i> for this indicator. The five interest centers must all be accessible for use for 25 minutes during the observation.
	7.3	This indicator should read “Centers <u>and/or play areas</u> ” requiring more space...
4. Space for privacy	5.3	If no problems are observed as children use spaces for privacy required in 5.1, score this indicator “Yes.”
	7.2	If no issues about having to share materials are observed, score “Yes.” The designated space for privacy is the space that is required in 5.1.
5. Child-related display	5.4	See definition of “routines” in the Additional Notes for Clarification, <i>Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale</i> .

6. Space for gross motor play

- 3.1 The space used must be an outdoor space. Only when weather does not permit use of the outdoor space, can an indoor space be substituted.
- 1.2, 3.2, 5.3 Consider the whole gross motor space when scoring. To give credit for “somewhat safe,” children should be observed using the space for gross motor freely, with plenty of reasonably safe space to run and use equipment, and without major hazards located in the areas children tend to use most frequently. There may be some major hazards in the space, but these are unlikely to cause a high risk of injury because they are not located in spaces most often used by the children. Children may come into contact with the major hazards occasionally, but not frequently. The major hazards must be very serious, and children must be frequently exposed to them, to score 3.2 “No.” For example, a popular high climber is located over a cement surface or the swings frequently used by children have little if any cushioned fall zone in front and behind them.
- 1.3, 3.1, 5.2 When calculating the amount of time children have access to gross motor space, a small absence from access is not considered, such as when a child needs to use the bathroom or get a drink of water. However, if groups of children leave the playground for a bathroom break or play stops for most children for a water break, then consider these lapses when timing access to gross motor space.**
- 5.1 If the space is large enough to meet the requirement of being spacious for the 30 minutes required in 5.2, other space(s) used for gross motor play can be smaller and are not considered in scoring here.
- 5.1, 5.2 The outdoor space is required to be used during the observation unless weather does not permit use.
- 5.4 Always consider access to the outdoor space(s) normally used and consider access to indoor gross motor spaces only if observed being used.
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7. Gross motor equipment

Replace all Notes for Clarification for this item with the following:

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1.1 | If any gross motor equipment is used during the observation, either indoors or outdoors, score 1.1 <i>No</i> . |
| 1.2, 3.2, 5.2, 7.2 | To be considered appropriate for children, the gross motor equipment must be safe, in good repair, and suited to their age and ability. Base the score of these indicators on all equipment regularly accessible to children, whether accessible to the children during the observation or not. This includes on-site equipment as well as regularly used off-site equipment, such as in a public playground. |
| 1.3 | If less than 10 minutes of access is observed in a program of any length, score <i>Yes</i> . |
| 1.3, 3.1, 5.3 | When calculating the amount of time children have access to equipment, a small absence from access is not considered, such as when a child needs to use the bathroom or get a drink of water. However, if groups of children leave the playground for a bathroom break or play stops for most children for a water break, then consider these lapses when timing access to gross motor equipment. |
| 3.1, 3.3, 5.1, 5.4, 7.1, 7.3 | Score these indicators based on the equipment/materials accessible to children during the observation, even if children do not choose to use them. Do not consider equipment that children are not observed to have access to. |
| 3.1 | In programs of any length, a minimum of 15 minutes of access is required (with the 2-minute leeway rule allowed for a possible timing error). |
| 3.2 | According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s <i>Public Playground Safety Handbook</i> (CPSC.gov), certain pieces of equipment are not safe to use at all, with any age group, including trampolines (of any size), rope swings, swinging dual exercise rings and trapeze bars, giant strides, climbing ropes not secured at both ends, any large heavy swing structures that pose a risk of impact injury, such as heavy metal animal figure swings, and multiple occupancy swings (other than tire swings). These pieces of equipment are considered “extremely dangerous” when scoring this indicator. |
| 3.3 | For this indicator, consider only skills stimulated by the equipment, beyond what children can do on the ground without equipment (such as running skipping or jumping on the ground). Each different skill encouraged by a complex climber with multiple components can be counted. For single pieces of equipment, such as balls, only two skills can be counted (e.g., throwing and catching), unless additional equipment is added to be used with the balls (such as a basketball hoop or soccer goal). |
| 5.1, 7.1 | “Stationary equipment” is not meant to be moved by the children as part of their play, such as climbing structures, basketball hoops, or balance beams. “Portable equipment” is meant to be moved by the children as part of their play, such as trikes, scooters, hula hoops, and balls. Both types of equipment are required to be accessible to score these indicators <i>Yes</i> . |
| 5.3 | For programs of less than 3 hours, 20 minutes of access to gross motor equipment is required. |
| 7.2 | To give credit, the helmets must fit each child well, be properly supervised, and removed when use of the wheel toy is finished. Children should not be observed running or using other equipment wearing safety helmets. If helmets are not used correctly, do not give credit, and consider this as a safety hazard in the Safety item. |
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8. Meals/snacks

