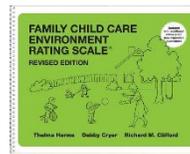
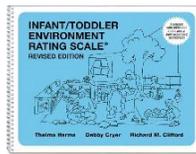


“Much of the day”

Key Points for North Carolina’s ITERS-R and FCCERS-R Assessment Process



Rationale: Young children benefit from using a variety of different materials and learning areas throughout the day. Varied experiences help children learn about their world. Adults can create environments that support exploration, setting the stage for lifelong curiosity and learning, while building important developmental skills.

Much of the day (MOD) considers whether each child has access to the various types of required materials/activities when they are awake and able to play, without any long lapses in being able to use materials (e.g., 20 minutes or more when children are not involved in routine care activities). This term is defined on page 7 of the ITERS-R and applies to 10 items. It is defined on page 10 of the FCCERS-R and applies to 11 items.

Which items include requirements related to access for much of the day?

	Items and materials, furnishings, or activities required*	Items and materials, furnishings, activities required*
ITERS-R	Item 3 - Soft toys, cozy area	Item 3 - Soft toys, soft furnishings
	Item 14 - Books	Item 6 - Space for privacy
	Item 15 - Fine motor materials	Item 15 - Books
	Item 16 - Indoor space for active physical play	Item 16 - Fine motor materials
	Item 18 - Music materials	Item 17 - Art materials
	Item 19 - Blocks and accessories	Item 18 - Music materials
	Item 20 - Dolls, soft animals, other dramatic play materials	Item 19 - Blocks and accessories
	Item 26 - Peer interactions	Item 20 - Dramatic play materials
	Item 29 - Play activities	Item 21 - Math materials
	Item 30 - Free play indoors and outdoors	Item 22 - Nature/science materials
		Item 32 - Free play indoors and outdoors

*Check the scale(s) to see the specific numbers and types of materials required for different age groups, when applicable, and at each quality levels for these items.

Notice that the MOD requirements describe times when access is prevented, rather than specifying a certain amount of time access is needed.

This means that access to different types of materials occurs not only for most of the day, but also almost all the time that children are awake and ready to play. MOD requirements apply to each child in the group. Make sure that all children have similar, positive experiences throughout the entire day. This includes any secondary spaces used at different times of the day too, such as opening and closing rooms.

Below are positive practices to be aware of along with red flags to avoid:

- ✓ All children use different materials throughout the day when they are awake and able to play, without any long individual transitions or times without materials. They are encouraged to use, look at, or reach for different types of toys.
- ✓ Non-mobile children are moved regularly and do not stay in the same spot or a seating device for a long period. Mobile children can move about freely.
- ✓ Group transitions, if used, are quick and there are materials for children to use while waiting. Rotating the items helps interest remain high.
- ✓ Small or large group activities such as circle time, are not more than 20 minutes long. Participation is based on individual children's interest.
- ✓ All children experience positive interactions and facilitation as they use materials. Upset children are comforted and then allowed to play once they are ready.
- ✗ Materials are limited in some or most areas so there is not a wide variety of age-appropriate materials for children's use.
- ✗ Children stay in furnishings such as exersaucers, swings, highchairs, or bouncy seats for long periods of time. Even if children are quiet, they should have a steady variety of experiences.
- ✗ Non-mobile children are not provided with many materials or are given the same toys over and over.
- ✗ Mobile children must stay in the same play area for long periods of time. Some play areas are often closed, or certain materials are not usually accessible.
- ✗ There are lengthy individual or group transitions when children wait with nothing to do or only very limited materials.
- ✗ Small and/or large group activities with expected participation are more than 20 minutes.

Beyond offering access, how adults facilitate play and the use of materials is key for all children. Warm interactions that scaffold children's development and interests indicate strong relationships are in place, thus leading to individualized, stimulating experiences every day.

Access to materials for children of different ages or abilities

There are many types of required materials, but there are also many options within each type. This means that children's environments should look different based on their ages, developmental needs, and interests. Generally, access means that there are materials stored or arranged in such a way that it is easy for children to use them. Low shelves that are not too crowded, open bins, and containers that are easy to move closer to non-mobile children are indications that children's access to materials is a priority. But children's actual experiences determine whether furnishings and materials are truly accessible.

Mobile children learn and develop skills when they are free to explore their environment and are allowed to move and play in different areas with the materials they choose. When mobile children are not allowed to move freely for a long period(s) during transitions or group activities, this will not meet requirements for access for much of the day. Other than routine care such as meals, diaper changes, or naps, mobile children should not have long periods of time without access to the required materials (e.g., being required to stay in the block area before lunch, a long whole group or transition time, being placed in exersaucers when they can move independently, etc.).



Non-mobile children rely on adults to bring the materials and experiences to them. When this does not occur and especially when confined in some type of equipment like a bouncy seat or swing, this has the potential to limit access to different materials over time more so than being on the floor near materials where the child can begin to reach and move freely as skills develop. Location matters: when materials are stored in different areas and are not brought to a non-mobile child or the child is not taken to that area, access is not provided.

Awareness is required to ensure that non-mobile children have a sufficient variety of toys and activities during the day. Younger infants typically require more routine care during the day which can mean there is less time for play. But, when the children are awake and ready to explore, adults can take advantage of opportunities for learning and interaction by providing a variety of materials and experiences. When adults are keenly aware of each child's developmental needs and individual preferences they notice when the babies become bored with a toy or area. Children show many behavioral cues; just because an infant is not crying or fussing does not mean that the child is actively engaged with his or her environment.

Non-mobile children do not need to have access to all the materials at the same time. For example, young infants do not need to be surrounded by large amounts of materials. Instead think about the various materials and what is offered in terms of meeting children's needs and offering different levels and types of activity. Then plan to offer different materials at different times (for non-mobile children) so that across a morning or afternoon, experiences occur with all types of items.



How assessors determine if materials are accessible for much of the day

The timing and sequence of the observed activities and events are the main consideration. Assessors document the timing of events throughout the assessment, including how children spend their time. They will note the length of group times, transitions, and play times. Additionally, when there are non-mobile children, they keep up with where each child spends time, for how long, and what materials are offered or used with the child and what play areas they are brought to.

Tip: If teachers wonder whether MOD requirements are being met, they can do the same thing as assessors by writing down a child's individual schedule as it occurs. It can be surprising to find out how long a group or transition time really lasts or how long one child stayed in the swing without fussing.



During the interview, the teacher is asked to describe what activities and routines typically occur before the observation began and after it ended. When other staff take care of the children in the early mornings or afternoons, they will also be interviewed to find out about the typical activities and locations for those specific times.



Tip: If other adults take care of the children at different times, do not assume everyone is doing things the same. There are likely to be good ideas to share, but it is also important to make sure there are not lengthy group times. Make sure everyone understands expectations for access to materials for much of the day.

The daily schedule is used only as a reference to consider whether observed and reported events reflect a typical day. Observed and reported times are used for scoring.

Tip: The schedule will likely change as children grow and develop over the year. Updating the schedule to reflect current situations can help verify that children experience a consistent routine and there are not any long periods of time when access to materials is restricted.



Do all the materials need to be in the gross motor room or outside?

Ideally children will have access to interesting and varied materials during all types of play times. However, during gross motor times it is fine to concentrate on gross motor materials and active physical play options. Unless children are in a gross motor space (gym and/or outdoor play area) for more than 1/3 of the operating day, the materials typically required indoors are not expected, although it is always a positive option to add variety to these times as well.

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References

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