



Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3)

By *Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, Debby Cryer*

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The long-anticipated new version of the internationally recognized Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, ECERS-3, focuses on the full range of needs of preschool- and kindergarten-aged children. This widely used, comprehensive assessment tool measures both environmental provisions and teacher-child interactions that affect the broad developmental needs of young children, including:

- * Cognitive
- * Social-Emotional
- * Physical
- * Health and safety

ECERS-3 also includes additional Items assessing developmentally appropriate literacy and math activities.

Designed for preschool, kindergarten, and child care classrooms serving children 3 through 5 years of age, ECERS-3:

- * Provides a smooth transition for those already using ECERS-R.
- * Emphasizes the role of the teacher in creating an environment conducive to developmental gains.
- * Is designed to predict child outcomes more accurately and with greater precision.
- * Provides a stronger method of distinguishing between good and truly excellent programs.

* Offers a complete training program with ongoing support available at the Environment Rating Scales Institute (ERSI) website.

ECERS-3 is appropriate for state and district-wide QRIS and continuous improvement; program evaluation by directors and supervisors; teacher self-evaluation; monitoring by agency staff; and teacher education. The established reliability and long term evidence of validity of the ERS family of instruments make this new version of ECERS particularly useful for RTTT-ELC accountability and research.

Suitable for use in inclusive and culturally diverse programs, ECERS-3 subscales evaluate:

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

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Thelma Harms, Director of Curriculum Development Emerita, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Harms is recognized internationally for her work on assessing care and educational programs for children from infancy through the primary grades. Her early experience as Head Teacher of the Harold E. Jones Child Study Center, UC Berkeley for 15 years, and her subsequent role as Director of Curriculum Development at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute prepared her to serve as lead author of the four widely used Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS, and SACERS). Much of her recent training and consultation through the Environment Rating Scales Institute (ERSI), where she serves as president, has focused on preparing professionals in the use of the scales for research, technical assistance, training, and program assessment in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and similar quality enhancement projects in the United States and abroad. These comprehensive projects use the scales to focus on developing accountable systems to train, recognize, and reward high-quality programs for children.

Richard M. Clifford, Senior Scientist Emeritus, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Clifford has written and consulted extensively on child and family policy issues with special emphasis on the role of government in the provision of early childhood services. In addition, he has done research on early learning environments and their impact on young children. He was Principal Investigator on the National Center for Early Development and Learning study of state funded pre-kindergarten programs and Co-Director of the companion SWEEP study. He was also one of the principal investigators on the Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers study. He helped establish and served as the first director of the North Carolina Division of Child Development. Dr. Clifford is a past president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Debby Cryer was a Scientist at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is now retired from the University and works with the Environment Rating Scales Institute. Dr. Cryer was a Principal Investigator for the national study on Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers, continued those interests in the European Child Care and Education Study, and has studied the effects of providing continuity of caregiver to infants and toddlers. She regularly provides consultation on establishing quality rating and improvement systems, especially with regard to use of the Environment Rating Scales. Dr. Cryer frequently lectures, and provides training on the scales, both in the United States and internationally.

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