

Program Assessment Tools for Early Childhood Programs

This material was developed under a previous contract with the Office of Child Care. While these materials are up to date, the National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement plans to issue an Information Product later this year that will update and/or expand on these materials. The National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement does not endorse any non-Federal practice, organization, publication, or resource.

About Program Assessment Tools

Program assessment tools are commonly used to measure early and school-age care program quality, efficacy, and sustainability. Program assessments can be used to inform decision making on all or part of a program's services. For example, program assessments can be used as a comprehensive measure of program quality based on a variety of program components. Program assessments can also be used to measure specific child outcomes, such as early literacy skills or social-emotional growth, which are indicators of program quality related to school readiness.

In addition, program assessments are tools that programs use to support program evaluation efforts. Program evaluation is a systematic process of clearly articulating the services and desired outcomes of an intervention or program. Data tied to the program goals serve to document the quality and effectiveness of the program over time. Program evaluation can incorporate many methods of data collection, such as child assessment, observations of practice, measures of the environment, and surveys or interviews of teachers or parents. There are two different types of program evaluation:

- Formative evaluation is the ongoing documentation of a program and its impact, which is used to make adjustments and revisions to services or the intermediate goals of the program during the initial phases of program implementation.
- Summative evaluation is the final summary of the program and its impact at the end of a particular length of time. It typically measures the long-term goals or impact of the program.

The following are strategies for implementing program assessments, a sample of program assessment tools, and examples of how States are using these tools to evaluate their programs.

Key Points to Consider When Conducting Program Assessments

- Effective program evaluation depends on the clear identification of the following: (1) the goals and intended outcomes of the program; (2) the services/intervention expected to achieve the outcomes; (3) the amount or level of intervention expected to cause effects; and (4) the relevant data and how they will be collected and analyzed.
- A commonly used logic model approach takes users through this process in a step-by-step manner.
- It is important to be sure that the program has been implemented well and that the logic model—or how it intends to directly influence the expected outcomes—has been clearly defined before measuring program impact.
- When measuring the impact on children, it is important that the goals and outcomes have a logical relationship to children’s development and that children have received the services for a sufficient length of time to allow for a significant impact given the myriad of factors that affect how children develop.
- Choose measures that clearly match the purpose of the evaluation. Data gathered on individual children, when aggregated, can be used to make determinations about the efficacy of the program to help children achieve goals, assuming there is an appropriate link between the program goals and the assessment tool.
- Sampling is an effective method to determine child outcomes—it reduces staff burden and the costs associated with assessing all children.
- Stakeholders can use program evaluation results to improve the quality of services for children and families, garner public support, develop policy, and justify public funding.

Program Assessment Tools

The following table provides information about program assessment tools for different age levels and different settings. Web sites are provided for more information about the tools if available.

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
CENTER-BASED SETTINGS (BIRTH TO 5 YEARS)			
Assessment Profile for Early Childhood Programs (APECP) http://www.qassist.com/pages/research-and-evaluation	Infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Safety and health ■ Learning environment ■ Scheduling ■ Curriculum approaches ■ Interacting ■ Individualizing

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
Classroom Language and Literacy Environment Observation (CLEO) http://headstartredi.ssri.psu.edu/measures_public/implementation-quality/classroom-language-and-literacy-environment	Preschool	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Literacy environment inventory ■ Language interaction observation ■ Language interaction ratings ■ Literacy activities inventory ■ Literacy activities rating scale
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Extension (ECERS-E)	Preschool classrooms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Literacy ■ Mathematics ■ Science ■ Diversity
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised Edition (ECERS-R) http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/	Toddler and preschool classrooms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Space and furnishings ■ Personal care routines ■ Language-reasoning activities ■ Interaction ■ Program structure ■ Parents and staff
Supports for Early Literacy Assessment (SELA)	Preschool	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The literate environment ■ Language development ■ Knowledge of print/book concepts ■ Phonological awareness ■ Letters and words ■ Parent involvement ■ Developmentally appropriate practice ■ Bilingual and non-English speaking children

