

Program Observation Instruments (POI) Overview

What are they? Program Observation Instruments (POI) are used to objectively review program practices, highlight strengths, and identify opportunities for growth. POIs examine a range of practices including teacher-child interactions, classroom environments, and program leadership and management practices. Many programs use more than one POI in their continuous quality improvement (CQI) work.

Why use them? POIs provide a research-based framework for observation and documentation. POIs are a common way for the early childhood education field to gather information and discuss progress, quality practices, and challenges. Using a POI supports consistent assessment and guides CQI goal setting.

How to choose? The POI selected should reflect the program's priorities for growth and consider identified strengths. Previous assessments and the interests and goals of staff should inform the selection process. Some questions to ask:

- What are our current challenges?
- What do we hope to learn?
- What are our short- and long-term goals?

The following is a list of Keystone STARS-approved POIs that provide feedback to programs, including current strengths and areas where improvements can be made:

Business Administration Scale (BAS[©])

For use in family and group child care programs located in a residence.

Purpose: Used to gather information about business and professional practices in family and group child care settings.

[Learn more at mccormickcenter.nl.edu.](https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu)

Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD[©])

For use in center based preschool classrooms serving children ages 3 to 5 years.

Purpose: Used to gather information about social interactions, verbal and nonverbal behaviors and subtle and overt cues, and issues of equity and inclusion in the classroom setting.

[Learn more at socialemotionalchild.org.](https://socialemotionalchild.org)

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS[®])

Separate instruments for use in observing different age groups, including infants (Infant CLASS), toddlers (Toddler CLASS), preschoolers (Pre-K CLASS) and school-agers (K-3 CLASS).

Purpose: Used to gather information about teacher interactions, behaviors, and responses.

[Learn more at store.teachstone.com.](https://store.teachstone.com)

Developmental Environment Rating Scale (DERS)

For use in family, group and center-based childcare settings serving children 3 to 12 years.

Purpose: Used to gather information about practices that support children’s development of executive functions, literacy, and social-emotional skills.

[Learn more at ders-app.org.](https://ders-app.org)

Environment Rating Scales (ERS®)

Separate instruments for use in observing different age groups, including infants/toddlers (ITERS-3), preschoolers (ECERS-3), school-age children (SACERS-U), and family child care (FCCERS-3).

Purpose: To gather information about the early learning environment, health and safety practices, learning and play activities, and teacher interactions.

[Learn more at ersi.info.](https://ersi.info)

Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP™)

For use in preschool classrooms serving children ages 2 to 5 years of age (majority of children are preschool aged); at least one child must have an IEP/IFSP.

Purpose: To gather information about the daily practices and classroom provisions that support the developmental needs of children with disabilities.

[Learn more at brookespublishing.com.](https://brookespublishing.com)

Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO™)

For use in all child care settings serving children ages 3 months to 6 years 1 month.

Purpose: Used to review positive adult-child behaviors and interactions that support better outcomes for children’s early development. PICCOLO can be scored from a live observation or from a video.

[Learn more at brookespublishing.com.](https://brookespublishing.com)

Program Administration Scale (PAS®)

For use in center-based programs located in commercial buildings.

Purpose: Used to gather information about administrative, management, and leadership practices in early childhood programs.

[Learn more at mccormickcenter.nl.edu.](https://mccormickcenter.nl.edu)

Rating Observation Scale for Inspiring Environments (ROSIE[®])

For use in center-based preschool classrooms or family child care where only preschool children are enrolled.

Purpose: Used to gather information about the environment through a lens of natural elements that consider the function and adaptability of space and the needs and interests of those who use it.

[Learn more at youtube.com/watch?v=O-SDG-8kRLE.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-SDG-8kRLE)

[Learn more at youtube.com/watch?v=74eRBi_wi40.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74eRBi_wi40)

School-Age Program Quality Assessment (SPQA[®])

For use in center or school-based settings including full day out of school time and before and after school sites serving children in grades K-6.

Purpose: Used to measure staff practices and experiences of children by using an assess-plan-improve sequence.

[Learn more at forumfyi.org.](https://forumfyi.org)

Social Emotional Learning Program Quality Assessment (SEL PQA[®])

For use in center or school-based settings including full day out of school time and before and after school settings serving children in grades K-12.

Purpose: Used to measure intentional staff practices and behaviors that support social-emotional learning, in addition to staff's approach to designing program structures, activities, and routines.

[Learn more at forumfyi.org.](https://forumfyi.org)

Teaching Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS[™])

For use in center-based infant and toddler classrooms.

Purpose: Used to gather information about how adult behaviors and the environment support the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers.

[Learn more at brookespublishing.com.](https://www.brookespublishing.com)

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT[™])

For use in center-based preschool classrooms.

Purpose: Used to gather information about how adult behaviors and the environment support the social-emotional development of children ages 2-5 years.

[Learn more at brookespublishing.com.](https://www.brookespublishing.com)