

GA Additional Notes for the ECERS-3

The GA Additional Notes provide supplementary information for the Environment Rating Scales so that participants in the assessment portion of Georgia's Quality Rated (Voluntary Improvement System) may correctly interpret and score items found within the scale. A primary aim for the notes is to further define or explain requirements of certain items to improve inter-rater reliability or consistency among assessors working with Quality Rated (QR).

Participants in Quality Rated should be aware of the following:

- Unless otherwise specified Quality Rated assessors use both the GA Additional Notes for the ECERS-3 and the ECERS-3 Additional Notes for Clarification created by the authors (available at <http://www.ersi.info/index.html>), as well as the [All About ECERS-3](#) published in 2019.
- GA Additional Notes provide further clarification to assist in the interpretation of the scale and the Environment Rating Scale Institute (ERSI) Additional Notes for Clarification.
- The GA Additional Notes are updated (approximately) every 6-12 months and QR assessors conduct assessments using the most current notes. Child care professionals are encouraged to download and use the most current version of the notes from the Quality Rated website.

The GA Additional Notes were compiled and further developed by members of the QR management team, especially by our State Anchors. In April 2012 with permission from Debby Cryer and Thelma Harms, the Additional Notes for Clarification for the ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCRS-R, and SACERS were retrieved from the Environment Rating Scale Institute (ERSI) website (<http://www.ersi.info/index.html>) and used for the basis for the GA Additional notes. Since then, Quality Rated has made modifications and additions to the notes as described below.

GENERAL GA NOTES FOR THE ECERS-3

Refer to Environment Rating Scale Institute (ERSI) website ECERS-3 General Additional Notes for Clarification for definitions of terms used in the scale.

Accessible: Children can reach and are allowed to use toys, materials, furnishings, and/or equipment. Toys on open shelves must be within easy reach of the children. No barriers can be present to prevent children from using them. Time counted toward materials being accessible will only be credited when all children have reasonable access and are not compelled to be doing something else. If children **are required** to participate in teacher led group activities, these times will not be included in the time count for accessible to other materials, even if these smaller groups occur during an otherwise free play or center time schedule. Read the extensive description for *Accessible* in the scale on page 10. At the lower levels of quality (3), access must occur for 25 minutes within the 3-hour observation period and at the higher levels when no other time requirement is stated. In many instances the higher levels (5 and 7) require access for more than 25 minutes and in those cases the time is increased to 1 hour during the 3-hour observation period. Note that if a program uses sedentary materials outside or in indoor gross motor areas, access to these materials will not be included in the time count for accessibility of said materials unless there is time to access them in addition to the minimum time requirements needed for vigorous active play (15 minutes).

Appropriate: Used in various items to mean age- and developmentally- suited for the children in the group being observed. In determining whether the requirements for “appropriate” are being met within the context of a particular indicator, consideration is given to whether the children’s needs for protection, stimulation, and positive relationships are being met in ways that are supportive and meaningful.

Engaged: Children are observed to be interested and paying attention. Although children may be well behaved, look closely to determine whether they are actually engaged in what is going on. Scoring decisions are made based on the children’s level of engagement and whether staff are able to positively re-engage children if they do lose interest.

Handwashing and hand sanitizer use: The 2019 edition of Caring for Our Children (page 118) states that hand sanitizers can be used in place of handwashing unless hands are visibly soiled. Use can be by adults and children, but handwashing is preferred for children under age 2. However, GA licensing does not allow the use of hand sanitizers in lieu of handwashing; therefore, QR assessors are required to only count handwashing as acceptable when scoring these indicators. If hand sanitizer is used after handwashing or when running water is not accessible (such as on the playground), the product must contain 60-95% alcohol, manufacturer’s instructions are followed, and very close supervision of children is provided to ensure proper use and to avoid ingestion or contact with eyes and mucous membranes. Be sure to check that the manufacturer’s directions for use are followed exactly, because if not, do not give credit for any time when not followed. You should ask to see the original container with directions for use if it is not observable. If children are not closely supervised when using the sanitizer, consider in supervision–related indicators for the item specifically, and in Safety and Supervision. To get credit for correct handwashing the time for rubbing soapy hands together (out of the flow of water), before rinsing is 20 seconds. Antibacterial soaps should not be used. Children using shared art or sensory materials must wash hands, both before and after use. Handwashing or use of a hand sanitizer is required for all ERS observers upon entering the program.