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
Supports for Social-Emotional Growth Assessment (SSEGA)	Preschool	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General classroom environment and routines ■ Supportive teacher–child relationships ■ Support for emotional self-regulation ■ Support for children’s positive social behavior ■ Support for children’s social understandings ■ Parent involvement ■ Program identity and support for children with special needs
The Preschool Classroom Implementation Rating Scale (PCI)	Preschool or kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Room arrangements ■ Daily routines ■ Planning time ■ Work time/free play ■ Clean-up time ■ Recall time ■ Small-group time ■ Outside time ■ Circle time ■ Teacher/Child interactions ■ Classroom management and organization ■ Team evaluation and planning

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND FAMILY, FRIEND, AND NEIGHBOR CARE SETTINGS			
Assessment Profile for Family Child Care Homes (APFCCH) http://www.qassist.com/pages/research-and-evaluation	Information not available	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learning environment ■ Scheduling ■ Curriculum methods ■ Interacting ■ Individualizing
Child/Home Early Language and Literacy Observation (CHELLO) http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/neuman-chello/index.htm	Mixed-age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Literacy environmental checklist ■ Group/Family observation ■ Provider interview
Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale – Revised Edition (FCCERS-R) http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/	Birth to school age	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Space and furnishings ■ Personal care routines ■ Listening and talking ■ Activities ■ Interaction ■ Program structure ■ Parents and providers
The Child Care Assessment Tool for Relatives (CCAT-R)	Birth to age 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developmental domains ■ Behavior ■ Parent relationships

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas	
The Child Care HOME Inventories (CC-HOME)	Birth to age 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Infant/Toddler ■ Caregiver responsiveness ■ Acceptance ■ Organization ■ Learning materials ■ Caregiver involvement ■ Variety of stimulation ■ Preschool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learning materials ■ Language stimulation ■ Physical environment ■ Caregiver responsiveness ■ Academic stimulation ■ Modeling of social maturity ■ Variety of experience ■ Acceptance of child
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION				
Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care (BAS) http://cecl.nl.edu/evaluation/bas.htm	Family child care homes that serve various ages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Qualifications and professional development ■ Income and benefits ■ Work environment ■ Fiscal management ■ Recordkeeping ■ Risk management ■ Provider-parent communication ■ Community resources ■ Marketing and public relations ■ Provider as employer 	

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
<p>Child Development Program Evaluation Scale (CDPES) http://ecti.hbg.psu.edu/docs/publication/ChildDev_ProgEvalScale_Fiene.pdf</p>	<p>Infants, toddlers, preschool, and school age Information on settings not available</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Administration ■ Environmental safety ■ Child development curriculum ■ Health services ■ Nutritional services ■ Social services ■ Transportation
<p>Preschool Program Quality Assessment, 2nd Edition (PQA) http://www.highscope.org/file/PDFs/PQAAdminManual_sample.pdf</p>	<p>Center-based preschool settings</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Classroom ■ Learning environment ■ Daily routine ■ Adult–child interaction ■ Curriculum planning and assessment ■ Agency ■ Parent involvement and family services ■ Staff qualifications and staff development ■ Program management

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
Program Administration Scale (PAS) http://cecl.nl.edu/evaluation/pas.htm	Center-based or prekindergarten programs in elementary schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Human resources development ■ Personnel cost and allocation ■ Center operations ■ Child assessment ■ Fiscal management ■ Family partnerships ■ Program planning and evaluation ■ Marketing and public relations ■ Technology ■ Staff qualifications
INFANT AND TODDLER CARE SETTINGS			
Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale – Revised Edition (ITERS-R) http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/	Infants and toddlers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Space and furnishings ■ Personal care routines ■ Language-reasoning activities ■ Interaction ■ Program structure ■ Parents and staff
Program for Infant/Toddler Care Program Assessment (PITC PARS)	Infants and toddlers (birth to age 3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality of caregivers’ interaction with infants ■ Family partnerships, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion of children with disabilities and other special needs ■ Relationship-based care ■ Physical environment ■ Routines and record keeping

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
SCHOOL-AGE CARE SETTINGS			
Assessment of Practices in Early Elementary Classrooms (APEEC)	Kindergarten to grade 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Physical environment ■ Instructional context ■ Social context
Ready School Assessment (RSA) http://www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=118	Prekindergarten programs in elementary settings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leaders and leadership ■ Transitions ■ Teacher supports ■ Engaging environments ■ Effective curricula ■ Family, school, and community partnerships ■ Respecting diversity ■ Assessing progress
School-Age Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS) http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/	School age (ages 5 to 12 years)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Space and furnishings ■ Health and safety ■ Activities ■ Interactions ■ Program structure ■ Staff development ■ Special needs supplementary items

