Thinking More about Interaction

ITERS-3

Purpose: This document addresses many of the requirements found in the Interaction subscale. The focus is primarily on indicators at the 3, 5, and 7 level. It is important to review each item entirely to ensure that no indicator at the 1, or "inadequate," level applies. Answering the questions and referring to the ITERS-3 will build familiarity with requirements, while reflecting on current practices and situations.

Preparation: Refer to the ITERS-3 (spiral binding on the top, published in 2017) when completing the questions. To better understand the scale format and structure, review the Scoring System on page 11. It will also be helpful to refer to a copy of the most current NC Additional Notes (available at ncrlap.org). There are many questions, so completing them all will likely take several reflection/review sessions.

These items consider the many ways in which adults interact with children to promote safety, learning, and close relationships. Positive and supportive responses to children's verbal and non-verbal cues during routines, free play, small and large group activities, including both planned and spontaneous times, promote social and cognitive development. Modeling and encouraging positive social behaviors build the foundation of children's social and emotional skills.

Tips:
- If you are confused about a question, look at the Item in the ITERS-3 and check any Notes for Clarification and/or NC Additional Notes to identify the specific indicator and requirement to which it refers.
- Describe current practices when answering questions. Remember, this is not about a "right answer," but rather a way to build understanding about what occurs every day.
- Using the worksheet on an ongoing basis can help verify that children experience enriching, positive, and age-appropriate language and interactions. Additionally, this process emphasizes how interactions, social communication, responsive teaching, and guidance contribute to positive relationships for all children.
- Answering the questions with someone else (co-teachers, administrators, technical assistance specialists, health consultants, etc.) promotes sharing of perspectives and may draw attention to different details.

Date(s) completed: _____ Classroom name/age group: _____

Worksheet completed by: _____

Item 25 Supervision of gross motor play (p. 64-65)

Answer the following questions with gross motor/active play in mind. Supervision of other types of play are considered in the next item. Indoor gross motor play can occur in open areas of the classroom, or in another indoor space.

Are children provided with space to move freely, indoors and outdoors (e.g., no extended use of bouncy seats, exersaucers, swings, or boppy pillows; no long sedentary activities at a table)? **Y / N**

Do teachers supervise gross motor play to ensure children's safety? **Y / N**

Are all interactions responsive and positive as children engage in active play? **Y / N**

Describe interactions between adults and children during gross motor play: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are all areas of the gross motor space(s) indoors and outdoors easy to supervise? **Y / N**

> Does outdoor play occur every day during the observation period, weather permitting? **Hint**: The observation period is defined on p. 9 and weather permitting on p. 13 of the ITERS-3. **Y / N**
> If the weather prevents outdoor play, do children have opportunities for gross motor play indoors? **Y / N** If **yes**, how does this occur: _____
> _____
> _____

Do teachers frequently encourage children to engage in gross motor play? **Y / N** If **yes**, think about opportunities for large muscle movement, indoors and outdoors, and list recent examples:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are children encouraged to practice new gross motor skills? **Y / N** If **yes**, list recent examples:
_____
_____
_____

Item 26 Supervision of play and learning (non-gross motor) (p. 66-67)

Consider the following related to supervision. Check any conditions that present challenges and think about how supervision practices can be adapted to prevent longer lapses in supervision of the children:

☐ Areas of the classroom that may be difficult to visually supervise

☐ Any times teachers have to turn their backs to children, for example to complete routine care or access materials or supplies

☐ Times when one teacher works alone with the group of children

Describe any checked items: _____

_____

_____

Do teachers initiate activities or experiences during children's play? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe two recent examples that included educational experiences for the children: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What happens when a conflict or minor problem occurs? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does this include providing comfort and support as needed? **Y / N**

What happens when children are having difficulty becoming engaged or using materials? _____

_____

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_____

_____

Are there ways supervision is individualized, to match children's different activity/developmental levels and social skills? **Y / N**

During routine care, is there one or more other staff who supervise children while they play? **Y / N**

Item 27 Peer interaction (p. 68-69)

Think about the current social skills of the children in your group. Check the situation that best applies. This group:

☐ Plays well together and is mostly skilled at navigating conflict

☐ Mostly plays well but one or two children still need frequent support with conflicts

☐ Mostly plays well but when conflicts occur, many children need regular support from a teacher

☐ Is still learning how to navigate play and needs higher levels of supervision and support to promote positive social interactions and joint play

Does the schedule provide opportunities for positive social interactions between children for most of the day? **Y / N** If **yes**, how are children's interactions with each other encouraged? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Is there also a balance so children are protected as needed (non-mobile children protected from mobile children, opportunities and space to play alone, etc.)? **Y / N**

Think of a recent conflict between children. Describe how teachers encouraged positive choices and assisted children with solving the problem: _____

_____

_____

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_____

Do these responses encourage appropriate interactions and behavior (e.g., tell them what to do, instead of what not to do)? **Y / N**

> Do teachers talk about children's actions and feelings (describe and model gentle hands, point out facial expressions, point out positive social choices, etc.)? **Y / N**