Individualized teaching: Does not look like one size fits all. Staff who individualize think about what is best for children and their development, strive to produce real and lasting learning, apply the principles of best practices and child development, and are intentional about everything they do. Individualizing means that staff can enable children to reach goals that are both challenging and achievable and meet their individual needs.

Interest Center: A well-defined play area set up for a particular kind of play may be classified as an interest center. There are 4 aspects to think about when determining if a play area meets the requirement for being an interest center, all four must be met in order for the area to become defined interest area instead of a play area:

- Is the area clearly defined with the materials of a certain type of play gathered together, specifically for that type of play? If several other types of materials were included in this play area and their use would cause interference, then this aspect of the definition would not be met.
- Were the materials stored by type? This would require some sort of sorting into containers, e.g. sorting of people, vehicles, and animals into different containers and shelf spaces in a block center. If not, then this part of the definition was not met.
- Was furniture needed so the materials could be used appropriately and comfortably? If not, then this aspect of the definition was not met.
- Was there enough space for the play with the materials so children could easily access them? Was there enough play for the number of children allowed in the area at one time, or was the space used for multiple purposes, such as a table and chairs used for both art and science materials? If not, then this aspect of the definition was not met.

Some/sometimes/somewhat/occasionally: Denotes a presence in the environment, and at least 1 example usually must be observed unless the indicator guidelines require more examples.

Staff: This may include volunteers and other special staff members who works for part of the observation with the children as a whole group or smaller groups. If children go to a special class or have a special teacher come to their room regularly (i.e. weekly) such as the library visit for story time, going to a computer or art lab, or having a special music teacher or foreign language teacher come into the room etc., all interactions and activities by these teaching staff will be included in scoring decisions. One-time guest visitors, such as a dentist, fire fighter, parent reading, etc. who is not a regular part of the program, would not be included in scoring decisions unless their interactions were extremely negative.

Usually/generally/frequently/often: Denotes the regular or prevalent practice in the environment, meaning that things occur for 75% of the time during the 3-hour observation period and are usually accounted for in the higher levels of quality (5 & 7). Specific numbers may be listed for different items and generally includes a variety of materials.

Weather permitting: Children participate in outdoor activities almost every day, unless there is active precipitation or public announcements that advise people to remain indoors due to weather conditions, such as high levels of pollution and extreme cold or heat, that might cause health problems.

SPACE AND FURNISHINGS

ITEM 1: Indoor Space

Indicator 3.1 and 5.1: Based on max number of children allowed.

Indicator 5.2: If dark shades or blinds are closed and most natural light is blocked, score No. If light colored shades or blinds are closed and enough natural light is coming in that the room appears light even while the blinds/shades are closed, score Yes.

Indicator 5.3: Ventilation methods must provide ventilation for the whole classroom. Ventilation control cannot be limited only to small spaces within the classroom, such as a bathroom or the diaper changing table.

ITEM 2: Furnishings for care, play, and learning

Indicator 3.4: Must be accessible for 25 minutes.

Indicator 5.3: Indicator should read: "Two pieces of furniture...used **or obviously usable.**"

Indicator 5.4: Must be accessible for 25 minutes.

Indicator 5.3 and 7.2: If easel is not set up for use, do not count. Separate sand and water tables count as 1 item; do not count at all if lid stays closed. All housekeeping/dramatic play furniture together=1 item. Plastic woodworking bench is a dramatic play prop; do not count as a separate furniture item. CAN count: specially designed library bookcase, wooden puppet theater, Lego table used only for Legos, special writing hutch with materials, woodworking bench with real wood materials, train table used only for trains, light table with materials (turned on or child-friendly turn-on), specially made listening center, 3-sided station with built-in computer.

ITEM 3: Room arrangement for play and learning

Indicator 3.2 and 5.2: “Interest centers” must meet 4 requirements: 1) sufficient space for type of play encouraged and # of children allowed, 2) relevant materials are present and accessible to children, 3) materials organized by type, 4) furniture provided if needed. Reading interest center can include a listening center if headphones are used. Do not count the computer as an interest center due to the time limit constraints in item 27. In Activities items that require interest centers (books, blocks, dramatic play, nature/science), all required materials listed in the Activities items are not required for credit in Item 3. Any interest center that meets the 4 requirements of an interest center, as listed above, will count for Item 3.