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
OTHER			
Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS)	Early care and education classrooms or family care homes Information on ages not available	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sensitivity ■ Harshness ■ Detachment ■ Permissiveness
Caregiver Observation Form and Scale (COFAS)	Infant to 12-year-old classroom settings	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Language ■ Social-emotional ■ Motor ■ Cognitive ■ Caregiving
Child Caregiver Interaction Scale (C-COS)	Children birth to school age in home- and center-based settings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developmental domains
Classroom Assessment of Supports for Emergent Bilingual Acquisition (CASEBA)	Settings with English Language Learner pre-school students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collection of child background information ■ Supports for home language development ■ Supports for English acquisition ■ Social-emotional supports and classroom management ■ Curriculum content ■ Assessment

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) http://www.teachstone.org/about-the-class/ http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/class	Preschool and school age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emotional support ■ Classroom organization ■ Instructional support
Classroom Assessment Scoring System: Toddler Version (CLASS Toddler) http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/class	Children between the ages of 15 and 36 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive climate ■ Negative climate ■ Teacher sensitivity ■ Regard for child perspectives ■ Behavior guidance ■ Facilitation of classroom routine ■ Facilitation of learning and development ■ Quality of feedback ■ Language modeling
Early Childhood Classroom Observation Measure (ECCOM)	Preschool and school-age classrooms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Instruction ■ Management ■ Social climate
Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/smith-ellco/index.htm	Preschool and school-age classrooms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Literacy environment checklist ■ Classroom observation ■ Teacher interview ■ Literacy activities rating scale

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Pre-K Tool (ELLCO – Pre-K) http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/smith-ellco/index.htm	Center-based settings with children ages 3- to 5-years-old	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Classroom structure ■ Curriculum ■ Language environment ■ Books and book reading ■ Print and early writing
Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation: Addendum for English Language Learners (ELLCO-ELL)	Prekindergarten center-based settings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Literacy environment checklist ■ Classroom observation ■ Literacy activities rating scale
Early Literacy Observation Tool (E-LOT)	Preschool and school-age classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Instructional orientation ■ Instructional components ■ Assessment ■ Learning environment ■ Visible print environment ■ Materials used
Environment and Policy Assessment and Observation (EPAO)	Preschool children, staff, and director in a child care center Assesses nutrition and physical activity environment and practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eating occasions – foods ■ Eating occasions – beverages ■ Eating occasions – staff behaviors ■ Physical activity – child behaviors ■ Sedentary activities – child ■ Physical activity – staff behaviors ■ Center environment

Assessment Tool	Age Level/ Specific Setting	Purpose	Target Areas
Quality of Early Care Settings: Caregiver Rating Scale (QUEST)	Variety of settings for children birth to 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring/Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Space and comfort ■ Equipment and materials to support developmentally appropriate play ■ Indoor safety and health ■ Daily routines

Source: *Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings: A Compendium of Measures, Second Edition* (2010), by Tamara Halle, Jessica Vick Whittaker, and Rachel Anderson, Child Trends for the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2010_03_10_FR_QualityCompendium.pdf

How States Are Using Program Assessments

States and Territories use Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) monies to support a variety of program assessment initiatives designed to encourage and strengthen the capacity of early care and education programs in order to increase positive outcomes for young children birth to 5 years.

Representative examples have been included from the CCDF Plans for FY 2010–2011 to illustrate the different ways States are using program assessment tools to assess quality across diverse care settings and age levels. These examples do not include all State program assessment initiatives, but are meant to represent a range of approaches States have taken to address these issues. Minor revisions were incorporated in order to enhance readability. Information was also collected from State Web sites and documents.

Arizona

Arizona has adopted a Quality Improvement and Rating System (QIRS) methodology to implement a voluntary five-star quality rating system. The QIRS is currently operating as a pilot called Quality First under the auspices of First Things First. The comprehensive quality rating process begins with assessment of child care facilities using environmental rating scales to document the quality of each child care environment. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is also used to measure the quality of adult and child interactions.

