

Wisconsin Interpretation

GROUP CENTERS – ECERS-R

1/8/2016

As technical assistance occurs in child care programs, it is important for YoungStar Technical Consultants, providers, and other trainers/technical assistance providers to provide information on what the ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, or SACERS-U tools will be looking at, and also what the intent is of the ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, or SACERS-U observation.

The Wisconsin Interpretations are given precedence when the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and Wisconsin licensing regulations are determined to be in contrast to each other at the 1 (inadequate), 3 (minimal) or 5 (good) levels of the indicators for the specific items of the ERS. The Wisconsin Interpretation Explanation section following the ERS items and specific indicators has the explanations for the Wisconsin Interpretations.

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - Revised (ECERS-R)

Hand washing will be scored as intended by the authors*. Twenty seconds minimal for hand washing and staff hand washing should occur prior to diapering. *See Items 10, 12, and 13.

“Keep out of the Reach of Children” will be scored as intended by the authors (requiring that these materials are locked away).

For Weather Permitting: Means 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.

Note: Language refers to “inclement weather” but does not provide any definition of it. Licensing rule is that children (preschool age) go outdoors as long as the “real feel” temperature is 0 degrees or more, with a 5 – 10 degree variance (so if they report that they go outside if it is 10 degrees or warmer, they are given credit). So it has always scored using the licensing rule as the definition of inclement weather (plus, of course, rain or heat index, etc.). “Weather permitting” and “inclement weather” are interchangeable since each is used in the tools.

Minimum Indoor Temperature

Item 1, Indicators 1.2 and 3.2 (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, and SACERS-U)

1.2 Lacks adequate temperature control.

3.2 Adequate temperature control.

The ERS tools require that the spaces or rooms used by children must be kept at a comfortable temperature. Wisconsin licensing rules require that the inside temperature may not be less than 67°F in all indoor spaces. “Indoor spaces” refers to all spaces served by the building’s ventilation system (heating and/or air conditioning). Since sensitivity to room temperature varies greatly, the adequacy of the room temperature will be judged based on how comfortable the children and adults appear to be. The temperature will only be checked if the children and/or staff indicate discomfort based on the room temperature.

Item 7. Space for gross motor play.

1.2 Gross motor space is very dangerous (Ex. Access requires long walk on busy street; same space used for play and parking lot; unfenced area for preschoolers).

When scoring ECERS-R 1.2, *NA (Not applicable) is permitted.* See Explanation.

AND

3.2 Gross motor space is generally safe. (Ex. Sufficient cushioning under climbing equipment; fenced in outdoor area).

When scoring ECERS-R 3.2, *NA (Not applicable) is permitted.* See Explanation.

Item 14. Safety practices.

1.2 Several hazards that could result in serious injury outdoors.

When scoring ECERS-R 1.2, *NA (not applicable) is permitted.* See Explanation.

AND

3.1 No major safety hazards indoors or outdoors.

When scoring ECERS-R 3.1, *NA (Not applicable) is permitted.* See Explanation.

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EXPLANATION: From December 1 to March 31, if children do not use outdoor equipment with platforms over 18 inches tall, insufficient cushioning will not be cited as a safety hazard when scoring this indicator. Formal Raters will not cite insufficient cushioning as a safety hazard if they have observed the program at times when children are not present because they would be unable to know if the children use the equipment with platforms over 18 inches tall.

Rationale: Accumulated snow does not provide adequate cushioning to protect against head injuries. Additionally, surface types such as loose-fill cushioning (wood mulch and rubber mulch), sand, pea gravel, and poured-in-place cushioning can freeze and lose their shock absorbency in winter/cold weather. Children can be permitted to use other equipment that does not require a cushioned fall surface. Other safety hazards in the gross motor space may still be cited as a safety hazard when scoring this indicator.

Note: For programs with fenced gross motor areas. When snow is cleared/moved and piled next to the fence, it can reduce the effective height of the fence. Licensing requires that fences are 48 inches high. Fence height should be considered when deciding where cleared snow will be placed, so that the required fence height can be maintained. Reduced fence height will be cited as a safety hazard.

Item 9. Greeting/departing.

5.3 Parents greeted warmly by staff. When scoring ECERS-R 5.3, *NA (Not applicable) is permitted.*
See Notes for Clarification.

AND

7.3 Staff uses greeting and departure as information sharing time with parents.

When scoring ECERS-R 7.3, *NA (Not applicable) is permitted.* See Notes for Clarification.

ECERS-R NOTES FOR CLARIFICATION: *NA permitted* is allowed if children are not brought to the program by their parents. 1.3 and 3.3 can be answered with asking the question of “Could you

describe what happens each day when the children and parents arrive and leave?" Observation of greeting and departure of each child in the class is not required to score the items. Scores can be based on greetings and or departures observed and information generalized to come to a scoring decision.