Indicator 3.2, 3.4, 5.2, and 5.4: Must be accessible for 25 minutes.

Indicator 5.2: For the cozy area to count as one of the 5 interest centers, it must meet the requirements of an interest center. If the cozy area does not meet the requirements of an interest center, the presence of a cozy area plus 5 interest centers is required.

Indicator 7.3: Of the interest centers credited in 3.2 and/or 5.2, all must have the amount of space they need for children to play successfully and not be crowded to score Yes. The centers listed in the indicator are examples of centers that often require more space, but this indicator does not require those centers specifically to be available. If no centers or only one interest center is observed in the classroom, score No. If more than 1 interest center is observed, but none are popular centers that require extra space, score No.

ITEM 4: Space for privacy

Indicator 3.1 and 3.2: Refers to informal child-created space for privacy.

Indicator 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3: Refers to teacher-created space for privacy.

Indicator 7.1: Can be any child playing alone, in any situation, not just a child using the designated space for privacy.

Indicator 7.2: Do not give credit if there is no designated space. Designated space does not have to be the space for privacy in 5.1; it can be any space designated by the teacher.

ITEM 5: Child-related display

General note: Rugs, wall mirrors, and other furnishings do not count as display. Center signs are not considered for credit in this item, unless they also provide meaningful display information to children, such as large photos of the children or commercial posters showing children playing in the centers. To count as display, items must be displayed from the beginning of the observation; items added during the observation will not be considered. Equipment used to display items for short periods do not count as display, such as a teacher using a felt board to display items in a story or a smart board used during circle time to show the calendar or weather chart. Additionally, for all indicators in this item, except 1.1 and 1.2, consider only displays that are appropriate for the ages of children observed.

Indicator 5.4: Cannot be at group time—must be during free play and/or routines. Preparing to go outside is a transition; it is not considered a routine.

ITEM 6: Space for gross motor play

General note: “Major hazards” are 1) likely to result in serious injury to a child, 2) require medical care, and 3) be in popular areas where children frequently come into contact with them. Playground next to quiet parking area with no active vehicles, no playground equipment near the fence, and no bollards protecting the fence = minor hazard. Locks on gates not a hazard if the group can exit through building. Otherwise, it is a minor hazard.

Indicators 1.1, 1.3, 3.1, 5.2: Score based on gross motor space used during observation.

Indicators 3.2, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3: If children do not go outside, score based on gross motor space used during observation and space typically used.

Indicator 3.1: The 15 minutes required here must be observed during the same gross motor time period. The 15 minutes cannot be achieved by adding together multiple gross motor time periods.

Indicator 3.2: Change “no major hazards” to “not many major hazards.” Any major hazards should not be in areas frequently used by children.

Indicator 3.1, 5.1, and 5.2: When weather permits, the space used must be an outdoor space.

Indicator 7.1: To determine hard and soft surfaces, consider the texture children will feel when playing on the surfaces and the type of play allowed by the surfaces observed. To give credit, you need one hard and one soft surface that allow for different types of activities to occur. Grass counts as a soft surface for this indicator.

ITEM 7: Gross motor equipment

Indicators 1.1, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 5.3, 5.4, 7.1, and 7.3: Score based on gross motor equipment used and/or accessible during observation.

Indicators 1.2, 3.3, 5.1, 5.2, 7.2: If children do not go outside, score based on gross motor equipment used during observation and observable equipment typically used.

Indicator 1.2: “Most” means 75%.

Indicator 1.1 and 1.3: Consider only appropriate equipment used.

Indicator 3.1: “Some” means portable OR stationary equipment.

Indicator 3.2: Change “both portable and stationary” to “portable OR stationary.” *On the CPSC playground sheet, beneath the Age-appropriate Equipment chart, note the list of equipment that is not appropriate for specific age groups. This equipment is never appropriate and is considered “extremely dangerous” for this indicator.*

Indicator 3.3: Only count skills stimulated by appropriate equipment.

Indicator 7.2: Any observed sanitation problems with helmets should be considered in the Health item at Indicator 7.1, not in this indicator. Refer to the Note for Clarification on page 26 of the scale book for additional guidance for helmet use.