For programs operating for at least 2 ½ hours, it is required that at least a snack be served, and the item must be scored. The item can be scored N/A if a program operates for less than 2 ½ hours, and no food/beverage is served to children.

If any food or beverage is served the item must be scored. However, the indicators that require specified nutrition components are marked N/A. These include Indicators 1.1, 3.2, and 5.2 (if only one component is served). A revised score sheet can be found on the ERSI website.

Remove “and 1.2” from the following additional note:

If a mealtime is not observed during the 3 hours, indicator 1.1 should be scored, “yes.” All other indicators related to nutrition, interactions and schedule should be scored, “no.” Score indicators related to sanitation based on other observed sanitary practices if no sanitary practices related to meals take place during the 3-hour observation.

Based on new guidance from the resource Caring for Our Children (CFOC), updated 09/2023, it is no longer required that the faucet be turned off with a paper towel. According to CFOC’s updated notes, programs may turn off the faucet during handwashing to save water. Programs do not need to leave the water running because data has not shown that a significant number of germs are transferred between hands and the faucet. At the end of the procedure, faucets may be turned off with or without a paper towel depending on program requirements. Research has shown that using a paper towel to turn off the faucet does not improve health. A handout, Diapering and Handwashing Procedure, is available on the ERSI website, www.ersi.info and contains the complete handwashing procedure.

1.2, Replace note in scale with the following:

3.3,

5.3,

7.1

Since three important health practices are required (washing /sanitizing the eating surface, hand hygiene before and after eating, and serving uncontaminated foods), consider the extent to which each of these required health practices is followed. If there is little or no effort in two of the three health practices, (for example, handwashing is completely ignored, there is no attempt to clean tables, and/or foods are served under conditions that cause extreme contamination), then score 1.2 Yes. For all indicators, there can be minor lapses in following the handwashing procedure (not rubbing for the 20 seconds, but rubbing all hand surfaces thoroughly; not wetting hands first but soap still makes bubbles). However, hands should be cleaned reasonably well. If there is some attempt to complete practices, even if procedures are not done correctly, score 3.3 Yes. If there is a significant attempt to do all procedures, but the practices are completed with many minor errors, score 5.3 Yes. To score 7.1 Yes, all procedures must be done with only a few minor errors. When a flexible snack time is provided, and children come and go throughout a period of time, the same sanitary conditions are required, such as sanitizing the table between uses by different children, handwashing completed. If children use hands to eat, handwashing is required after eating to remove saliva and food.

1.3 Only score Yes if the atmosphere is obviously strongly negative, with many unpleasant staff-child interactions observed.

3.1 Children should be fed every two to three hours, unless sleeping. One meal or snack should be observed during the three hour observation to score 3.1 “Yes.” In addition, water should be offered between meals/snacks when children have been very active, upon request or if the air is very dry.

5.1 To score Yes, children must be able to easily get water independently.

9. Toileting/diapering

If diapering is needed, the diapering procedure in Caring for Our Children is required.