1.3 Parents are not allowed to bring children into the classroom.

3.3 Parents allowed to bring children into the classroom.

This indicator does NOT require that all parents bring their children into the classroom, but that they are allowed to do so any time they wish. There can be nothing preventing this practice.

Items 10, 12 and 13 specific to hand washing. See Explanation.

Item 10. Meals/snacks.

1.3 Sanitary conditions not usually maintained.

3.3 Sanitary conditions usually maintained.

Item 12. Toileting/diapering.

1.3 Hand washing often neglected by staff or children after toileting/diapering.

3.3 Staff and children wash hands most of the time after toileting.

Item 13. Health practices.

1.1 Staff usually do not act to cut down on the spread of germs.

3.1 Adequate hand washing by staff and children takes place after wiping noses, after handling animals, or when otherwise soiled.

7.1 Children taught to manage health practices independently.

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EXPLANATION: Wisconsin Licensing Rules: Disinfecting hand sanitizers may not replace the use of soap and water when washing hands. Staff and children will need to use water and soap or soap and water-based wet wipes. Disinfecting hand sanitizers are not allowed.

Item 12. Toileting/diapering.

In this case the goal of the item 12 (page 28) Toileting/diapering is to "minimize the spread of germs in the early childhood classroom." (*All About ECERS-R*, page 111).

The quality indicators identified within this item begin with the indicator 1.1: Sanitary conditions of area are not maintained (Ex. Toilet/sinks dirty; diapering table/potty chairs not sanitized after each use, toilets rarely flushed).

Within the Notes for Clarification (page 29) - in the ECERS-R tool 1.1 indicates " If the same sink is used by either children or adults for both diapering/toileting and food-related routines (including tooth brushing) or for other purposes (to wash toys/other classroom equipment; after wiping nose), it must be sanitized by spraying sink and faucets with a bleach solution after diapering/toileting use. As an exception to this rule, in order to avoid requiring children to wash hands in quick succession between toileting and being fed, the following applies: if children use toilet, wash hands and then immediately sit down for meal/snack, contamination of children's hands at toileting sink must be minimized by having children/adults turn off faucet with paper towel.

Further additional information in the *All About ECERS-R* page 112 indicates: If the same sink is used by either children or adults for both diapering/toileting and food-related routines (including brushing teeth) or for other purposes (for example, to wash toys or other classroom equipment), it must be sanitized after diaper/toileting use by spraying the sinks and faucets with a bleach solution. All use of the sink for one purpose can be completed before the sink needs to be sanitized for another use.

Item 11. Nap.

1.2 Nap/rest provisions unsanitary (Ex. Crowded area, dirty sheets, different children use same bedding).

AND

3.2 Healthful provisions for nap/rest. (Ex. Area not crowded, clean bedding).
(Cots/mats are at least 18 inches apart, unless separated by a solid barrier.)

Wisconsin Interpretation

EXPLANATION: Wisconsin Licensing Rules – Each child who has a nap or rest period shall be provided with an individual bed, cot, sleeping bag, 2-inch thick mat, crib or playpen, which is placed at least 2 feet from the next sleeping child. Cribs or cots must have a solid partition separating children and an aisle not less than 2 feet in width is maintained between cribs and cots. Cribs or cots may be placed end-to-end if a solid partition separates children (does not need to be extended from floor to ceiling) and an aisle not less than 2 feet in width is maintained between cribs and cots. Solid screens or other barriers, such as crib ends or toy shelves that extend from floor to ceiling are not required, however, there must still be a solid partition separating children.

When scoring the ECERS-R, 1.2 will be scored as NO. 3.2 will be scored as YES.

Over-the-Counter Medications/Sunscreen/Bug Spray Hand Lotion.

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For the purposes of YoungStar, the Wisconsin Licensing Rules will apply to over-the-counter medications as written in the Wisconsin Licensing Rules 250, 251, 252, 202.

Wisconsin Licensing Rules: Center staff may give prescription or non-prescription medication, such as pain relievers, teething gels or cough syrup, to a child only under the following conditions:

- a written authorization that includes the child's name and birthdate,
- name of medication,
- administration instructions,
- medication intervals and
- length of the authorization dated and signed by the parent is on file.

Blanket authorizations that exceed the length of time specified on the label are prohibited. The center may develop its own form or may accept a written authorization from the parent in the form of a note, but either format must include the child's name and date of birth, the name of the medication and administration instructions, the medication interval and the length of the authorization and it must be signed and dated by the parent. The parent's authorization may not exceed the time specified on the label of the medication (usually 7 – 10 days). Sunscreen and insect repellent may only be applied upon the written authorization of the parent. All medications shall be stored so that they are not accessible to children. **"Keep out of the Reach of Children" will be scored as intended by the authors as locked away.**

Final determination of any Wisconsin modified scoring must continue to meet all Wisconsin licensing and certification health and safety standards.

Notes

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