PERSONAL CARE ROUTINES

ITEM 8: Meals and snacks

General Note: When a meal or snack is not observed during the 3-hour observation, stay to observe the meal/snack and score the following indicators based on observation: Indicators 1.1., 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 3.3, 5.2, 5.3, and 7.1. Score the remaining indicators as unmet since the interactions and language did not take place during the 3-hour observation: 3.1, 5.4, 5.5, 7.2, 7.3.

Indicator 1.1, 3.2, and 5.2: USDA guidelines will be credited only by evidence observed during the observation. Items that are required by the food program to have nutrition labels to determine the adequacy of guidelines met will not be credited. As such, breaded meats, including chicken nuggets and fish sticks, will only be credited for proteins since adequacy of the breading to count towards grain requirements cannot be determined by observation. If a planned snack is observed in addition to a meal, then nutritional component requirements must be met for both. If an extra, unplanned snack is offered to children, nutritional components are not required to be met. Unplanned snacks do not occur daily, and they are

typically snacks provided to tie one or more children over until lunch can be served or as part of an occasional learning activity. Food served for celebratory occasions, such as birthday parties or holiday celebrations, is not required to meet the USDA guidelines for meals or snacks.

Indicator 1.1: Can consult posted menu to determine if USDA standards “not usually followed;” if menu not posted, score on what is observed. “Not usually followed” means food served for 50% of children is unacceptable.

Indicator 1.2: If no attempts are made in any category, score Yes.

Indicator 3.2: Credit given if the appropriate food is offered, even if child refuses an item.

Indicator 3.3: If an attempt is made in any of the categories, score Yes.

Indicator 5.1: If children experience flexibility during the 3-hour observation and can easily and independently get water when thirsty without having to request it, then score Yes.

Indicator 5.2: Components can be on table or verbally offered at same time as other components to give credit.

Indicator 5.3: Attempts should be made in all categories when needed, and there should be much effort made to complete procedures correctly. However, perfection is not required to meet the requirements of “usually,” so a few lapses in procedural steps or neglecting the procedures for one or two children are allowable.

Indicator 5.4: One example is required for 3-year old children. Two examples are required for 4-5-year old children.

Indicator 5.5: “Some” means at least 2 conversations.

Indicator 7.2: There can be no negative interactions observed.

Indicator 7.3: Give credit for actively teaching proper meal handwashing.

ITEM 9: Toileting/diapering

Indicator 1.2: If no attempts are made in any category, score Yes.

Indicator 3.2: The Assessor must check the bathroom for supplies at least twice during the observation. There should be enough toilet paper, water, soap, and paper towels easily accessible and within reach of children throughout the observation, so that the children are not dependent on teachers.

Indicator 3.3: If an attempt is made in any of the categories, score Yes.

Indicator 3.4: Teachers should be aware of all children using toilet and provide some supervision. If the bathroom door is closed, teachers must be able to supervise by listening. If the teachers do not demonstrate awareness of every child using the restroom and/or a solid door is closed and teachers cannot supervise through hearing, score No.

Indicator 5.2: Attempts should be made in all categories when needed, and there should be much effort made to complete procedures correctly. However, perfection is not required to meet the requirements of “generally,” so a few lapses in procedural steps or neglecting the procedures for one or two children are allowable.

ITEM 10: Health

Indicator 7.1: Visibly dirty toys/materials and lack of sanitizing between face masks and/or helmets used by multiple children should be considered at this indicator.

Indicator 7.2: Health practices observed must be completed correctly.

ITEM 11: Safety practices

General note: When weighing hazards, consider: 1) likelihood of injury, 2) supervision, 3) way space is used, and 4) seriousness of possible injury.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

ITEM 12: Helping children expand vocabulary

Indicator 5.1: Listen for much descriptive language (adjectives, adverbs) used throughout the day.

Indicator 7.1: Must observe this to be the prevalent practice of the classroom. Less common words should be used often.

ITEM 13: Encouraging children to use language

Indicator 1.3: “Few” means less than 3.

Indicator 3.3: There is no required number for “some,” but conversations must be observed intermittently throughout the observation.

Indicator 3.4: With ESOL students, look for much encouragement for child to name objects, teachers make a real effort to communicate with the children in both their first language and English.

Indicator 3.5: Environment should “flow” and be conducive to conversation (example: few disruptions with directives).