Based on new guidance from the resource Caring for Our Children (CFOC), updated 09/2023, it is no longer required that the faucet be turned off with a paper towel. According to CFOC's updated notes, programs may turn off the faucet during handwashing to save water. Programs do not need to leave the water running because data has not shown that a significant number of germs are transferred between hands and the faucet. At the end of the procedure, faucets may be turned off with or without a paper towel depending on program requirements. Research has shown that using a paper towel to turn off the faucet does not improve health. A handout, Diapering and Handwashing Procedure, is available on the ERSI website, www.ersi.info and contains the complete handwashing procedure.

- 3.1 The example referring to "toileting accidents" should not affect the score when a toileting accident is observed, but staff reminded and encouraged children to use the toilet, not ignoring the need for some children to get extra attention.

10. Health practices

Based on new guidance from the resource Caring for Our Children (CFOC), updated 09/2023, it is no longer required that the faucet be turned off with a paper towel. According to CFOC's updated notes, programs may turn off the faucet during handwashing to save water. Programs do not need to leave the water running because data has not shown that a significant number of germs are transferred between hands and the faucet. At the end of the procedure, faucets may be turned off with or without a paper towel depending on program requirements. Research has shown that using a paper towel to turn off the faucet does not improve health. A handout, Diapering and Handwashing Procedure, is available on the ERSI website, www.ersi.info and contains the complete handwashing procedure.

- 1.3 To score Yes, the exposure to smoking or smoke-related debris must present an extreme hazard to the children and be likely to cause a major health risk. For example, if many cigarette butts are observed within easy reach and supervision is lax, or a person is actively smoking in the immediate vicinity of the children's play space for an extended period of time, score Yes. However, if the exposure to smoking or debris is very limited and does not present a high health or safety risk, and supervision decreases the risk, score No.
- 3.2, 5.2 If naptime is not observed, but cots and linens are observed to be stored with minor sanitary problems, (slight problem of contamination, such as a few edges of blankets touching) score 3.2 Yes, and 5.2 No. If there is a major problem with contamination, such as contamination of linens for each cot or floor sides of mats stored touching sleep sides of other mats, score 3.2 No.
- 3.3 Some interaction is required. All interaction observed must be either neutral or positive, with at least 2 examples of positive interaction. No negative interactions can be observed to score Yes.
- 5.3 If staff demonstrate most of the examples in the indicator score Yes. All examples are not required but handwashing should be carried out reasonably well, if not perfectly. If staff obviously give children the message that they do not seem to care for their own health, score No.
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11. Safety practices	1.2, 3.2, 5.1, 7.1	All unsafe accessible outlets are considered one hazard. The severity of the hazard represented by accessible electrical outlets that are uncapped or not made to be tamper resistant depend on the number of outlets, whether they are in a high use area, the level of supervision provided, and the characteristics of the children in the group. Foods that pose a choking risk for children under 4 years of age are considered a separate hazard. For a list of these foods refer to guidelines from national organizations such as the CDC or The American Academy of Pediatrics.
	5.1	There can be no more than 2 major hazards indoors and 2 outdoors to give credit. If there are more than 2 in either location, credit cannot be given.
12. Helping children expand vocabulary	3.1, 5.1	See the definition of “routines” in the Additional Notes for Clarification, Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale.
	7.2	Since one of the primary ways to represent a current theme or topic in a classroom is through the use of books, at least 2 books related to the theme are required (either used or accessible).
13. Encouraging children to use language	1.2, 3.2, 5.2, 7.2	This note is actually for indicators 1.2, 3.2, 5.2, and 7.2.
	3.5	There may be observed times, such as transitions, that are less relaxed, and there may be times when children are not allowed to talk, such as during short teacher-led group times or while walking in the hallway. However, to give credit, the environment should encourage rather than discourage talking for the vast majority of the observation.
	7.2	See the definition of “routines” in the Additional Notes for Clarification, Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale.
14. Staff use of books with the children	1.2, 3.2, 5.2, 5.3	Book time is any time a book is read to or used with a child or a group of children. It can be formal or informal.
	3.1, 5.1	To give credit for 3.1, one book must be read from beginning to end, unless staff reads a complete story within a book with several stories. The book or story read can be very short, but it must be completed in its entirety to score Yes. 5.1 requires that two books/stories are read in their entirety. In addition, singing the text of a book counts as reading.
	5.4	This indicator can be met as staff read to the children or use books with them, formally, or informally, more than once during the observation. When doing these types of activities, they must demonstrate the interest or enthusiasm required in the indicator. The mere reading of a book to a child without showing enthusiasm or enjoyment, suggesting that a child go use a book, or briefly commenting on a child’s use of a book as they walk past may not be enough to meet the requirements of the indicator.

