

# Tennessee Additional Notes to SACERS-August 1, 2016

## Revised with a new note effective October 17, 2016

### Overview

The purpose of the Tennessee additional notes is to improve the interrater agreement among scale users and to provide further interpretation of items and indicators to assist with scoring decisions. In order to fulfill the requirements of Tennessee state law, the Tennessee Anchors wrote these additional notes as the first reference for scale clarification and scoring. These notes have been adopted for use in Tennessee assessments. Some of the information used in the additional notes was adapted from the School-age Care Environment Rating Scale®. The notes follow the intent of scale application as defined by Thelma Harms, Ellen Vineberg Jacobs and Donna Romano White, authors of the scale. This resource can be purchased or checked out from a CCR&R or TECTA office.

Be sure to replace older notes with newer notes. The most recent TN updates are:

#### 10/17/16: General Notes

##### 8/1/16: Item 7

8/1/15: General Notes and Item 3, 7 and 27

5/5/14: No new notes

11/7/13: Item 40

5/3/13: General Notes and Items 21, 22 and 38 (Deleted note from 3-5.2)

10/12: General Notes and Items 3, 7, 18 and 38

4/12: General Notes and Items 13, 18 and 32

10/11: General Notes and Items 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 19, 20, 21 (indicator 5.1-last sentence deleted), 22, 23, 24, 25 (delete note for indicator 7.1), 26, 27, 34, 35 and 37. Definitions for the Term "Some" in SACERS have been incorporated into the Tennessee Additional Notes.

4/11: General Notes and Items 13, 16, 18, 27, 37 and 40 (Removal of sentence-Item 18, Indicators 1.2 and 3.3)

7/10: General Notes and Item 37

10/09: General Notes, Items 2, 15, 18, 23, 26 and 28 (Some General Notes have been moved directly under the items)

5/1/09: General Notes, Items 2, 3, 5, 8, 18, 23, 26, 27 and 40

### General Notes for SACERS

#### Levels of quality

Levels of quality build expectations from minimal to good to excellent. Consider not only the requirements of the indicator, but the level of quality documented as general practice throughout the observation.

#### Some

The term "some" occurs most frequently in indicators that represent a minimal (3) level of quality, although occasionally it occurs at higher levels. In determining how much is needed to give credit for "some" in an indicator, consider the requirements in the parallel indicators at the lower and next higher level of quality. For example, if under inadequate "no" materials are required, then "some" would mean "one or more". In cases where a plural is used with the term "some", then "more than one" would be required to give credit. When terms such as "very few" or "very little" or "rarely" are used under inadequate, then "some" represents a mid-point between what is required for the 1 and the 5 levels.

#### Accessibility

For all levels of quality, another determining factor when deciding accessibility as opposed to availability is who initiates getting the materials. If the teacher initiates putting the materials out, they are accessible for the period of time they are out. If children initiate by asking for materials, then they are not considered accessible but are available.

#### Accessibility at the minimal level of quality

At the three level, materials are considered accessible only if it is observed that children freely access and are permitted to use most of the materials daily. Ex. Some centers may not be opened during the observation. If the schedule indicates an additional time for access to materials, base the score on teacher questions and how materials were used.

#### Accessibility at the good level of quality

The requirement for materials to be accessible for 1/3 of the day at the good level pertains to the following items and indicators: Items 3, Space for privacy-indicator 5.1; 7, Furnishings for relaxation and comfort-indicator 5.1; 20, Arts and crafts-indicator 5.1; 21, Music and movement-indicator 5.2; 22, Blocks and construction-indicator 5.1; 23, Drama/theater-indicator 5.1; 24, Language/reading activities-indicator 5.1; 25, Math/reasoning activities-indicator 5.1; 26, Science/nature activities-indicator 5.1; 27, Cultural awareness-indicator 5.1.