Indicator 5.2: “Many” requires that the conversations observed occur frequently as the regular practice throughout the observation, and no child can be completely ignored.

ITEM 14: Staff use of books with children

General note: Books or stories without pictures count if children can respond to it as a book reading (i.e., eBooks, story on paper, Bible story, etc.)

Animated eBooks with moving pictures are scored at Item 27, appropriate use of technology.

Indicator 3.1 and 5.1: Staff must finish reading the book to count as a reading (or finish a meaningful portion of a longer book).

Indicator 3.2: Every book time should be set up with the basics to promote children’s engagement, considering children’s comfort, children’s ability to view the book, scheduling and length of the book time, minimizing distractions, age appropriate book content and length, and number of children participating. If a lack of any of these basics causes many problems for children not being able to pay attention to the book, score No.

Indicator 3.2, 3.3, 5.2, and 5.3: Consider all times books are used and/or read.

Indicator 3.3: Determine across multiple book times if several occur; score based on the majority of children’s engagement during most book times. “Majority of children” = 75%.

Indicator 5.4: Must draw interest to books several times, which can occur during formal or informal readings. Do not count telling children to get books during transitions as a filler activity or brief comments made in passing.

Indicator 7.3: Observe twice at 2 different times.

Indicator 7.4: Observe books used as a resource or evidence they have been used recently, such as evidence heard in conversation or seen in display.

ITEM 15: Encouraging children’s use of books

Indicator 5.2 and 5.4: Any time would count if the child chose to independently use the books, and it was not required by the staff. Independence and choice are the key. Even if children choose which book to look at during a transition, it is not an example of this indicator if the staff told them to choose a book, even if there were other choices such as “Choose a book or a puzzle”.

Indicator 5.3: A defined reading interest center can include books on c.d. or tape if headphones are used. Puppets and soft animals can be in the book area and will not result in a discount, unless they are observed used in a way that prevents successful book reading from occurring in the center.

ITEM 16: Becoming familiar with print

Indicator 5.2: Can point out name or number on cubby and explain its meaning; must point to print and draw child's attention to it giving some explanation for why or how it is used.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

ITEM 17: Fine motor

Indicator 3.3 and 3.4: Pertains to materials credited in 3.1.

Indicator 7.2: Labels cannot contain only words. Picture labels or picture/word labels are required. When materials are stored in containers that are not transparent, both the container and the shelves need labels. Clear containers do not necessarily need labels if children can see the materials stored in them and it is observed that the children can consistently match the materials with the labels on the shelves. Large individual items, such as a large truck or small play house do not need labels, but the shelves they are stored on would need labels.

ITEM 18: Art

General Note: No credit given for coloring predesigned pages, coloring book sheets, ditto sheets etc. (scored in Fine Motor).

Indicator 1.2, 3.2, 5.2: Individual expression means that children can use art materials in their own creative way. This is evidenced by children having choices about the topic, which materials to use, and/or how they want to complete the art work. If teachers assign the topic for the artwork, the art materials to be used, and the way in which they must be used, individual expression has not been allowed.

Indicator 1.3: If teachers never interact with children as they use art materials, or if children never choose to use art materials and the teacher does not encourage their use, score this as Yes.

Indicator 3.3: Teacher involvement required here goes beyond setting up the materials or giving directions. Teacher involvement needs to occur while children are using the materials, and the interaction should be related to the art the child is creating.

Indicator 7.1: Complex art materials generally involve multiple steps in their use.

ITEM 19: Music and movement

Indicator 3.4: Children are generally engaged every time, unless they are allowed to engage in another alternate activity they are interested in.

Indicator 5.1: Do not count dance props, such as scarves or ribbons, as music materials.

Indicator 5.2: The requirements for 5.2 can take place indoors or outdoors, with individual children or groups, but it must be done informally during free play and not be a pre-planned teacher-directed group.

Indicator 5.2/5.3: Movement and dance activities must include large muscle use; fingerplays do not count.

Indicator 5.3: The requirements for 5.3 can take place indoors or outdoors with individual children or in a group.

Indicator 7.1: At least two alternate activities must be accessible.

ITEM 20: Blocks

Indicator 1.2: If children do not play with blocks, teachers must be observed verbally encouraging block play.

Indicator 3.1: Either unit OR large hollow blocks are acceptable; 1 type of accessory in sufficient quantities to prevent sharing issues.