15. Encouraging children's use of books	1.2	If this happens twice during an observation, and 75% of the children are not interested, score "Yes."
	3.2	To give credit, at least two examples of each type of book must be easily observed.
	5.1	When counting the number of books accessible to children enrolled, 20 books are required for up to 10 children, and 30 books are required for 11 to 15 children, with one additional book per child over 15 children.
	5.3	If unrelated materials, such as dramatic play or fine motor, are observed being used in the area and would disrupt any book use, and staff do not redirect the play to another space, then the area is not considered a "defined reading interest center," even if it was originally set up in that way.
16. Becoming familiar with print	3.1	The note for 5.1 also applies to this indicator.
	5.1	"Most" is defined as almost all.
	5.3	To give credit for encouraging a more advanced child to write, staff must encourage or guide children as they write down what they have said (about their artwork or a note to someone, for example). Simply prompting children to write letters or write their name does not meet the requirement of this indicator.
	7.3	To give credit this must be observed 3 times during the observation.
17. Fine motor	3.4	To give credit, the materials required in 3.1 must offer the different levels of challenge.
	5.3	To give credit, at least 2 different examples must be observed.
18. Art		When children use electronic drawing materials such as a drawing app on a computer or a special drawing device, consider whether children have reasonable control over the marks they can make. If the child is able to use the electronic drawing materials with no problems, give credit as a drawing art material.
	7.2, 7.3	To give credit for these indicators, two different examples must be observed for each indicator.
19. Music and movement		General note for item: Since the definition of "staff" has been updated to include special staff who work with children on a regular basis (i.e, weekly), such as a music teacher or librarian, disregard the statement, "Do not count experiences provided by a special music teacher who is not present daily or almost daily, even if the music teacher is present during the observation." The interactions with a regular weekly music teacher are considered in scoring this item, if observed.
	5.1	Since the "many music materials" are required to be accessible during free play, disregard the portion of the original note that states, "or if used at group time there must be at least 1 instrument for each child participating."

20. Blocks

In some cases, block-like materials are designed to give children a message about what they should create with the materials. For example, there are building materials that are designed to represent specific types of buildings such as castles, or that look like transparent windows to be added to buildings. These materials are counted as accessories to the blocks.

- 5.5 To give credit this must be observed twice.
- 7.1 Since play with large hollow blocks involves the use of large muscles, if heavy (not plastic or cardboard) large hollow blocks are provided outside or in an indoor gross motor space, the minimal time for gross motor activity of 15 minutes does not need to be met before counting the time towards accessibility of the blocks. The entire time spent in the gross motor space can be counted to meet the 25 minutes of access to large hollow blocks.

