

ENVIRONMENT Quality Standard—Centers



The ENVIRONMENT Quality Standard measures health, safety, and environment through the *Environment Rating Scales* (ERS). Environment is a standard of quality because children spend their day in a physical setting, the environment. The way children are cared for and the activities and materials available for them in that setting have a profound effect on their development. The ERS are used as an evaluation tool because they are comprehensive, reliable, and valid instruments that assess quality and measure what is observed to be happening in a classroom. The *Classroom Summary Reports* you receive from the assessments will help you set goals to improve the quality of the environment.

Half of the total number of classrooms must be assessed, and each age group must be represented in the assessment sample. Classrooms are chosen at random by the assessor on the day of the assessment. The assessor will work with the director to identify a two-week window for the assessments; two black-out dates will be honored during this window.

Documents needed to complete this section: *Environment Rating Scale* score of each classroom assessed.

Terms:

- **ERS:** *Environment Rating Scales* (ITERS-R, ECERS-R, FCCERS-R, and SACERS)
 - ITERS-R – *Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale*, revised (Birth-30 months)
 - ECERS-R – *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale*, revised (2 ½ -5 years)
 - FCCERS-R – *Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale*, revised (for family child care homes)
 - SACERS – *School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale*, revised (5-12 years)
- **Assessment Sample:** The randomly chosen classrooms that receive an *Environment Assessment*
- **ERS Score:** *Environment Rating Scale* scores range from 1 (inadequate) through 7 (excellent). Each item will have an explanation of the score with concrete examples from the observation. **Scores are based on the current situation that is observed or reported by staff, not on future plans**
- **Classroom Summary Report:** The report received after an *Environment Rating Scale* assessment. The *Classroom Summary Report* contains the ERS score, a general description of the classroom and special circumstances, documentation of strengths (those indicators with a score of 5 or more), and documentation for those indicators needing improvement (those with a score of 4 or less)

Environment Quality Indicators

ENVIRONMENT				
Not yet at Tier 1 <input type="checkbox"/>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Tier 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Average of the <i>Environment Rating Scale</i> scores 3.0-3.49 <i>Attach coversheet of each Classroom Summary Report</i> <input type="checkbox"/> All classrooms score 3.0 or above	<input type="checkbox"/> Tier 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Average of the <i>Environment Rating Scale</i> scores 3.50-3.99 <i>Attach: coversheet of each Classroom Summary Report</i> <input type="checkbox"/> All classrooms score 3.0 or above	<input type="checkbox"/> Tier 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Average of the <i>Environment Rating Scale</i> scores 4.0 – 4.99 <i>Attach coversheet of each Classroom Summary Report</i> <input type="checkbox"/> All classrooms score 3.5 or above	<input type="checkbox"/> Tier 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Average of the <i>Environment Rating Scale</i> scores 5.0-5.49 <i>Attach coversheet of each Classroom Summary Report</i> <input type="checkbox"/> All classrooms score 4.5 or above	<input type="checkbox"/> Tier 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Average of the <i>Environment Rating Scale</i> scores 5.5 or above <i>Attach coversheet of each Classroom Summary Report</i> <input type="checkbox"/> All classrooms score 5.0 or above

Directions:

1. Calculate the average ERS score of the classrooms that were assessed (**Line D** in the example below).
2. Compare the average & lowest scores to the quality indicators for Environment on the grid above.
 - Begin by looking at the indicator in Tier 1. Ask yourself if the first indicator is true for the facility.
 - If the answer is 'yes', it is true at this time, check the box and gather the supporting materials to submit with the completed application. The materials you need are listed in **red** beneath the indicator.
 - If the answer is 'no', it is not true at this time, leave the box empty.
 - If all indicators in Tier 1 are NOT in place, check the **Not yet at Tier 1** box.
 - If all indicators are checked in Tier 1, check the Tier 1 box; if the indicators in Tiers 1 & 2 are in place, check off the Tier 2 box, and so on.
4. Transfer the information to the Environment Quality Standard section on the *Application for a Facility Profile*.

How to calculate the average ERS score:

A.	Total number of classrooms assessed:	_____
B.	Score for each classroom (The scores are found on the first page of each <i>Classroom Summary Report</i>).	
	Classroom 1	Classroom 4
	Classroom 2	Classroom 5
	Classroom 3	Classroom 6
C.	Total of all the scores	_____
D.	Average score (B divided by A)	_____
E.	Lowest score	_____

<p>Example 1:</p> <p>A. Total number of classrooms assessed: 2</p> <p>B. Scores are 4.30 and 4.55</p> <p>C. Total of all scores: 8.85</p> <p>D. Average score: 8.85 divided by 2 = 4.43</p> <p>E. Lowest score: 4.30</p> <p>This is Tier 3</p> <p><i>Why?</i> All indicators in a tier must be checked to meet the requirements for that tier and move to the next tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average <i>Rating Scale</i> score = 4.43. This score falls in the range listed in the first indicator of <u>Tier 3</u>. Check the box. • The lowest classroom score = 4.30. This score meets the second indicator in Tier 3 because it is above 3.5. Check the box. <p>Both indicators are met, so this is <u>Tier 3</u></p>	<p>Example 2:</p> <p>A. Total number of classrooms assessed: 3</p> <p>B. Scores are 3.10, 4.25, and 5.25</p> <p>C. Total of all scores--- 12.60</p> <p>D. Average score: <i>12.6 divided by 3 =4.20</i>.</p> <p>E. Lowest score—3.10</p> <p>This is Tier 2</p> <p><i>Why?</i> All indicators in a tier must be checked to meet the requirements for that tier and move to the next tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average <i>Rating Scale</i> score = 4.20. This score falls in the range listed in the first indicator of <u>Tier 3</u>. Check the box. • The lowest classroom score = 3.10. This score does not meet the second indicator in <u>Tier 3</u> because it is below 3.5. The box cannot be checked. • Only one indicator in Tier 3 is checked, so look back at Tier 2. Both indicators in Tier 2 are met so this is <u>Tier 2</u>.
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Helpful Hints

- A sample *Classroom Summary Report* can be found at www.idahostars.org
- Training on each scale is available through IdahoSTARS. Call your Regional Consultant for trainings in each region.
- For more information about the *Environment Rating Scales* go to www.fpg.unc.edu or contact the Idaho AEYC Assessment Specialist by dialing 2-1-1 Idaho CareLine

WHAT TO SEND IN:

- **The *Environment Quality Standard* section of the *Application for a Facility Profile***
- **A photocopy of the top page of every *Classroom Summary Report***
 - **Number of classrooms assessed** ____
 - **Number of coversheets attached** ____