Indicator 3.1 and 5.1: A set of 20-30-unit blocks (depending on size of blocks) is enough for 1 child to build a sizeable independent structure. A set of at least 10 large hollow blocks is enough for 1 child to build a sizeable independent structure.

Indicator 5.3: Three types of accessories in sufficient quantities are required. Unit blocks are required.

Indicator 5.5: Teacher conversations credited here must be about the children's block play. Conversations about other subjects and play occurring only with block accessories do not count.

Indicator 7.1: Cannot be in same space as unit blocks, unless the space is sufficiently large enough to be able to adequately build with the large blocks without interfering with the use of the unit blocks.

ITEM 21: Dramatic play

Indicator 1.3: Staff must encourage use of dramatic play materials (not just say the center is open).

Indicator 3.2, 3.3, and 5.3: Must include the children's use of dramatic play props and not just be imaginative conversations that sometimes occur while children play outside (pretending to be a princess in a castle etc.)

Indicator 5.1: Wealth of props does not need a 2nd theme. Additionally, baby dolls, or other large dolls, that children can pretend to be adults with, are required. Smaller dolls, such as Barbies, do not meet the requirement.

ITEM 22: Nature/science

Add to first note for clarification, p. 56: Tools not required to be kept with the materials—consider teacher intent.

Indicator 1.2 and 3.2: Any talk about nature/science with children will count for 1.2, but at 3.2 the talk needs to be more than a mention. At 3.2, teacher's talk about nature/science should be intentional for the purpose of drawing children's attention to nature/science.

Indicator 3.3: Kinetic sand is considered an acceptable sand substitute.

Indicator 5.1: All items, including books, must be in Science center to count. For example, to count, puzzles and plants etc. must be in Science center, not elsewhere. Sand/water is the only exception; it can be elsewhere. Do not have to have "collections" of items—for example, 5 different natural objects are okay.

Indicator 5.3: Must see or hear staff comment or interact with children to count. For example, just seeing a recycling bin would not be enough evidence.

Indicator 7.2: Could be an outdoor garden if all components of the indicator are observed.

ITEM 23: Math materials and activities

Indicator 1.1: "Few" means less than 3 appropriate math materials.

Indicator 1.3: "Most" means more than half.

Indicator 3.3: Does not have to include the use of materials. To give credit here, 75% of the children must be engaged during 75% of the math activities observed. When math activities are done during group times, do not include children who are permitted to leave group times to do something else of interest to them.

Indicator 5.4: Any material or activity in which the primary purpose is math learning can be used in meeting the requirement, except books and posters which are not credited here. Staff interaction about the use of the material must be math focused.

Indicator 7.3: Must observe being done during the 3-hour observation. Displays already posted do not count.

ITEM 24: Math in daily events

Indicator 1.1 and 3.1: Only the use of math words that are easy for children to understand and relate to their real-life experiences count.

Indicator 3.3: Just rote counting with no practical event associated is scored No.

ITEM 25: Understanding written numbers

Indicator 1.1/3.1: Rugs are furnishings, and they do not count as display, even if they have designs on them.

Indicator 1.3: Most observed examples of children reading or writing numbers must be inappropriate to score Yes.

Indicator 3.1: Must be at eye level to children. Two different types of examples. For example, center labels to determine the number of children allowed is one type; each center label is not counted separately.

Indicator 3.2, 5.1, and 7.1: Must be accessible at least 25 minutes.

Indicator 5.1: Look for 3 examples of 1:1 correspondence in materials. Books are included in materials here, but display does not count.

Indicator 7.3: The materials are those required in 5.1 and/or 7.1.

ITEM 26: Promoting acceptance of diversity

Indicator 1.2, 5.2, and 5.3: When crediting non-traditional gender role materials, a contrast with a traditional gender role material is not required.

Indicator 5.3: May be pictures, books, or play materials.

Indicator 7.1: Foreign language vocabulary use counts.

ITEM 27: Appropriate use of technology

General Note: “Electronic media” includes any device used that has a screen with moving images, pictures, or print, including toys that are designed to imitate electronic devices.

Indicator 1.3: Any comment about what a child is doing at computer counts as staff involvement (example: simple tech assistance, comment about a character, etc.). However, just turning the computer on and loading the program is not enough.

