

The Rhode Island Notes: ITERS-R 07/31/2017

BrightStars manages all of the reliable assessors for the Environmental Rating Scales. Part of this management is to ensure that all assessors remain reliable on the tools. This reliability is two-fold. First, each assessor will have a reliability check on their tenth observation. This consists of conducting an ERS in tandem with the Senior Assessment Specialist. Second, each assessor is also reliable to the pool of assessors. Together they have created the Rhode Island Notes. The Rhode Island Notes are a running record of Environment Rating Scale (ERS) consensus decisions BrightStars' reliable assessors have made following ERS-related questions or discussions. These notes support Rhode Island in having a cohesive assessment system that provides a comparable program experience regardless of the assessor who visits the program. Although these notes may be useful as reference on particular topics, The Rhode Island Notes do not replace either formal ERS reliability training or the Notes for Clarification provided by the ERS authors, and may be subject to change as the Environment Rating Scales are updated. BrightStars encourages all programs and providers who are preparing for their ERS site visit to review the tool, the tool's All About book, the tool's Notes for Clarification, and the RI Notes.

Date	Type	Item #/ Standard	Item Name	Indicator (if applicable)	Clarification notes
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Access</i>	Access does not need to be observed to give credit. Reported access is acceptable, but make sure that the required materials and variety specified in the indicator are available
2/17/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Access</i>	To give credit for "daily access" for different materials or experiences, scheduled times throughout the rest of the day can be counted if confirmed by the written schedule or during the follow up questions (this is true for all activities).
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Many & Varied</i>	Materials with dual characteristics can be counted as a material under different categories but not twice under the same category (e.g. push button piano can be counted towards Fine Motor and Music.) Consistent with past guidance and BS practice
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Much of the Day</i>	Assessors can consider "Much of the Day" within specific 3 hour spans. This is considered time sampling and can provide a good idea of what happens beyond those 3 hours. Observations can last longer than this to gather important information that has not been observed but this additional time should not be considered within the context of "Much of the Day."(Reconfirmed by CR on 1/14/15.)

2/19/2015	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Much of the Day</i>	Do not count any time after the required 3 hours for ERS observations against a program for MoD. However, note MoD issues observed after the time sample is over as a note on the report if the program would have lost credit after the 3 hour mark.
2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	Much of the Day	For group times over 20 minutes, start counting time beyond 20 minutes against much of the day even if kids are engaged. (would count off sooner if children are disengaged.)
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Much of the Day</i>	Indoor gross motor time can replace outdoor gross motor time for up to one hour <i>only</i> during periods of inclement weather. The indoor gross motor space must also meet the requirements of Item 16 - Active Physical Play, indicators 5.2 and 5.3 (aka the space must be large, uncluttered, uncrowded and have ample materials and equipment.) If an appropriate indoor space is used in bad weather but for longer than one hour, count the time beyond one hour against much of the day. If the program uses an indoor gross motor space that is inadequately equipped or uses the space during a time where the weather is "permitting", this time is considered a whole group activity and is scored as such in regard to much of the day. (Start counting against much of the day if children are not engaged or if the time lasts too long to be an appropriate group activity.)
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	<i>Much of the Day/nap</i>	Handle "much of the day" issues that may arise for toddlers the same way they are handled for infants in cribs. If children need a few minutes to settle or are allowed off their cot when they don't fall asleep, don't count this time against "Much of the Day." However, even if children are happy, they should not wait on cots or in cribs without the required materials for more than 15 minutes, because these children are "awake and ready to play." (See DC email confirming on 11/25/15.)

