

## Wisconsin Interpretations

### GROUP CENTERS – ITERS-R

1/22/20

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.

### Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ITERS-R)

**Hand washing will be scored as intended by the authors.\* Twenty seconds minimal for hand washing. Staff hand washing should occur prior to diapering.**

**\*See Items, 7, 9 and 10.**

**Although a change to the diapering procedures has been made to the Notes for Clarification on the ERSI website, that change will not be implemented for scoring YoungStar formal ratings.**

**“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, or 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 6. Greeting/departing.

1.3 At greeting/departing times, parents rarely enter area used for child's care. *NA permitted.*

**AND**

3.3 Parents bring child into caregiving area as part of daily routine. *NA permitted.*

ITERS-R NOTES FOR CLARIFICATION: *NA permitted* is allowed in programs where the children are regularly transported to and from the center, by center transportation (children are not brought to the program by their parents).

**Items 7, 9, and 10 specific to hand washing. See Explanation.**

Item 7. Meals/snacks.

1.3 Basic sanitary procedures usually neglected.

3.3 Basic sanitary procedures maintained at least half of the time.

5.3 Basic sanitary procedures usually practiced, with only a few lapses.

Item 9. Toileting/diapering.

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

3.3 Staff and children usually wash hands after diapering/toileting

Item 10. Health practices.

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

3.2 Hands of children and staff washed at least 75% of the time when needed to protect health.

5.2 Hands of children and staff consistently washing to protect health.

7.1 Children encouraged to manage health practices independently.

HANDWASHING WI INTERPRETATION 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 7. Meals/snacks

1.3 Basic sanitary procedures usually neglected.

3.3 Basic sanitary procedures maintained at least half of the time.

5.3 Basic sanitary procedures usually practiced, with only a few lapses.

Wisconsin Interpretation

EXPLANATION: In the Notes for Clarification: 1.3, 3.3, 5.3, under the bullet "Sinks used for food preparation should be used for no other purposes (e.g. not handwashing or diaper changing clean-up). If the same sink must be used for different purposes, it must be sanitized before food-related use. Wisconsin Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers with Commentary 251.09(4)(b) **does not allow for the same sink to be used for different purposes.** Each self-

contained classroom or area serving infants or toddlers who are diapered shall have a sink with hot and cold running water which is **not** used for food preparation or dishwashing within the room or area.

Item 8. Nap.

1.1 Provisions for nap/rest not appropriate. (Ex. too early or too late; crowded area; sleeping children disturbed by loud noise, bright lights, or other children ; young infants put to sleep on stomach; soft pillows used with infants; infant’s head covered).

**AND**

3.2 Healthful provisions for nap/rest. (Ex. Cribs/cots/mats at least 36 inches apart unless separated by a solid barrier; clean bedding for each child.)

ITERS-R ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR CLARIFICATION: For infants under one year of age, no blankets should be placed in the crib. Caring for Our Children, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition now requires 3 feet between cots, mats or cribs.

When scoring the ITERS-R, 1.1 will be scored as “NO” and 3.2 will be scored as “YES” as long as cots/mats/cribs are spaced at least 2 feet apart. 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. Additionally, 1.1 will be scored “NO” and 3.2 will be scored “YES” as long as blanket use follows the Wisconsin Interpretation.

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.

The licensing rules require a sheet and blanket or a sleeping bag. Each sleep linen (sheets, blankets, etc.) shall be assigned to a child and shall be used only by that child while he/she is enrolled in the facility. Children may share bedding if it has been laundered between uses by the different children. Each mat, cot, or crib mattress shall be covered with the child’s individual sheet for exclusive use by that child. No child shall sleep on a bare uncovered surface. Seasonally appropriate covering such as sheets or blankets that are sufficient to maintain adequate warmth shall be available and shall be used by each child. Cots and sleeping bags and two-inch thick mats, shall be long enough so the child’s head or feet do not rest off the pad. A sleeping bag is a bag that is closed or capable of being closed on three sides. Sleeping bags may be provided by the center or the parent.

A child under one year of age may not sleep in a crib or playpen that contains soft or loose materials, including sheepskins, pillows, blankets, flat sheets, bumper pads, bibs, and pacifiers with attached soft objects or stuffed animals. No blankets or other items may be hung on the sides of a crib or playpen. (State of Wisconsin, Department of Children and Families, Clearinghouse Rule 19-089, Section 308, DCF 251.09 (1) (L) [amended].

## WISCONSIN INTERPRETATION

DEFINITION OF CRIB: Wisconsin licensing definition: Crib means a bed for an infant or young child that is enclosed on four sides including playpens and portable cribs. Pack N Plays will meet the criteria for crib.