Indicator 3.2: Indicator pertains only to the passive and inactive watching use of TV/video;/. dancing to an exercise video would be considered in 5.2.

Indicator 5.2: Pertains to use of media other than TV/video, including computers, tablet, iPad etc.

INTERACTION

ITEM 28: Supervision of gross motor

General note: If another adult provides instruction or assistance such as a sports coach or lifeguard, include their interactions as staff, although the actual teachers should be weighed more heavily in the score.

ITEM 29: Individualized teaching and learning

Indicator 3.1 and 3.2: “Some” means one or more.

Indicator 3.2: Must be accessible for at least 25 minutes.

Indicator 3.3: Questions match children’s interest and ability. One or more example must be observed.

Indicator 5.1: Can take place indoors and/or outdoors.

Indicator 5.2 and 7.2: Higher level teaching interactions must be observed, such as the addition of more difficult words, expansion of children’s ideas related to play, or asking questions that encourage children to explain reasons and ideas related to their play.

Indicator 5.3: Any interaction that moves a child to learn counts.

Indicator 7.1 and 7.2: One hour of indoor free play must be observed.

ITEM 31: Peer interaction

Indicator 7.3: Evidence seen in displays or elsewhere in the classroom must represent a recent activity completed; evidence that is dated several weeks/months prior to the observation and/or which are obviously old and faded will not be credited.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE**ITEM 33: Transitions and waiting times**

Indicator 1.2: “Usually” means more than 2 examples.

Indicator 1.4: Score Yes when groups of children are required to wait 10+ minutes during a transition and almost all of the children are not engaged meaningfully in an activity.

Indicator 5.1: “Usually” means 75% of the time. A few minor problems in transitions are allowable if they do not occur frequently and are quickly handled by teachers, but credit cannot be given if any chaotic transitions are observed.

Indicator 7.2: Score No when any child is required to wait 3+ minutes during a transition with nothing to do.

ITEM 34: Free play

General note: Time counted toward free play can start when most children are dismissed to free play. For example, time is not discounted for slow eaters or when a teacher may be talking to a couple of children who on their way to free play got into a conflict.

Indicator 3.2: Should be scored Yes unless supervision during free play is extremely lax or staff are very uninvolved with children during all or much of the observed free play time.

Indicator 5.1: At least 20 minutes of the 1-hour must be outdoor free play, weather permitting.

Indicator 5.3: Ample and varied materials/equipment accessible for the max number of children allowed at any time. The materials must provide a wealth of variation, so there needs to be a lot of materials across the classroom.

Indicator 7.1: At least two different types of materials/activities related to the theme/current topic of interest are required in at least two different play areas, and they must be accessible for at least 25 minutes.

ITEM 35: Whole-group activities for play and learning

Indicator 3.2: Whole-group activities are arranged to encourage children's engagement and provide basics to support engagement by considering: 1) the comfort of the child, 2) access to information provided, 3) how teachers present information to the children, and 4) length of group time. If you observe more than one group time, consider them all but give more weight in scoring to the longer group times.

- If most children tend to be engaged throughout most group times observed and many (but not necessarily all) of the basics to support engagement are observed, score this indicator Yes.
- If many of the basics to support engagement are not provided, score this indicator No, even if children are somewhat engaged.
- If a group time was initially set up with the basics but the group time begins to fall apart, credit can be given as long as teachers responded appropriately and did not force the group to continue when children did not re-engage quickly.

Indicator 5.2: Must be observed for all children who need it. If action taken by teacher is done with a negative message, for the child who is having difficulty or for the other children, score No.

Indicator 5.3: Must be observed during at least one group time.

Indicator 7.2: If more than one whole-group time is observed, and at least one is carried out in smaller groups, score Yes. If the max number of children in attendance is very few, then the whole group size would not need to be reduced, and this indicator would be scored Yes. "Very few" means no more than 6 three-year olds, 8 four-year olds, or 10 five-year olds; if mixed ages are present, use requirements for the age of the youngest child present in the group.

Indicator 7.3: For credit here, there can be no negative message attached to making a choice to not participate. If children do not try to leave a large group, but they are not actively engaged and the teacher does nothing to try and re-engage them or offer them the choice of leaving, then leaving is not considered an option. If all children are obviously engaged and no one wants to leave, score Yes.