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Research verifies that children learn through prolonged periods of play that give them opportunities to make choices, discover and explore. To support learning and development, schedules should include meaningful time periods when a variety of materials are accessible to children. A significant portion of this time should occur when most children are present so they benefit from experiences with these materials.

### One Third of the Day

To meet the requirements for “one third of the day,” materials should be accessible to children for one third of the hours of operation. If groups arrive at different times, “one third of the day” will be calculated for each group.

#### Before School Care

If programs provide care before school, consider the amount of time children are present. Children should have opportunities for ample choices if time allows even if all types of materials are not accessible. Children should not be observed sitting with no activities or choices for extended periods of time.

#### After School Care

If programs provide after school care, the schedule should reflect at least one meaningful period when most of the children have access to materials because they have been in large group, structured activities for much of the school day. **In situations where most of the children have limited access to materials due to prolonged waiting or routine times, credit for “one third of the day” may be impacted.**

#### Full Day Program

For full day programs, consider the entire operational hours.

### Throughout the Day: Full Day Program

At the good level, accessibility should be provided “throughout the day” for *full day programs*. In order to meet “throughout the day”, materials should be accessible for one third of the time when most (more than 50%) of the children are present. Meaningful free play with materials should take place in both the morning and in the afternoon.

Many and varied materials should be accessible during the *majority of the “throughout the day” time frame*. If children have access to additional materials during other play periods (such as outdoors), but not necessarily many and varied, access to those additional materials can count towards “throughout the day” as long as those choices allow for a meaningful play experience.

### Ten Minute Allowance

For any program, credit for “one third of the day” and “throughout the day” can be given if the program is “off” by ten minutes or less when calculating accessibility.

### Display

Display should be meaningful for children. To meet the requirements of the display indicators as well as the requirements of other agencies, consider the quality of the display. The requirements may be met with fewer thoughtfully chosen pieces that incorporate several meaningful components (ex. one poster may include diversity and current themes, etc.).

Display only counts as materials if it encourages active involvement through child manipulation.

### Equipment

**DHS licensing rules state that the manufacturer’s safety instructions shall be followed for the use and/or installation of all indoor and outdoor equipment and appliances (1240-04-03-.08). For example, crib, bed and futon mattresses should not be used on the floor to create soft areas.**

**Assessors will not consider mattresses on the floor towards meeting requirements for soft furnishings, and if seen, assessors will notify DHS licensing and the child care agency staff of the violation (effective October 17, 2016).**

### Health

Disinfectant and/or anti-bacterial wipes do not count for sanitization purposes. Products that can be given credit as sanitizing solutions are: bleach and water solution; or a commercial product that states on the label or manufacturer’s products sheet it kills 99.9% of germs, kills HIV virus, or is an EPA registered product. All commercial products used for sanitizing must be used according to manufacturer’s instruction.

Proper hand washing requires the use of liquid soap and running water.

### Playground

The list of acceptable protective surfacing materials does not include mixed surfacing materials since these materials were safety tested individually.

All equipment and/or play structures present in Gross Motor areas will be considered when assessing playground safety unless a physical barrier (fence, cones, rope, etc. ) is present providing a visual reminder to children that an area is not to be used.

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### Rotation

When rotation of materials is required, rotation should occur monthly.

### Staff

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 substantial part of the day. 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 whether the requirements of the item are met. For example, if a therapist, parent, a director, or owner of a program comes into the classroom and interacts with children, for short or irregular periods, these interactions do not count in scoring the item.

When two or more teachers are in the classroom and you are trying to determine overall impact of interactions, look for a balance. However, if one caregiver is extremely negative, a balance cannot be achieved and the indicator should be discounted.

### Supervision

For children under the age of 10, staff must be able to hear the child at all times, must be able to see the child with a quick glance, and must be able to physically respond immediately, leaving no child unattended. For children 10 and older, the adult must know the whereabouts and activities of the children at all times and must be able to physically respond immediately.