- *Source: If portable cribs and those that are not full size are substituted for regular full-sized cribs, they must be maintained in the condition that meets the ASTM Standard F1822-97 Consumer Safety Specification for Non-Full-Size Baby Cribs. Portable cribs are designed so they may be folded or collapsed, with or without disassembly. Although portable cribs are not designed to withstand the wear and tear of normal full-sized cribs, they may provide more flexibility for programs that vary the number of infants in care from time to time. Standard 5.145, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.*

Safety standards document that cribs used in facilities should be made of wood, metal, or plastic. Crib slats should be spaced no more than two and three-eighths inches apart, with a firm mattress that is fitted so that no more than two fingers can fit between the mattress and the crib side in the lowest position. The minimum height from the top of the mattress to the top of the crib rail should be twenty inches in the highest position. Cribs with drop sides should not be used. The crib should not have corner post extensions (over one-sixteenth inch). The crib should have not cutout openings in the headboard or footboard structure in which a child's head could become entrapped. The mattress support system should not be easily dislodged from any point of the crib by an upward force from underneath the crib. All cribs should meet the STM F1169-10a Standard Consumer Safety Specification for Full-Size Baby Cribs, F406-10b Standard Consumer Safety Specification for Non-Full-Size Baby Cribs/Play Yards, or the CPSC 16 CFR 1219, 1220, and 1500 – Safety Standards for Full-Size Baby Cribs and Non-Full-Size Baby Cribs; Final Rule.

### Wisconsin Interpretation

EXPLANATION: The Consumer Product Safety Commission requires that a full-size crib will have the interior dimensions of no greater than 27 3/8" to 28 5/8" (28 ± 5/8 inches) (71 ± 1.6 centimeters) in width x 52 3/8 ± 5/8 inches (133 ± 1.6 centimeters) in length. The mattress used in a full-size crib must be at least 27 1/4 inches wide x 51 1/4 inches in length with a thickness not exceeding 6 inches. The measurement of the height of the mattress and the outside edge of the mattress to the inside of the crib side will be conducted with a tape measure and not the two-finger measurement as indicated in the ERS. The measurement of the distance from the inside edge at the side of the crib to the mattress will not exceed 1 1/2" or a combined total of 1 1/2" with both sides measured (crib mattress may have moved to one side).

**Cribs/Mattresses. Since cribs with sides that drop down are no longer considered safe for children, this will be considered in both the Nap item and Safety item. See item 8 and Item 12.**

### Item 9. Toileting/diapering.

The goal of the Item 9 (page 24) Toileting/diapering is to "minimize the spread of germs in the early childhood classroom." (*All About ITERS-R*, page 107).

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

Within the Notes for Clarification (page 25) - in the ITERS-R tool 1.1 indicates " If the same sink must be used for more than diapering/toileting, faucet handles and sink should be sanitized 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 ITERS-R* page 108 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.

**NOTE:** Wisconsin Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers with Commentary 251.09(4)(b) does not allow for the above. Each self-contained classroom or area serving infants or toddlers who are diapered shall have a sink with hot and cold running water **which is not used** for food preparation or dishwashing within the room or area.

#### Item 11. Safety practices.

1.2 Four or more hazards that could result in serious injury outdoors.

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

#### **AND**

3.1 No more than 3 safety hazards that could result in serious injury indoors and outdoors, combined.

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

#### **AND**

5.1 No safety hazards that could cause serious injury indoors or outdoors.

When scoring ITERS-R 5.1, NA (Not applicable) is permitted. See Explanation.

#### Item 16. Active physical play.

1.1 No appropriate outdoor or indoor space used regularly for active physical play.

When scoring ITERS-R 1.1, NA (*Not applicable*) is permitted. See Explanation.

#### **AND**

5.5 All space and equipment is appropriate for children.

When scoring ITERS-R 5.5, NA (*Not applicable*) is permitted. See Explanation.

#### **AND**

7.1 Outdoor space has 2 or more types of surfaces permitting different types of play (ex. grass, outdoor carpet, rubber cushioning surface, decking).

When scoring ITERS-R 7.1, NA (*Not applicable*) is permitted. See Explanation.

#### Wisconsin Interpretation

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.

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

#### Wisconsin Interpretation

**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**

\*Environment Rating Scale Institute. Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Dr. Thelma Harms, Dr. Debbie Cryer, Dr. Richard Clifford.

#### **Document Revision Dates**

1/22/2020; 10/31/2018; 2/13/18; 1/8/2016; 12/14/15; 5/12/15; 2/27/15; 12/4/14; 1/9/14; 11/5/13;  
2/11/13; 10/17/11