

Top 10 Tips to Remember when using ERS-3 Scales (ITERS-3, ECERS-3, FCCERS-3)

1. Focus on what you can change or do differently

Focus on the items within the scale that you can change such as room arrangement or the classroom display. There are some things you may not have any control over such as how the building is set up or furniture in your classroom.

2. Scoring

It is okay if some items score low as long as there are other items that score higher. Your final rating is based on an average score of all items. Do not change your program philosophy in an attempt to increase your score.

3. Interactions are scored throughout the scale

Interactions are scored throughout each scale - during routines, group activities, and free play. There should be no periods of non-interaction during the observation. Use materials and experiences as a basis for interactions - teach concepts/procedures, ask questions about what they are doing and why they are doing it, and talk about home and family experiences that happen away from your program.

4. Developmentally Appropriate Materials

Include materials of different difficulty levels and take into consideration the ages of the children present; there must be appropriate materials for each of the ages observed.

5. Free Play

Free play is fundamental in the rating scales. For an ECERS observation, make sure you have one hour of free play time in total (does not need to be consecutive); for an ITERS observation, make sure that children do not have lapses in access to materials when they are awake and ready to play (when children are not eating, sleeping, or involved with diapering/toileting)

6. Free Play Interaction

Interact with children as they use the materials from each play area/interest center. If the materials are present but not used or teachers do not interact with children, it will have a negative impact on the score.

7. Display

The display for children should include photos of the children and/or their families, posters/pictures related to the current topics, and posters/pictures with diversity. Display posters/pictures about health practices (such as the proper handwashing procedure); be sure to use them as a learning tool and as an opportunity for interaction. Remember to also include items displayed at a child's eye level. For ECERS, posters with numbers and the quantity represented should be included in the classroom display.

8. Gross Motor

It is important that children have time to exercise. If the weather permits, be sure to go out with the children and motivate them to do activities that speed up their heart rate. A walk or a ride in a stroller does not count as a gross motor activity. If the weather does not allow it, be sure to do some exercise or dance activity inside to motivate children to move.

9. Read to Children

Read to children with interest and enthusiasm. Be sure to also interact with children when they choose to use books independently.

10. Personal Care Routines

Personal care routines include diapering/toileting, sleeping, and mealtimes. Remember to follow the proper procedures for washing hands, changing diapers, and disinfecting tables. Routines are also an opportunity to interact/have conversations with children and to teach children proper hand-washing procedures.