21. Dramatic play

- 1.1 Some access is required to score No.
 - 1.3 If staff are rarely, if ever, observed interacting positively with children using dramatic play materials, or the only observed interaction is to control disruptive behavior, such as fighting or the inappropriate use of materials, this indicator is scored Yes. If one example of staff paying positive attention to children in the dramatic play area is observed, or if staff encourage children to use the materials when no one has used them during the observation, score this indicator No.
 - 3.2, 3.3 To score these indicators Yes, staff are not required to be in the dramatic play interest center when they interact with the children, as long as the children know that the staff are interacting with them about their dramatic play. For example, a child may bring a doll to a teacher and the teacher might talk about the doll play with the child, or the teacher may talk from another area, but is close enough for the child to notice the interaction.
 - 5.3 At this level of quality, staff should circulate to the dramatic play center and have conversations with the children as they play there.
 - 7.2 Replace original note with the following:
To score Yes, observe either print or number talk at least once. Both print and number talk are not required to be observed.
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22. Nature/science

When scoring sand/water experiences, there should be a sufficient quantity of the sand or water so children can dig, scoop, pour, fill, and empty containers. Materials that cannot be used for digging, measuring, and pouring, such as Styrofoam packing materials, natural objects (e.g., pine cones, acorns, leaves for children to examine), or gelatinous sensory materials (e.g., goop, Jello) cannot be counted as sand/water substitutes. In addition, do not count foods (issue of wasting food) or materials that are hazardous to the children in the group, such as dried kidney beans, materials that children put in nose or ears, etc. Examples of appropriate substitutes would be millet bird seed or sterilized potting soil. Kinetic sand can count as an appropriate sand/water substitute but should not be used with children who mouth materials because it poses a safety hazard if ingested. Do not count mulch used as ground cover outdoors.

- 1.3 If the only observed nature/science staff involvement is negative, such as stepping on a cockroach indoors, killing a mosquito, or telling a child about her fear of snakes, then score this indicator Yes. However, if there are also positive instances observed, such as showing interest in plants, animals or the weather, and these outnumber the negative, score No.
- 3.1, 3.3 Sand and/or water can each be counted for both indicators.
- 3.3 When sand or water is provided for children's use outdoors, the time it is accessible can only be counted once the minimal time requirement for gross motor activity of 15 minutes is met.
- 5.1 Even though an outside garden is listed as an example in the original note defining the "living things" category, the garden cannot be counted to meet the requirements of 5.1, since as stated in the indicator, the materials counted to meet this indicator must all be located within a defined nature/science interest center (with the exception of sand and water).
- 5.1 Sand/water experiences do not have to be located in the nature/science interest area in order count among the 15 required materials. However, all other required materials must be included in the center, including at least one living thing. There may be plants/animals in other areas in the room or outdoors, but to be counted in the required 15 materials, they must be present in the nature/science center for children to observe closely or care for.

23. Math materials and activities

- 1.1, 3.1, 5.1 Since the use of unit blocks in construction encourages children to become familiar with size and shape, consider unit blocks as math materials for this item, whether labels are present on the shelves or not. One type of blocks is counted as one math material representing familiarity with shapes. For example, all unit blocks are one example, large hollow blocks are a second example
 - 1.2 If either behavior is observed, score "No." If neither is observed, score "Yes."
 - 5.3 If staff model showing fingers to represent numbers, this can count as "encouraging children" only if staff obviously encourage children to follow their model, or one or more children are observed copying what the staff does.
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24. Math in daily events

- 1.2, 1.3 Score “No” if no math talk is observed being used during daily events.
- 3.1, 5.1 The terms “routines” or “daily routines” are the personal care routines considered in the items Meals/snacks, Toileting/diapering, and Health practices. They do not include other scheduled daily events, such as whole group or small group times.
- See the definition of “routines” in the Additional Notes for Clarification, *Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale*.
- 3.2, 5.2, 7.2, 7.3** In each of these indicators, the math talk must be about non-math materials, as stated in 3.2. Using math talk in relation to children’s play or clean-up of blocks is not credited here, since blocks are considered a math material and considered in Item 23, Math materials and activities. **In addition, delete the example in 5.2 about measuring cups and in 7.3 about a tape measure because they are also counted as math materials.**
- 3.3 For this indicator, any whole group can be considered including routines, transitions, or playing/learning. Additional examples of the math talk might include staff saying to the group, “First we will get our coats; second we will go out and then we can play”, “How many people are allowed in the block center? Three, that’s right.”. “Remember we need to rub our hands for 20 seconds as we wash.”
- 7.2 The math talk must occur when children are playing and not involved in transitions or routines.
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25. Understanding written numbers