### Violence

For all scales-the presence of weapons or characters displaying weapons is no longer an automatic discount. With regard to books, pictures, and materials, if the combined, overall impact is negative, displays graphic violence, and promotes aggressive behavior such as play fighting that is not stopped by the caregiver, then discounting is valid and should be well documented in the assessor notes.

### Connected indicators and omitted items

The following indicators are connected indicators. When credit is not given for the first indicator, credit cannot be given for the second indicator: 4, Room arrangement-indicators 3.1 and 3.3; 13, Health practices-indicators 5.1 and 5.2.

Items to be omitted from TN scoring: #9, #10, #11, #12, #14, #36, #39, #41, #42, #43, #45, #46, #47, #48, and #49

### Specific Notes for SACERS

#### 1. Indoor space

- 1.3 Score Yes only when space is in very poor repair.
- 3.3 Score yes when space is generally in good repair; do not penalize for small problems.
- 5.2 This indicator requires that natural lighting should be observed in the space used for care.
- 5.3 This indicator considers ongoing maintenance as well as housekeeping.

#### 2. Space for gross motor activities

- 1.2 Add “completely” so indicator reads “Outdoor space completely lacks protection . . .”.
- 3.1, 5.1, 7.1 Spaces used for gross motor activity, whether inside or outside, should be accessible daily.
- 3.2 This indicator requires that space used for outside gross motor play has one or more elements that provide protection from natural weather conditions.
  - 5.2 Requires at least three different surfaces. Determine whether the surfaces in the outdoor space enable children to successfully participate in different types of play. For example, each different surface must be large enough to permit a type of play without much interruption from other activities. At least one hard and one soft play surface must be accessible daily outdoors. If there is no equipment present, which requires protective surfacing, the requirements of this indicator can be met with just two surfaces (one hard, one soft).
- 7.2 Age groups = K-3, 4-6, or older. N/A if all children are in the same age group.
- 7.3 Since this indicator is at the 7 level, the playground should be fairly close. Take the age of the children into consideration. “Convenient” includes more than close (e.g., on same level).

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### 3. Space for privacy

No score of 2 is possible.

7.2 This indicator requires more than just having a center limited to a specific number of children. Evidence of staff intentionally setting up special activities for one or two children should be observed. This indicator carries a higher expectation than general monthly rotation; therefore, activities should be changed more than once a month.

### 4. Room arrangement

1.2 Replace “rooms” with “space”, so indicator reads, “Space inconveniently arranged . . .”.

Omit all of #4a (“When doing homework is part of the program”).

Add the following indicators to #4 (“Room arrangement”).

1.4 No separate area for homework or other quiet study.

3.4 Separate area for homework or other quiet study.

5.5 Separate area is quiet, not crowded, and has suitable furniture for homework or other quiet study.

7.3 Easy access to areas where reference materials are stored (ex: library is open, computer accessible).

### 5. Furnishings for routine care

Mats or cots are not required for older children, or when napping in after-school groups is not part of the program.

If table and chairs are present but not used (available, not accessible), stop the score at 3.1 since the note for clarification states that the “furniture should be comfortable.” Furniture cannot be comfortable if it cannot be used.

1.1, 3.1 If there is no provision for individual storage of childrens’ possessions, such as cubbies or hooks for coats/book bags, score 1.1 Yes. If there is adequate provision that allows the children to store their possessions in an individual space, then score 3.1 yes if other requirements are met. If there is some small, individual provision, such as envelopes or small boxes for artwork or notes, that does not meet the needs for storing most of the children's possessions, do not give credit for 3.1.

5.1 Appropriately sized (same as child-sized) is defined in the note printed in the book: when children sit in chairs, their feet must touch the floor, elbows comfortably rest on table. Observe also to be sure that chairs and tables are not too small, so childrens’ knees are not cramped under the table. If 75% of chairs and tables are appropriately sized, give full credit for 5.1. If 60-74% are appropriate, give a score of 4.