2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	0	General Notes	Much of the Day/nap	If children are NOT awake and ready to play, do not take off for Much of the Day for the time the child is in a crib, even if it takes them a long time to fall asleep (e.g. they are dozing but periodically fussing.) If it takes a long time and child needs support (rocking) etc. and does not receive it, address these concerns in the appropriate supervision and Nap/rest items.
2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	1	Indoor space	<i>1.3 Space is in poor repair.</i>	Major repairs that impact children's safety (based on children's age + abilities and the location) will be addressed at the 1s level. Regarding health/ safety hazards - ex: tripping on floor tiles, mouthing peeled paint is more significant than water-stained tiles.
2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	1	Indoor space	<i>3.1 Enough indoor space for children, adults, and furnishings.</i>	Cribs affect space available for play. Cribs taking up too much room might mean there is not sufficient space.
11/17/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	2	Furniture for routine care and play	<i>3.1 Enough furniture for routine care.</i>	Bags for cubbies? It is recommended that programs get appropriate cubbies that are large enough to hold children's possessions without touching. Bags provide dubious protection and must not touch one another. BS Will accept bags only if they are completely sealed
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	2	Furniture for routine care and play	<i>3.1 Enough furniture for routine care.</i>	Clean, unused diapers for different children can be stored together and touching on same shelf, bin etc.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	2	Furniture for routine care and play	<i>3.1 Enough furniture for routine care.</i>	Give credit for cubbies being sufficient even if there is minor overlap; just take off under Health practices
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	2	Furniture for routine care and play	<i>3.1 Enough furniture for routine care.</i>	If cubbies do not have "dividers", then hooks need to be far apart. Cubbies can be shared among siblings. BS will allow sharing between up to 2 siblings.
2/19/2015	ERS - ITERS-R	3	Provision for relaxation and comfort	<i>5.1 Special cozy area accessible for much of the day.</i>	As stated in the tool, cozy spaces must provide a substantial amount of softness. If multiple soft furnishings are combined and it is possible for a child to use the provided soft furnishings comfortably without having to touch any hardness (linoleum floors, cement walls etc.), the space will be considered an acceptable cozy space.
	ERS-ITERS-R	3	Provisions for relaxation and comfort	<i>5.1 Special cozy area accessible much of the day.</i>	No chairs with wooden frames. If no credit at 5.1 then no credit for 5.2
2/11/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	5	Display for children	<i>3.1 At least 3 colorful pictures and/or materials displayed where children can easily see them.</i>	Mirrors are not considered a part of display.

2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	5	Display for children	<i>5.2 Mobiles and/or other colorful hanging objects for children to look at.</i>	Items like 3D paper "lanterns" are counted as 3D display. (Please note that making these lanterns would not be considered a 3D art project.)
2/9/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	6	Greeting/ departing	<i>3.3 Parents bring child into caregiving area as part of daily routine.</i>	Although children should not be "handed over" a gate, if the main play area is gated, but parents still enter the classroom and are greeted by staff, it is not required for the parent to come all the way past the gate. (For example, staff might open the gate so children can enter the play space, or might exit the gated area to come and greet the family.)
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	6	Greeting/ departing	<i>3.3 Parents bring child into caregiving area as part of daily routine.</i>	Parents may not "drop and go." 100% of parents must enter space and hand off child while in caregiving area. (See 2/9/16 decision for additional info.)
5/11/2017	ERS-ITERS-R	7	Meals/snacks	<i>5.1 Children fed separately or in very small groups.</i>	A group of 6 is the largest number of toddlers at a table to receive credit. Appropriate group size allows for positive interactions. Groups smaller than 6 still may not meet this indicator's intent.
5/6/2015	ERS-ITERS-R	7	Meals/snacks	<i>1.4 Inappropriate feeding practices used.</i>	Take off here at 1.4 children are allowed to walk around while drinking from bottles, even if they only contain water.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	7	Meals/snacks	<i>3.1 Meal/snack schedule meets each child's needs.</i>	Infants under 9-10 months do not need to be given water if they are primarily bottle fed. Water should be given to older infants and children consuming solid food.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	8	Nap/rest	<i>1.1 Provisions for nap not appropriate. 3.1 Nap is scheduled appropriately for each child.</i>	36" is required between sleepers not between empty cribs. - BS will accept that it is actually 36 inches between cribs as long as the authors reconfirm.
4/2/2015	ERS-ITERS-R	9	Diapering/toileting	<i>3.1 Sanitary conditions are maintained at least half of the time.</i>	Staff should fold over paper after a child's diaper is removed and the child has been cleaned. If not, take off at 3.1 (or 1.1. if there are many issues or severe issues with diapering sanitation.)
3/7/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	9	Toileting/diapering	<i>3.1 Sanitary conditions maintained.</i>	Diapering procedure states one wipe per swipe. It was clarified that if the child only urinated then one wipe can be used for the cleaning as it is not as messy.
4/22/2015	ERS-ITERS-R	9	Meals/snacks	<i>3.2 Well-balanced age-appropriate food served for meals and snacks.</i>	Children must be offered water between meals - water offered with a meal does not count.