- 1.1, 3.1 The examples must be easily seen by the children and children must be able to clearly see the relationship between the printed number and the quantity it represents.
- At least one easily seen example must be observed to score 1.1 No. To give credit for 3.1, at least two easily seen examples must be observed.
- 3.1 At least 2 examples are required to score Yes.
- 7.1 The appropriate materials are the types of play materials required in 5.1. Since these are play materials, displayed items such as number posters or signs in centers telling how many children can play there, are not considered here. However, if children can actually play with or manipulate a displayed item, it can be considered here (e.g., displayed magnetic board showing different quantities of objects with magnetic print numbers to match or count.)
- 7.3 The materials are those required in 5.1.
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26. Promoting acceptance of diversity

3.2, 5.3 Replace the existing note with the following:

If stereotyping or violence is shown with regard to any group, such as some “Cowboy and Indian” toys, then Indicator 3.2 should be scored No. Gender stereotyping should be considered here. Look for problems that would be easily obvious to the children. It is not necessary to search avidly for negative examples. Portrayals of men/boys doing traditionally male activities and women/girls doing traditionally female activities are acceptable for this indicator. However, do not give credit for 3.2 if gender stereotyping is portrayed negatively in any way. To give credit for the “non-traditional gender roles” diversity type, in 5.3, some evidence of non-gender stereotyping must be easily visible to balance the traditional roles shown. Examples of non-stereotyping in gender roles means showing males and females doing similar activities, such as both doing construction, both engaged in sports, or both caring for babies. For 3.2, when historic cultural traditions are represented, the images must be balanced with non-traditional modern representations. For example, if traditional African cultures are represented in materials, then current representations must also be included.

5.1, 5.2 To give credit for materials, children must be able to easily experience them for at least one hour during the observation. For example, if the materials are located in play areas or interest centers, children must be able to play with them for the required amount of time. Pictures in the display must be easily viewed and displayed in spaces children access during the observation.

5.3 For the category of ages, seniors should be evident, since their depictions are often underrepresented in children’s programs.

27. Appropriate use of technology

In some settings computer screen savers are used on monitors as a constant part of the environment. If children are not using the technology, or being made to watch it as an activity and are not observed to be attracted to it in any way then do not consider this in scoring.

If a child spends a very brief time using screen time (less than 2 minutes) and this is a rare occurrence during the observation, mark the item NA.

The American Academy of Pediatrics released new guidance for the use of technology with young children. This guidance is provided for parents at home with their children, not for early childhood programs. Many children are often exposed to large amounts of technology at home, and it is not in their best interests to add to that in early childhood programs. Therefore, the ERS item is to be interpreted as written, with the earlier additional note.

- 3.2, 5.2 The term TV/video represents a passive use of screen time with no active involvement (“the couch potato”). This use is limited to 10 minutes during the observation. The more active use of screen time, such as active dancing or singing with a video, having conversations about photos on the tablet or making choices on a computer game are the “other electronic media,” and their use is limited to 15 minutes during the observation. The two separate types can be combined for a total of 25 minutes screen time during an observation but neither can exceed its time limit.

3.3 Replace 3.3 note with the following:

If electronic media is used with children at group time for no more than 10 minutes (a 2 minute timing error is allowed), and all children are interested and engaged, this indicator can be scored Yes, even though there may not be an alternate activity accessible. For example, if children all enjoy dancing to a program shown on a smart board, with no obvious alternative, score Yes. However, this should not exceed the total of about ten minutes at either one time or as a combination of shorter times.

28. Supervision of gross motor

If classrooms are combined during gross motor times, consider the experiences of all children and the supervision of all staff.

If scoring this item when space is being shared with other groups, consider all staff and all children of about the same ages as those being observed.