No score of 6 is possible.

### 6. Furnishings for learning and recreational activities

This item addresses indoor furnishings.

5.1 75% of furnishings must be child-sized.

5.2 In order to give credit for this indicator, work done by the children in the school age group and materials of interest to them, must be displayed in the space used by the children for most of the time.

### 7. Furnishings for relaxation and comfort

1.1, 3.1, 5.1 and 7.1 Standard bed-sized pillows or larger are considered furnishings. Smaller pillows count as materials. **To count as a furnishing, rugs/mats should be large enough to permit at least one child to stretch out and lounge comfortably.**

3.1 This indicator requires at least two furnishings for relaxation and comfort to be accessible.

3.2 Add “most” so indicator reads, “Most soft furnishings are clean...”.

No score of 4 is possible

5.1 To meet the requirements of 5.1, there must be at least one protected area where children can depend on being able to relax, with a substantial amount of softness to lounge, daydream, read, or play quietly.

5.1 Delete “several carpeted areas” from the example. **Both furnishing(s) and materials should be gathered together in the designated space to create a cozy area. The cozy area should provide a substantial amount of softness that allows children using that area to completely escape hard surfaces.**

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7.1 If carpet/rugs was not used to give credit at a lower indicator, it can count as one additional softness (it does not matter if it is wall-to-wall carpeting or one or more area rugs, it only counts as one). If one additional softness, give a score of 6. To score a 7, there must be 2 or more furnishings/materials for softness (again, carpet/rugs may only count as one).

### 8. Furnishings for gross motor activities

If several assessors are doing observations in the same program where all classrooms being observed use the same playground/gym space, each assessor must assess her/his group using the space for supervision and age-appropriate reasons. The assessors should compare structural and protective surface information so that Playground Assessment Notes will be consistent.

1.2 Add “all” so indicator reads, “All stationary equipment in poor repair . . .”.

3.1 This must occur daily weather permitting. Requires one appropriate stationary gross motor equipment. Items must be accessible.

3.2 This must occur daily. Requires at least two portable materials for individual games and at least two for group gross motor games be accessible.

1.3, 5.3 Portable equipment means the portability is part of the play potential for children (e.g. wheel toys, ball, jump ropes, hula hoops, roller skates, bats, tennis rackets.) Equipment that children cannot or do not move as part of play is considered stationary, even though it may not be anchored, and therefore can be moved by adults.

5.1 Variety means at least 3 different pieces of equipment, but they can be part of 1 large, composite structure.

5.3 Add “accessible” so indicator reads, “Variety of portable materials accessible to play . . .”. Variety for this indicator requires at least 3 portable materials for individual games and at least 3 for group gross motor games. Different balls requiring different skills is considered variety. However, more than balls should be observed to give credit for variety at this level. The time requirement for accessibility does not apply at this indicator.

7.1 The intent of this indicator is to provide children and staff the opportunity to be creative in gross motor activities, rather than just using equipment and materials in the same way. Other examples that could be credited here include an obstacle course made of things that children or staff can rearrange to provide new challenges; cubes and planks that can be arranged into various kinds of balance beams, cones that can be placed in different ways to allow different bike-riding paths, or sturdy boxes that can be arranged into various types of tunnels to crawl through. One piece of equipment that meets the intent of the indicator is required.

### 13. Health practices

3.2 To allow for positive scoring, change indicator to read, “Staff supervise both the sick and healthy children with proper health precautions. (Ex. Staff do wash hands . . .)”. Handwashing between caring for sick and healthy children is considered for this indicator.

3.3 The list of food allergies, medications and dietary restrictions must be located in the room where children eat. This information does not have to be publicly displayed; however, directions for finding this information must be publicly displayed in the room where children eat.

5.1, 5.2 If 5.1 is No, then 5.2 is also No.

### 15. Safety practice

For a more detailed listing of Playground Safety Hazards, refer to the Tennessee Playground Safety Sheet found at [www.tnstarquality.org](http://www.tnstarquality.org).

