

Determining the Appropriate Program Observation Instrument

The charts below provide guidance for child care providers to use in determining which observation instruments are most appropriate for their facility and which tool is appropriate for an individual classroom/group of children.

The following Department of Human Services Certification age-range definitions refer to typically developing children when applied to the use of the observation tools. In classrooms where at least half of the children are experiencing significant developmental delays, the developmental age of the majority of the children will determine the appropriate scale to use.

CHILD STATUS	DHS CERTIFICATION AGE LEVEL
Infant	Birth – 12 months
Young Toddler	13 – 24 months
Older Toddler	25 – 36 months
Preschool	37 months to date child enters Kindergarten
Younger School-Age	Kindergarten – 3 rd Grade
Older School-Age	4 th Grade through age 15



DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE PROGRAM OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT FOR CENTERS

To determine which scale should be used in center-based child care, programs should review the ages of the child in each group/classroom and find the corresponding scale for that group below.

SINGLE AGE CHILD GROUPINGS	CLASS TOOL TO USE	ERS SCALE TO USE
Infants	CLASS – Infant	ITERS-R
Young Toddlers	CLASS – Toddler	ITERS-R
Older Toddlers	CLASS – Toddler	ITERS-R
Preschool	CLASS – Pre-K	ECERS-R/ECERS-3
Kindergarten	CLASS – K-3	ECERS-R/ECERS-3
Younger School-Aged	CLASS – K-3	SACERS-U
Older School-Aged	CLASS – K-3	SACERS-U

MIXED-AGE CHILD GROUPINGS*	ERS SCALE TO USE
Infants Young Toddlers Older Toddlers	ITERS-R
Older Toddlers Preschool	ITERS-R or ECERS-R/ECERS-3*
Preschool Younger School-Age (Kindergarten only)	ECERS-R/ECERS-3
Preschool Younger School-Age Older School-Age	ECERS-R/ECERS-3 or SACERS-U*
Kindergarten Younger School-Age Older School-Age	SACERS-U

* Mixed-age groupings comprised of these age-ranges will determine the most appropriate scale for the group by reviewing the group composition for the number of enrolled children in each age-range (younger and older school-age combined). The age-range with the highest number of children enrolled will dictate the appropriate scale for use with the group. In groupings where there is an equal distribution between the age-ranges the scale designed for the older group should be used, taking into account the emerging skills of the younger children in the group. Programs that group school-age children with preschoolers should consult with their STARS Specialist to determine which scales will be used to assess their group for purposes of Keystone STARS, as in some instances both ECERS-R/ECERS-3 and SACERS-U will be used.

DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALE FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE AND GROUP CHILD CARE FACILITIES

Family Child

The FCCERS-R will be used to assess all Family Child Care homes.

Group Child Care

The FCCERS-R will be used to assess all Group Child Care homes that are located in a residence. The chart below provides further information for Group Child Care homes that are located outside of a residence (e.g. in a church hall or storefront):

	GROUP CHILD CARE IN A RESIDENCE	GROUP CHILD CARE OUT OF A RESIDENCE
Age groups separated by room (as in Center-based Care)	FCCERS-R	ITERS-R or ECERS-R/ECERS-3 or SACERS-U Age of the majority of the children enrolled will determine which training the provider should take and which scale will be used for assessment.
Settings serving only children Kindergarten through Older School-Age children in mixed grouping(s)	FCCERS-R	SACERS-U
Settings serving only children Kindergarten through Older School-Age children in separate rooms	FCCERS-R	ECERS-R/ECERS-3 and SACERS-U
Settings serving only Children Ages 3 Years through Kindergarten	FCCERS-R	ECERS-R/ECERS-3
Settings serving Children Ages Birth to 36 Months only	FCCERS-R	ITERS-R
Mixed Age Groupings include Children All Ages	FCCERS-R	FCCERS-R