

# The Importance of Schedules

*The Big 3 of ERS: Schedules, Relationships, and Interactions*

## What is the schedule?

The schedule is the sequence of daily events children experience, from arrival to departure. The schedule contains all activities that occur throughout the day, including play, routines, and transitions. Transitions are the times that children move from one activity on the schedule to the next.



## Why is the schedule important?

Building relationships and trust can take place in a predictable classroom. When children can predict what will happen next, they feel secure and prepared. Consistent classroom schedules help create an environment where children are more likely to be engaged, attentive, and receptive to learning. When there is a predictable sequence of events each day and activities and transitions are planned, teachers are able to create intentional learning opportunities, focusing more on meaningful interactions and less on managing behaviors.

## Which ERS items are affected by the schedule?

### ECERS-3

ALL except Item 1

### FCCERS-R

ALL except Items  
1 & 2

### ITERS-3

ALL except Item 1

### SACERS-U

ALL except Items  
1, 5, & 9

## What does an effective schedule look like?



- ✓ Includes accurate list of all activities, routines, and transitions
- ✓ Is predictable to children and supportive of their needs
- ✓ Consists predominantly of free play, with time spans long enough to promote deep, engaging play and learning
- ✓ Includes a balance and variety of play opportunities: active, quiet, gross motor, creative, indoor, outdoor, with a small group or individually
- ✓ Incorporates time needed for short, smooth, gradual transitions designed to minimize children's wait times
- ✓ Minimizes large group gatherings and uses small groups to provide meaningful new content children are interested in
- ✓ Is age-appropriate, flexible, and individualized to meet children's needs

# The Importance of Relationships

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## What are relationships?

Relationships are how teachers and children bond, interact with one another, and feel about one another. The teacher-child relationship is a foundational component of child development. When children feel cared for and know they can trust and rely on their teacher, they are able to more freely explore, play, and learn.



## Why are relationships important?

Children grow and thrive in the context of close, dependable relationships that provide love, nurturing, security, and responsive interactions. Children's relationships shape the way they see the world and affect all areas of their development. Devoting time and effort to building warm, respectful, and responsive relationships with children provides the foundation for learning now and in the future, and it shapes how children approach other relationships with peers and adults.

## Which ERS items are affected by relationships?

**ECERS-3**

ALL except Item 1

**FCCERS-R**

ALL except Item 1

**ITERS-3**

ALL except Item 1

**SACERS-U**

ALL except Items 1, 2, 9

## What do positive teacher-child relationships look like?



- ✓ Teachers talk to children using pleasant, calm voices and positive, simple language.
- ✓ Responsive, comforting, and timely help when children are upset
- ✓ Teachers provide respectful, patient, age-appropriate guidance.
- ✓ Engaging in frequent one-on-one interactions with children on their eye level
- ✓ Providing warm, responsive physical contact (hugs, sitting beside children, high-fives, pats on the back)
- ✓ Listening with interest to what children have to say
- ✓ Acknowledging children for their efforts and accomplishments
- ✓ Showing consideration of children's individual needs, interests, personalities, and abilities
- ✓ Greeting children warmly when they arrive and depart

# The Importance of Interactions

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## What are interactions?

Interactions are verbal and non-verbal communication with children. Teacher-child interactions can include verbal communication, such as mimicking sounds, having conversations, modeling, asking meaningful questions, explaining, brainstorming, and problem solving. Interactions also include non-verbal communication, such as smiling, facial expressions, nodding, warm physical affection, and maintaining eye contact. Opportunities for intentional interactions happen every time teachers approach, respond to, communicate with, and support children.



## Why are interactions important?

Meaningful interactions expand children's thinking, build deeper understanding, and help children connect to their learning experiences. Interactions that are thoughtful and intentional can teach children concepts related to their play and interests, help each child develop skills at their own level, and provide a meaningful context for individualized learning.

## Which ERS items are affected by interactions?

### ECERS-3

ALL except Items 2 & 6

### FCCERS-R

ALL Items

### ITERS-3

ALL except Item 24

### SACERS-U

ALL except Items 5 & 6

## What do intentional and meaningful teacher-child interactions look like?

During play and personal care routines, teachers enhance and extend learning by:

- ✓ Building on interests and ideas of the children
- ✓ Asking Why, How, and What if questions related to the child's play
- ✓ Adding new information related to the play that the child may not already know
- ✓ Introducing developmentally appropriate related concepts and a wide variety of words related to the routine or child's play
- ✓ Engaging in child-directed free play
- ✓ Having conversations with children
- ✓ Sharing their own interests and ideas
- ✓ Providing additional teacher-initiated experiences based on children's interests and ideas
- ✓ Using positive non-verbal communication to support and encourage children (smiling, nodding, high-fives, facial expressions, etc.)
- ✓ Paying attention to children's moods and emotions and responding supportively