Indoor space for gross motor play and equipment is not held to the same standards as outside; however, safety as the primary focus should be insured. Consider the placement of equipment as well as the surface under equipment where children might fall. If indoor children’s climbing equipment is used, mats or carpet are required to be placed under the equipment if it is over 12 inches in height. This is in reference to equipment specifically for climbing.

If several assessors are doing observations in the same program where all classrooms being observed use the same playground/gym space, each assessor must assess her/his group using the space for supervision and age-appropriate reasons. The assessors should compare structural and protective surface information so that Playground Assessment Notes will be consistent. If protective surface numbers differ due to surface being displaced and not raked back throughout the course of the day, times of measurements should be noted in summary reports.

3.1 Uncovered electrical outlets are not sufficient concern to stop scoring at this indicator, but could be a complicating factor if other hazards are present.

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### 16. Attendance

No N/A is possible for score on this item. (1.1, 1.3 and 5.2)

3.2 If recording of attendance is not observed, ask teacher questions.

3.3 The provider should contact parents/school representatives immediately upon arrival if an expected child does not attend. This is only a consideration if there is a transfer of care between the child care center and another agency.

No score of 6 is possible.

### 17. Departure

1.3, 3.3, 5.3 Ask if not observed.

3.2 If parents are “asked” to notify staff of alternate pick-up arrangements, give credit.

### 18. Meals/ snacks

1.2, 3.3 The intent of this indicator is to determine whether the correct components of a meal or snack are being served to the children, regardless of whether it is provided by the program or brought from home. No analysis of the nutritional value of foods served is necessary. Use the Food Guide to determine whether the components are present. The guidelines also require all components to be served together. Personal dietary preferences of the assessor (e.g., whole grain vs. white breads; fresh vs. canned vegetables; high vs. low sugar or fat content, etc.) are not to be used in determining the quality of the foods served.

Foods that are perishable should not be left out longer than 1 hour.

Regardless of source or ages served, 75% of all children must receive meals and snacks that meet USDA guidelines. Providers may supplement if they choose in order to guarantee 75% compliance. Combination foods are foods with multiple components that have been packaged together or combined during the cooking process. Combination foods can be counted to meet up to two different components. Scoring consideration of combination foods should be balanced with other items on the menu. Foods that might be served together, but do not meet the definition of combination foods can count for up to 3 components (i.e. hamburgers, sandwiches, cereal and milk with added fruit). When vegetable garnishes are served in sufficient quantities, they may be considered to meet the requirement as a vegetable. Breading on meat products may not be counted. Cooked dry beans, such as kidney or black beans which are considered to be an excellent source of protein, can count as either a protein or vegetable. However green beans, like string or lima beans which aren't considered to be good sources of protein, should only be counted as a vegetable.

1.4, 3.5 Eating surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized prior to, and following, use for food service. Follow the “2-step” process. Eating surfaces should be: 1) washed with a soap and water mixture to remove gross soil and, 2) sanitized with a bleach-water solution before and after being used for meals/snacks. To allow bleach-water solution to sanitize, it should be allowed to remain on the surface for at least 10 seconds (preferably longer) before wiping dry or allowing to air dry. For other acceptable sanitizing agents, refer to the general notes. A fresh paper towel must be used for each step. One paper towel should be used to clean all surfaces and a second clean paper towel should be used to sanitize all surfaces. Cloth towels may be used in place of paper towels. If cloths are used for cleaning or sanitizing food prep surfaces, they may not be re-used for other purposes during the day and should be set aside for laundering.

If proper sanitary measures are clearly practiced as part of the schoolage program, but an occasional lapse does occur, credit can be given.

Sanitary conditions such as table cleaning and sanitizing, using clean serving and eating utensils, protecting food from table surface with a plate, paper towel or napkin, are considered in this indicator.