2/18/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	10	Health practices	<i>3.3 Extra clothes available and children changed when needed.</i>	Children's clothes should be changed if the child is uncomfortable or wants to be changed, or there are health concerns like feces/vomit. Also take off if children are being dressed very inappropriately for the weather.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	10	Health practices	<i>3.4 All medications administered properly.</i>	Doctor's notes not required for over-the-counter meds as long as parents give permission/instructions, and for RX, need the parental permission and original container with instructions.
6/11/2013	ERS-ITERS-R	11	Safety Practices	<i>1.1 Four or more hazards that could result in serious injury indoors 3.1 No more than 3 safety hazards that could result in serious injury indoors and outdoors combined. 5.1 No safety hazards that could cause serious injury indoors or outdoors.</i>	Safety considerations for a loft inside a classroom? Stairs are usually considered gross motor equipment and require a fall zone.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	11	Safety Practices	<i>1.1 Four or more hazards that could result in serious injury indoors. 3.1 No more than 3 safety hazards that could result in serious injury indoors and outdoors. 5.1 No safety hazards that could cause serious injury indoors or outdoors.</i>	No Styrofoam allowed because it is a choking hazard.
11/17/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	11	Safety Practices	<i>1.1 Four or more hazards that could result in serious injury indoors. 3.1 No more than 3 safety hazards that could result in serious injury indoors and outdoors combined. 5.1 No safety hazards that could cause serious injury indoors or outdoors.</i>	To determine whether secure hard eyes on a stuffed animal are a major or minor hazard, consider the age and characteristics of children using the toys and how stringent the supervision is.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	11	Safety Practices	<i>1.1 Four or more hazards that could result in serious injury indoors. 3.1 No more than 3 safety hazards that could result in serious injury indoors and outdoors combined. 5.1 No safety hazards that could cause serious injury indoors or outdoors.</i>	Apart from cushioning, there are no specific guidelines for climbing equipment up to 18" high. Assessors can take off if they observed children actually hurting themselves on equipment. Includes tripping on available equipment.

5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	11	Safety Practices	<p>1.1 Four or more hazards that could result in serious injury indoors. 3.1 No more than 3 safety hazards that could result in serious injury indoors and outdoors combined. 5.1 No safety hazards that could cause serious injury indoors or outdoors.</p>	Helmets are not required for wheeled toys
2/18/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	14	Using books	<p>3.2 Almost all books are in good repair.</p>	If a book was ripped <i>during</i> the observation and the teacher is unaware the book was just damaged <i>or</i> the teacher notices and removes the book, do not count this as a book in disrepair
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	16	Active physical play	<p>3.2 Some space for outdoor physical play used by infants/toddlers at least 3 times a week, year-round, except in very bad weather. 5.1 Easily accessible outdoor area where infants/toddlers are separated from older children is used at least 1 hour daily year-</p>	If an infant sleeps through outdoor GM, credit can still be given for access to gross motor, unless there is strong evidence that the child in question never gets to go outside.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	16	Active physical play	<p>3.2 Some space for outdoor physical play used by infants/toddlers at least 3 times a week, year-round, except in very bad weather. 5.1 Easily accessible outdoor area where infants/toddlers are separated from older children is used at least 1 hour daily year-round, except in very bad weather.</p>	There is no meaningful different between "very bad weather" and "weather permitting" in the ITERS-R. However, if the weather is frigid, the time for the outdoors could be adjusted for young infants. 5.1 requires that the program meets the full definition of weather permitting every day.
2/18/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	16	Active physical play	<p>3.3 Some appropriate materials and equipment used daily; materials/equipment generally in good repair.</p>	Some means vast majority of gross motor equipment is appropriate.
4/13/2017	ERS-ITERS-R	16	Active physical play	<p>3.3 Some appropriate materials and equipment used daily; materials/equipment generally in good repair.</p>	Some also means enough gross motor equipment/materials so that there is something for each child to use while engaged in active physical play.