> Do teachers act to prevent problems and regularly point out positive social behavior between children? **Y / N**

Are there ways teachers model positive social interactions? **Y / N** If **yes**, list some recent examples: _____

_____

_____

_____

Item 28 Staff-child interaction (p. 70-71)

Think about how teachers interact with the children, verbally and non-verbally, including during positive, challenging, and neutral situations:

> Do interactions with all children include enthusiasm, affection, and/or appreciation? **Y / N**

> Do these types of interactions occur frequently throughout the day? **Y / N**

Are there times when teacher(s) need to shift focus away from children to work on other tasks in the room (e.g., setting up the next activity, preparing for routines like snacks or nap)? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe plans to ensure that interactions with the children can still occur while this takes place:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are children and adults relaxed and interested in activities/play most of the time? **Y / N**

Are responses to strong emotions sympathetic and respectful, even when the feelings occur during challenging behaviors? **Y / N**

Describe a recent interaction with a child who was angry or upset: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do interactions with children include playfulness and gentle humor? **Y / N** If **yes**, in what ways does this occur? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do positive, individualized interactions occur often for each child in the group? **Y / N**

Are there times teachers respond to non-verbal cues from children? **Hint:** See the Notes for Clarification for indicator 7.2 for examples. **Y / N** If **yes**, describe a recent example: _____

_____

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_____

Item 29 Proving physical warmth/touch (p. 72-73)

Do teachers engage in regular positive physical contact with children (e.g., hugging, holding, patting, or other close physical contact)? **Y / N** If **yes**, check all that apply:

☐ Appropriate/supportive physical contact during routine care (feeding, diapering, arrival/departure)
☐ Adults positioned for child-initiated physical contact (e.g., close to and on child's level)
☐ Warm and supportive contact during play and learning
☐ No long periods where the teacher is unavailable to children for physical contact

Describe ways physical contact is used to show warmth to children:

_____

_____

_____

_____

What happens when children engage in negative/unwanted physical contact with each other, even accidentally? _____

_____

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_____

Are there ways the children are encouraged to engage in gentle, friendly physical contact with one another? **Y / N** If **yes**, when and how does this occur: _____
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_____
_____
_____

Is physical contact with the children varied to match their moods and preferences? **Hint**: See indicator 7.2 for examples. **Y / N**

Item 30 Guiding children's behavior (p. 74-75)

Are expectations for children's behavior adjusted based on their age and developmental levels? **Y / N**

When addressing challenging or unwanted behaviors, are staff consistently positive and supportive? **Y / N** Describe common guidance strategies: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are reasons for rules explained to children? **Y / N** If **yes**, list recent examples: _____
_____
_____
_____

Describe two recent examples of teachers pointing out the relationships between a child's actions and another child's response (positive or negative). **Hint**: See indicator 7.1 for examples: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are children guided to begin to use communication when problems arise, as appropriate, during conflicts or challenging situations? **Y / N** If **yes**, list a few recent examples:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
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_____

Reflection for future planning: After completing this worksheet, it can be helpful to go back and think more about the answers. Were there any questions that were answered "no" instead of "yes"? Were there any questions where you struggled to provide written examples, or where the specific interactions considered do not occur daily, throughout the day? If so, this could help identify areas to work on. It can also be helpful to break bigger topics into smaller steps so that changes and progress can be easily recognized. Hopefully, this worksheet was a helpful tool in an ongoing self-study practice and will be useful in continuing with an action plan after completing the reflection questions below.

List areas where strengths were noted in interactions:

_____
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_____
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List areas where improvements could be made or there are new ideas to think about:

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Are there any issues you will work to change right away? Describe how so:

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Are there issue that will take more time to change? What were these and what resources/support may be needed?

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Want to find out more?

Not all ITERS-3 indicators are covered in this worksheet, so review the ITERS-3 carefully and seek out other resources, as needed, since relying on these questions alone to prepare for an assessment will not be sufficient. We encourage you to review other resources on the ncrlap.org website to stay informed about any updates and to continue to build your understanding of the ITERS-3 and the assessment process.

Register for free online training webinars. Some are live webinars; others are pre-recorded and offer training credits (contact hours). Call 1-866-362-7527 or register online at ncrlap.org.

Look for general information about the assessment process and specific ITERS-3 resources. These resources may offer ideas about what to focus on or to supplement ideas you were already considering. Check out the answers to the Frequently Asked Questions or send a new question to ncrlap@uncg.edu

When planning for program enhancement, always consider the unique features of the classroom and facility such as ages and abilities of the children enrolled, the number of teachers in the classroom, and overall goals and/or philosophy. Programs may also seek advice from their DCDEE Child Care Consultant, local CCR&R and/or Smart Start Partnership TA Specialists, a Child Care Health Consultant, or other child care agencies.

References:

Harms, T., Cryer, D., Clifford, R., & Yazejian, N. (2017). Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale. (Third Edition). New York, NY. Teachers College Press.

NC Additional Notes (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.ncrlap.org.