If the 2-step process is not observed, (for example, if children go to the lunchroom for snack) ask questions to determine whether tables have been cleaned and sanitized and not re-contaminated before food was served. Hand washing is considered in item 19, not in this item.

3.4 For food substitutions to be considered appropriate, they must meet the same nutritional value as the food they replace.

3.6 An accurate menu should be posted in a location that is easily seen by parents.

### 19. Personal hygiene

1.1 Change “little” to “no”. Indicator should now read “No attention paid to . . .”.

3.1 “Some” means that staff might remind children sometimes and not others: hand washing should take place at least 50% of the time.

5.1 Credit can be given for this indicator if adequate hand washing takes place at least 75 percent of the time when needed. Stop at this indicator for contamination issues.

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### 20. Arts and crafts

- 3.1 This indicator requires a minimum of two art and/or craft materials.
- 5.1 Add “art and craft” so indicator now reads, “Variety of art and craft materials . . .”.
- 7.1 If only one component (new skills or long range project) is present, score 6.

### 21. Music and movement

- 3.1 This indicator requires a musical experience daily. If a musical experience occurs less than daily, but at least weekly, this would receive a score of 2.
- 5.1 Add the word “appropriate” so indicator now reads, “Appropriate music activities . . .”. Activities must be daily. Requires that music activities are available as free choice.
- 5.2 “Variety” means there must be variety in materials for 2 of the 3 categories (cassettes, dance props, musical instruments).
- 7.1 If every 2 weeks to monthly, score 6.

### 22. Blocks and construction

- 3.1 This indicator requires that enough materials for two children be accessible daily.
- 5.1, 5.2 To provide clarification between the indicators at the good level, 5.1 focuses on materials while 5.2 focuses on space.
- 3.2 This indicator means “appropriate” in the most basic sense. If children seem to be able to use materials well, without major inconveniences, give credit for this indicator. For example, if blocks are being used, there should be a level, firm surface, and not too many disruptions.
- 5.1 Delete the word “some” from this indicator. This indicator requires enough construction materials for three children. More materials may be needed depending on the number of children using the materials.
- 7.1 This indicator requires at least three types of construction materials.

### 23. Drama/ theater

Materials: dress-up clothes, costumes, props, puppets, action figures, dolls (both adult and baby).

Drama is more organized than pretend. There is no difference in the type of prop, only in the degree of pretend or dramatic play.

- 3.1 Change “and” to “/” so indicator now reads, “Some pretend/drama props accessible.” This indicator requires at least two props.
- 3.2 For this indicator, “support offered by staff” means that staff have made space and materials needed for play accessible to the children. Children play without much adult input. When disagreements occur in the play, staff participate in helping to solve problems.
- 5.1 The items in parentheses are just examples. Enough props should be accessible for meaningful play to support two roles or situations.
- 5.2 To give credit for this indicator, more active involvement is required than that required in 3.2. Staff add to the childrens’ possibilities for dramatic play. For example, if the drama is very active, staff might provide children with a larger space. Or if children need more props, staff might help them find what they need. Must observe at least one incidence.
- 7.1 Add “and” so indicator reads, “Pictures, stories, and trips . . .”. Outside trips are not required for this indicator. Credit can be given for bringing community resources into the program.

### 24. Language/reading activities

- 3.1 This indicator requires at least two materials that encourage language and reading skills.
- 3.2 Credit can be given when this is done by either staff or older children, who are fluent in reading or telling a story.

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5.1 The age of the children in the group is a key factor in deciding appropriateness. Younger children (K-2) who still may not be able to separate fantasy and reality should not have access to inappropriate books or games. Appropriateness includes content that is not graphically violent or sexually explicit. For older children, the vast majority of materials should be appropriate, with no materials being extremely inappropriate. Since children will probably not lack exposure to inappropriate materials in other settings, the school age program should concentrate on positive input. Provision of books and games on different reading levels is also part of appropriateness.