	ERS-ITERS-R	16	Active physical play	<i>5.1 Easily accessible outdoor area where infants/toddlers are separated from older children is used at least 1 hour daily, year-round, except in very bad weather.</i>	See attached handout for guidance on how assessors will score access to gross motor spaces and equipment in the event that the playground is inaccessible due to extreme snow conditions.
1/12/2017	ERS-ITERS-R	17	Art	<i>3.2 All art materials used with children are non-toxic, safe and appropriate.</i>	Glitter itself is still a hazard per <i>Caring for Our Children</i> . Assessors will treat other glitter products, like glitter paint, the same way as the previous note from 02/19/16 indicates.
2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	17	Art	<i>3.2 All art materials used with children are non-toxic, safe and appropriate.</i>	As long as the material is not toxic or an obvious choking hazard (e.g. Barbasol shaving cream, pom poms, cotton balls), a material observed in use can be considered appropriate if supervised properly (e.g. if children are watched to ensure they don't eat playdoh, mouth markers etc.)
1/7/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	20	Dramatic play	<i>3.1 Some age-appropriate dramatic play materials accessible; 5.1 Many and varied age-appropriate dramatic play materials accessible daily.</i>	Small toy people would count as dolls only for toddlers. For infants we will require typical baby dolls.
2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	22	Nature/ Science	<i>5.2 Some daily experiences with living plants or animals indoors.</i>	Requires more than just having a plant or pet in classroom. Staff must point it out to children/or otherwise reference it at some point during the 3 hours. BS will give credit if incorporation of plants or pets are referenced unprompted during follow questions.
2/20/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	23	Use of TV, video, and/or computer	<i>1.3 Television, video, and/or computer used with children under 24 months of age.</i>	Do not give credit if the program mentions using technology with children under 24 months, even if its use is infrequent.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	24	Promoting acceptance of diversity	<i>3.1 At least 3 examples of racial or cultural diversity observed in materials.</i>	Contrasts in pictures do not need to be placed directly next to one another as long as the contrast can be easily viewed/experienced
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	24	Promoting acceptance of diversity	<i>5.1 Many books, pictures, and materials showing diversity.</i>	Only need 10 total examples of diverse materials in books, pictures and materials, 4 of 5 categories represented. (E.g., 7 books, 1 material and 2 pictures would suffice to give credit.)
2/18/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	24	Promoting acceptance of diversity	<i>5.1 Many books, pictures, and materials showing diversity.</i>	Small block people can be counted as a "material" for this indicator OR as dolls for 5.2 (provided they are age-appropriate) but cannot be counted for both.

1/7/2015	ERS-ITERS-R	24	Promoting acceptance of diversity	<i>5.2 Dolls representing at least 3 races accessible.</i>	Small toy people would count as dolls only for toddlers. For infants typical baby dolls (hard or soft) are required.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	26	Peer interaction	<i>1.1 Little or no appropriate peer interaction possible, 3.1 Peer interaction is possible much of the day.</i>	Credit can be given for peer interactions being possible if children are in restrictive devices as long as the device is close enough and low enough that this kind of interaction is reasonable.
2/19/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	27	Staff-child interaction	<i>3.3 No harsh verbal or physical staff-child interaction.</i>	Although staff should not generally use physical contact to restrain children, staff may physically restrain children specifically in an instance where children may be endangering themselves or other children, without automatically losing credit in this indicator. The interaction must have a negative impact on the child to take off. Consider both how the interaction was handled and how it impacted the child.
2/17/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	27	Staff-child interaction	<i>3.3 No harsh verbal or physical staff-child interaction.</i>	When considering "harshness" weigh the child's perception of the interaction first, then tone, then content. It is acceptable to use the word, "No," with young children; the scale considers the tone and impact on the child.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	27	Staff-child interaction	<i>3.3 No harsh verbal or physical staff-child interaction.</i>	Saying, "You're fine," or "You're safe" is not always dismissive - check whether the child feels reassured and quickly recovers from their upset.
5/2/2014	ERS-ITERS-R	27	Staff-child interaction	<i>3.3 No harsh verbal or physical staff-child interaction.</i>	Take off for significantly negative or unsympathetic reactions even if the issue is not with your specific staff or group (for example, other staff are negative with their students while your group is also on the playground.) This only applies in instances of significant negativity, and only during times where the groups are sharing space and supervision.
11/5/2015	ERS-ITERS-R	28	Discipline	<i>3.2 Staff usually maintain enough control to prevent problems.</i>	Must stop most major issues (75%) before children are hurt. (At 5.1 must stop all major issues.)
2/18/2016	ERS-ITERS-R	29	Schedule	<i>3.2 Staff provide play activities as part of the daily schedule.</i>	"Play activities" can include group time if play activities are included as part of the group time. This indicator does not require free play for much of the day.