Based on the results of these assessments, facilities will develop Program Improvement Plans in consultation with assigned mentors. Support for program improvement will be available in the form of technical assistance, small grants, child care health consultants, educational scholarships and financial incentives for staff members who attain specific educational levels. The success of individual Program Improvement Plans will be measured by another round of evaluation using the assessment tools mentioned above. Additional information is available at <http://www.azftf.gov/WhatWeDo/Programs/QualityFirst/Pages/default.aspx>.

Kentucky

The Kentucky Early Childhood Quality Self Study is designed to assist classrooms and programs in self-assessing and planning for continuous improvement in five key areas associated with quality. The tool is for center-based programs serving children from birth to five years of age and is the third in the *Building a Strong Foundation for School Success* series. The tool is organized into five key areas with standards and indicators within each area. Programs can use the tool to assess their progress with the indicators on a continuum of “not met,” “in process,” and “fully met,” and to develop action plans according to the assessment.

The five key areas are:

1. Program Structure and Personnel;
2. Child Experiences With Curriculum and Assessment;
3. Child Experiences in the Environment;
4. Program Interactions With Families and Communities; and
5. Health, and Safety and Nutrition.

Additional information and the *Building a Strong Foundation for School Success* self study tool and other documents are available on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at

<http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Early+Childhood+Development/Building+a+Strong+Foundation+for+School+Success+Series.htm>

Mississippi

Partners for Quality Child Care, at Mississippi State University, provides quality technical assistance and assessments for caregivers in licensed child care settings through the State. Funded by the Mississippi Department of Human Services Office for Children and Youth, Partners for Quality Child Care identify the level of quality child care through the use of the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scales (ITERS) and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS) assessment tools. Centers that participate in the technical assistance offered are expected to show improvement of at least one indicator rating point from pre to post scores. Minimum scores on environment rating scales are key criteria in the Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System, a quality rating and improvement system. Programs that participate in Partners for Quality Child Care can be on their way to earning Quality Step stars. Additional information is available at <http://www.earlychildhood.msstate.edu/initiatives/partners.htm>.

New York

The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSA) Tool is intended to help program leaders and staff, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to better understand the indicators of a high-quality program and reflect on all aspects of their program's operation. The NYSAN QSA Tool has been in use since 2005 and has been adopted by program practitioners, public agencies and intermediaries across New York State and nationally. The New York State Education Department (SED) requires that all 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs use the QSA Tool, and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) has adapted the QSA Tool for use in monitoring its Out-of-School Time (OST)

programs. NYSAN published the QSA Tool, 2nd Edition in June 2010 to reflect new afterschool research and promising practices. Additional information is available at <http://www.nysan.org/section/quality/qsa>.

In 2009, NYSAN conducted a survey of afterschool practitioners to learn more about how they use the QSA Tool and the outcomes of self-assessment on their programs. The survey also included questions for practitioners who have not chosen to use the QSA Tool. The *NYSAN Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool Survey Report* (2010), by NYSAN, is available at <http://www.nysan.org/content/document/detail/2930/>.

Rhode Island

The Child Care Support Network (CCSN), supported by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services and the Department of Health, provides on-site technical assistance to center-based programs and family child care homes serving children birth–3. CCSN has an emphasis on increasing the quality of infant-toddler settings, health and safety, developmental screening, integration of children with special needs, strengthening reciprocal relationships with families, and enhancing the social and emotional well-being of children in care. As a measure of impact and a guide to improving quality, project staff assess each classroom or FCC home with the appropriate Early Childhood Rating Scale as they enter and exit the CCSN program. Additional information is available at <http://www.health.ri.gov/partners/networks/childcaresupport/>.

How States Are Using Program Assessment for QRIS

Many States with a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) are using environmental rating scales (ERS) to evaluate program quality. Most States require an environment rating scale (ERS) assessment for all programs participating in the QRIS. Indiana, Maine, Montana, and Vermont do not use assessments. The ways ERS assessments and scores are used within QRIS varies among the 21 States that require assessments.