5.2 Must observe at least one instance during the observation.

5.3 Must observe more than one example.

### 25. Math/ reasoning activities

3.1 Add to note Replace “and” with “/” so the indicator reads “Some age-appropriate math/reasoning games/activities accessible . . .”. This indicator requires at least two math/reasoning games and/or activities.

5.1 Replace the phrase “games and activities” with “games and/or activities”. If there are 3-5 games that are accessible, give credit for this indicator.

5.2 The intent of this indicator is for adults to link math and numbers to practical life events in the childrens’ daily schedule. Therefore, look for use of numbers during meals or when fixing own snacks, setting the table for correct number of children, transition times, using a timer to take turns, keeping scores in ball games, taking attendance by children, talking about times to do things and looking at the clock, arriving/leaving, etc. Do not count play activities such as number games, computer games, or homework in determining the score for this indicator. “Number talk” or number experiences as part of practical life events should be observed more than once during the observation to give credit for this indicator.

### 26. Science/nature

Science/nature toys are included in materials. Look for how they are used.

3.1 This indicator requires at least one piece of equipment and at least two materials for science/nature activities. If materials are accessible less than daily, but at least weekly, score 2. If there are either materials or equipment present, but not both, score 2. Tables and shelves are not considered equipment.

5.2 May ask question, if not clear from observation.

5.3 At least 1 instance must be observed. Examples may include the use of books, internet or experimentation.

7.2 Outside trips are not required for this indicator. Credit can be given for bringing community resources into the program.

### 27. Cultural awareness

1.2 Refers only to the staff’s interaction or approach to children. This includes stereotypes of gender as well as ethnicity and race.

3.1 This indicator requires at least three examples of diversity in materials.

5.1 A minimum of three different books, three different pictures, and three different types of materials are required. Multiples of the same type of material, such as three puzzles, would not count.

5.2 Remove the designation of “ex” from the indicator so that the expectation is for books and pictures depicting both males and females in non-traditional roles. Look for visual images of males and females engaged in activities that promote equal opportunities or in similar work/play roles. Materials should actively promote equal opportunities for men and women to participate in similar activities. These materials should include books at child level, even if only bindings show.

5.3 This can mean an acceptance of children’s choices of the activities in which they want to participate (ex. boys are fully allowed to play with dolls; girls are allowed to freely participate in block or carpentry).

7.2 The intent of this indicator is that all diversity be presented in a positive way. This includes cultures, races, gender, age, and ability or other characteristics.

### 28. Greeting/departing

1.1 N/A permitted.

3.1 N/A permitted. To give credit for this indicator, kindergarten children must be escorted by a responsible adult.



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3.2 To allow for positive scoring, change indicator to read, "Acknowledgement of childrens' arrival and departure is consistent." Positive acknowledgement is implied; give credit at this level if arrival/departure of 50% of children is acknowledged by the classroom staff.

5.1 N/A permitted. To give credit for this indicator, K-1 children must be escorted by a responsible adult. No score of 6 is possible.

### 29. Staff-child interactions

3.1 To allow for positive scoring, change indicator to read "Staff respond consistently." Positive is implied.

3.2 To allow for positive scoring, change indicator to read, "Staff does not favor or dislike particular children."

### 30. Staff-child communication

3.1 Replace the word "brief" with the word "some".

3.2 Replace the word "limited" with the word "some".

### 31. Staff supervision of children

7.2 This indicator requires that a person knowledgeable in a team sport or other activity (e.g., pottery) is available for instruction and guidance so that the children can develop their skills. This means more than just supervising a game of tag, or coloring with markers.

### 32. Discipline

Discipline is defined as teaching children to exercise self-control. Discipline is ideally proactive, and reactive only when needed. The proactive steps taken to teach self-control and prevent misbehavior are part of effective classroom management. One element of classroom management is developmentally appropriate expectations for the children. This means that the expectations should be based upon the children, their ages and abilities, their experiences, and best practice about how children grow and learn. When discipline is reactive, it should be a positive teaching interaction between an adult and child. Lack of observed discipline encounters typically indicates effective classroom management strategies resulting in positive discipline.  
No score of 4 is possible.

