Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-3)

What is the ECERS-3?

The ECERS-3 is an observational tool used to evaluate the overall quality of early childhood learning environments for children aged 3 to 5 years. It gathers data through classroom observations and an inventory of accessible materials.

The tool includes 35 items organized into six subscales, with each item rated on a 7-point scale—1 indicating inadequate quality and 7 representing excellent quality, with scores of 3 and 5 reflecting minimal to good quality. The subscales are as follows:

- Space and Furnishings
- Personal Care Routines
- Language and Literacy
- Learning Activities
- Interaction
- Program Structure

Which program(s) could use the ECERS-3?

The ECERS-3 is appropriately used for childcare programs. ECERS-3 specifically covers classrooms serving three- to five-year-olds.

ECERS-3 Self-Reflection:

With support from the QCSD coaches, program leadership and staff will use the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) as a self-reflection tool helping teachers assess the quality of their classroom environment and daily practices through a structured lens. It encourages staff to identify strengths, recognize areas for improvement, and set intentional goals to enhance children's learning experiences.

How does ECERS-3 support continuous quality improvement (CQI)?

An ERS assessment supports Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) by providing a clear, objective snapshot of a program's current practices and environment. The detailed feedback helps programs identify specific strengths and areas needing enhancement, which can then be used to set targeted CQI goals, track progress over time, and make informed decisions that directly improve child outcomes and overall program quality.

NOTE: These practices are from the ECERS-3 Edition, which contains the most current research-based information.

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