- In 13 States (Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee), ERS scores are used to determine rating levels.
- In five States (Colorado, Iowa, Louisiana, North Carolina, Wisconsin), programs can earn points for ERS scores. The points contribute to the overall rating.
- Two States (New Hampshire, Oklahoma) require programs to be assessed with ERS, but do not tie particular scores to the ratings.
- In Ohio, self-assessments are required, but programs can use an ERS, the Early Learning and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO), or other assessment tool, and scores are not tied to ratings.

Some States use other assessment tools:

- Oklahoma recognizes the Child and Caregiver Interaction Scale, the Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale, the Early Learning and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO), and the Program Administration Scale (PAS).
- Ohio recognizes the ELLCO tool for its self-assessment requirement.

- Massachusetts also requires assessments with the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) or Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale to measure teacher-child relationships, and the PAS for administration. Assessment with the Business Administration Scale (BAS) is required for FCC providers.
- Mississippi uses scores from ERS and the Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale to determine rating levels.
- In Rhode Island, CLASS scores are collected from a random sample of 33 percent of preschool classrooms. Scores were not used in the rating process during the first year of implementation.

Additional Resources

Environment Rating Scales

There are four ERS, each designed for a different segment of the early childhood field. Each one of the scales has categories of items to evaluate: physical environment, basic care, curriculum, interaction, schedule and program structure, and parent and staff education. The following is a list of the ERS and related resources:

- The *Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition* (2003), by Thelma Harms, Debby Cryer, and Richard M. Clifford, is designed to assess group programs for children from birth to 2½ years.
- *Escala de Calificación del Ambiente de la Infancia Temprana, Edición Revisada* (2002), by Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer, translated by Corina Dueñas, is the Spanish version of the *ECERS-R*.
- The *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition* (1998), by Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer, is designed to assess group programs for children of preschool through kindergarten age, 2½ through 5 years.
- The *School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale* (1995), by Thelma Harms, Ellen Vineberg Jacobs, and Donna Romano, is designed to assess group-care programs for school-age children 5 to 12 years.
- The *Family Child Care Rating Scale, Revised Edition* (2007), by Thelma Harms, Debby Cryer, and Richard M. Clifford, is a thorough revision of the original FDCRS, designed to assess family child care programs conducted in a provider's home for children from infancy through school-age.

Additional ERS resources include the following:

- *All About the ITERS-R* (2004), by Debby Cryer, Thelma Harms, and Cathy Riley, is a detailed guide with words and pictures to be used with the *ITERS-R*.
- *All About the ECERS-R* (2003), by Debby Cryer, Thelma Harms, and Cathy Riley, is a detailed guide with words and pictures to be used with the *ECERS-R*.

These publications may be ordered through Kaplan Early Learning Company. Call 800-334-2014 or visit <http://www.kaplanco.com/index.asp>. Additional information about the ERS is available on the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Web site at <http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/>.

Other Program Assessments

- *Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings: A Compendium of Measures, Second Edition* (2010), by Tamara Halle, Jessica Vick Whittaker, and Rachel Anderson, Child Trends for the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2010_03_10_FR_QualityCompendium.pdf
- *Measuring Youth Program Quality: A Guide to Assessment Tools* (2009), by the Forum for Youth Investment.
<http://www.forumfyi.org/content/measuring-youth-program-quality-guide-assessment-tools-2nd-edition>
- *Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings: A Compendium of Measures* (2007), by Tamara Halle and Jessica Vick, Child Trends for the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2007_12_10_FR_CompleteCompendium.pdf
- *Evaluating Early Care and Education Programs: A Review of Research Methods and Findings* (2007), by Carol Horton, Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy, Erikson Institute.
http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Pre-k_education/Horton%20-%20ECE%20research%20review.pdf
- *Promoting Positive Outcomes for Children With Disabilities: Recommendations for Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation* (2007), by the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.
http://www.dec-spced.org/uploads/docs/about_dec/position_concept_papers/Prmtg_Pos_Outcomes_Companion_Paper.pdf
- *Taking Stock: Assessing and Improving Early Childhood Learning and Program Quality* (2007), by Tom Schultz and Lynn Kagan, published Pew Charitable Trusts.
http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Pre-k_education/task_force_report1.pdf
- *Resources for Measuring Service and Outcomes in Head Start Programs Serving Infants and Toddlers* (2003), by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., for the Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/ehs/perf_measures/reports/resources_measuring/resources_for_measuring.pdf