- 3.3, 5.3 To give credit for these indicators, some outdoor gross motor play must be observed, weather permitting. There is no specific time requirement for outdoor gross motor play, but it must be enough time to be a satisfying experience for the children.
- 7.2 To give credit, at least one example must be observed.
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29. Individualized teaching and learning	5.1	To give credit there must be many materials/activities accessible for an hour of the observation and most must be open-ended.
	5.2, 7.2	“Staff sometimes circulate” means that staff do not remain in one or two places throughout free play. Instead they move about occasionally to interact and teach children playing in different areas. However, they do not need to frequently move about the room, as would be required to provide much individualized teaching during free play. A few children may not receive any interaction. For 7.2, no children should be ignored while in indoor free play, and many should be interacted with in outdoor free play.
	5.3	“Most” means almost all observed staff-directed activities, with only minor problems that do not affect most of the group. When scoring, consider all staff-directed times, including group times, transitions, and routines, such as meals or toileting.
	7.1, 7.2	To give credit for these indicators, at least one hour of free play must be observed.
30. Staff-child interaction	1.4, 3.1	If activities with whole group are observed for at least 2 ½ hours of the 3 hour observation, score 1.4 Yes. In addition, 3.1 may be scored Yes, even if 1.4 was scored Yes.
	3.3	Although staff might appear to be neutral in their interactions, and sometimes mildly negative with children, as they attempt to manage out-of-bounds behavior, to score Yes, they must show interest in children’s activities, get along well with children , usually appear relaxed. If staff frequently appear irritable, disinterested or detached, or show extreme negative behavior with any child, score 3.3 No.
31. Peer interaction	1.1	“Most of the time” means for at least 2 ½ hours of the 3 hour observation.
	3.1	To score Yes, it is required that children have at least 40 minutes of free play (indoors, outdoors or both) during the observation.
	5.1	If free play time is limited to less than an hour during a three hour observation, do not give credit.
	7.1	Observe two examples to give credit.
32. Discipline	3.2	Usually means that staff maintain the control required to keep children from hurting themselves, one another or being destructive most of the time, with only a few exceptions during the observation. If there are constant minor problem behaviors, such as teasing, taking toys, not listening to staff, or running in the room, in which children do not really become upset or hurt, or even a few major problems that are not stopped, either caused by one or more children, score this indicator No.
	7.1	To score Yes, a total of two examples must be observed: one calling attention to a negative interaction and one calling attention to a positive. If there are no negative effects of children’s actions observed, two explanations of positive effects are required to give credit.

33. Transitions and waiting times	1.2, 3.2, 5.2.	“Staff not being prepared” is evident when staff are not able to efficiently gather the necessary materials needed to move onto the next activity. Getting materials needed for routines and/or play are considered here. If staff have accomplished what is needed to progress into the next activity, then they are considered prepared.
	3.1	To score this indicator Yes, no heavily negative staff-child interaction can be observed, or only one or two mildly negative interactions, during any transition. Even if children misbehave, the problem is generally handled in a positive manner. Score No when any obviously negative interaction (discounting one or two mildly negative interactions) is observed during any transition.
	5.2	To score “Yes” there can be no long delays observed, due to staff not being prepared, that cause children to wait for long periods.
34. Free Play		When staff restrict children in terms of what they can access to use in a play area or interest center, free play is not being provided to the children. It is not required that all play areas or interest centers are open, but children should not be overly restricted. See definition of “free play” in <i>Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale</i>.
	5.1	At least 20 minutes of outdoor free play (weather permitting) must be observed as part of the total 1 hour of free play required for this indicator.
35. Whole group activities for play and learning	1.2, 3.2	Score 1.2 Yes only when there are extreme problems observed with the way in which group times are carried out, so that most children cannot become or remain engaged throughout the activity. Score 3.2 No when problems, such as crowding, trouble seeing the book, or difficulty listening to peers causes many children to lose engagement for extended periods of time. Small problems with these issues that do not significantly affect children’s engagement or enjoyment of the activity should not cause this indicator to be scored No.