3.3 Discount if teacher/caregiver uses harsh punishment, threatens, or physically disciplines any child.

7.2 In most cases "consultant" means someone from outside the program who specializes in the area of concern. The staff working in the program can benefit from an outsider's perspective of a child who is experiencing difficulties. In a few cases, however, a program staff member can count as the "consultant" if the person has a specialization in the area of concern and can give an unbiased perspective.

### 34. Interactions between staff and parents

3.2 Interpret this indicator to read: "Parent conferences occur upon staff or parent request."

3.3 This indicator requires observed evidence of welcoming parents into the program. Consider things such as parent information board/table, parent newsletter, event calendar, parent handbook, welcome letters, etc.

5.2 "Regularly scheduled" is defined as at least one time a year.

5.3 Take events such as picnics, parent meetings, open houses, etc. into consideration.

### 35. Staff interaction

Score this item N/A if there is only 1 staff member working with the children.

3.1 This indicator requires that at least two instances of staff sharing information are observed.

5.2 Time for staff communication must not distract from responsibilities with children.

### 37. Schedule

If a schedule varies throughout the week, base your scores on what the children experience most of the time. For example, if the Friday schedule is more relaxed, while the rest of the week is more restricted due to time for homework, then base the score on the four days of the more rigid schedule.

3.2 The posted schedule should include times and reflect all hours that children are in care regardless of the caregiving areas used. The schedule should be posted in the room where the children spend the majority of their time. The schedule should accurately reflect the events of the day even if it is not followed to the minute.

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3.4 This indicator requires that at least one gross motor activity takes place daily.

5.2 Score N/A if only one age group is in the program.

5.3 Add to the end of the indicator: "some teacher-initiated and some child-initiated."

7.2 Two to three field trips are required during the school year. More is expected during the summer.

### 38. Free choice

3.1 In some programs, opportunity for free choice may be very limited; at least 2 activities for free choice must exist. A program may allow children to choose a specific area to play in at the beginning of an activity period, and then the children cannot change their choice for the rest of the time. In this case, credit would be given for 3.1 (there is some free choice) but not for 5.1.

5.1 Accessibility is required for one third of the day.

7.1 This should be observed.

### 40. Use of community resources

3.1 Acceptable use of community resources can be having representatives from the resources come to the program. For example, a fire fighter may visit the program to explain about his or her job, or the Agriculture Extension Agency may provide special gardening activities on-site. Children do not have to leave the program site to give credit for a program's use of community resources.

3.2, 3.3 Score yes if all community resources are used on-site, rather than off-site, and no permission is needed.

5.1 To meet requirements for regular use, at least two recreational resources and two cultural resources must be used and the use must be spread throughout the year. If resources are brought into the program, give credit.

5.2 Ask questions as needed to score this indicator. Supervision may vary depending on the type of activity.

5.3 Field trips are required for the site being assessed.

### 44. Provisions for exceptional children

ECERS-R 37, ITERS-R 32, FCCERS-R 34, and SACERS 44 should be scored NA unless a child with a disability that has been diagnosed through a formal assessment procedure and receives (or is eligible for) early intervention services is enrolled. Across all four scales, the following aspects should be considered when scoring: modifications, parent involvement, inclusion, and use of assessment information. Look for the extent of modifications needed to the schedule or classroom to include the child in daily activities, parent and staff communication regarding the child's assessment information and ongoing therapy, and the use of assessment information into planning throughout the day. Some parents may not share all information with staff for various reasons. Consider the levels of quality when determining if staff and parents have shared enough information to meet the child's needs. Even if staff put significant effort into asking about a child's needs, if parents share no information, the child's development is compromised.