

## About the Environment Rating Scale (ERS®)

### What is ERS?

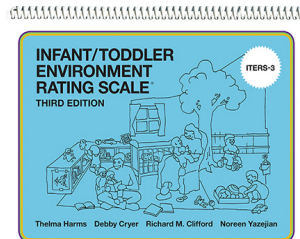
The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) focus on the typical daily experiences of children in early childhood settings. The assessment considers how teacher engagement, the spaces and equipment used by the children, accessible play materials and children's activities combine to enhance learning.

Three age-specific ERS instruments are used in Quality First, each comprised of **subscales** and **items**. All ERS items have **indicators** that are observed to determine which quality practices consistently occur within early childhood care and education environments.

### Age-Specific ERS Instruments Used

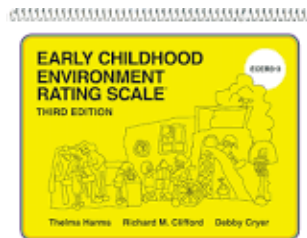
### Subscales

ITERS-3: Infant Toddler  
Environment Rating Scale -  
Third Edition  
*birth-36 months*



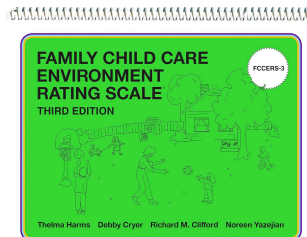
- ★ Space and Furnishings
- ★ Personal Care Routines
- ★ Language/Books
- ★ Activities
- ★ Interaction
- ★ Program structure

ECERS-3: Early Childhood  
Environment Rating Scale -  
Third Edition  
*3-5 years*



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

FCCERS-3: Family Child  
Care Environment Rating  
Scale - Third Edition  
*birth-12 years*



- ★ Space and Furnishings
- ★ Personal Care Routines
- ★ Language/Books
- ★ Activities
- ★ Interaction
- ★ Program structure

## When will an ERS assessment be conducted?

All Quality First participating sites that are not accredited or affiliated with Early Head Start/Head Start will start the formal assessment process with ERS assessments. All participants can request informal ERS assessment, no matter their accreditation or Head Start status.

ERS assessments are conducted by a certified and reliable assessor from the Quality First Assessment team. The ERS assessment tool can be used in center-based programs, family child care homes, and family group homes. Observations last a minimum\* of three hours and include the indoor and outdoor spaces used by the children.

\*An ERS observation may be less than three hours if the program operates less than three hours. An ERS observation may be longer than three hours if specific tool requirements were not observed during the three-hour time sample.

## How does ERS support Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)?

It's important to understand what the ERS scores are really saying about your practices. The ERS assessment tools do NOT expect perfection. The information gathered during an ERS assessment can:

- ★ Guide professional development planning
- ★ Inform individualized support for program and classroom staff by Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs)
- ★ Inform the development of Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) with the Quality First Coaching team
- ★ Inform the development of the Health Safety Action Plan with the Child Care Health Consultant team
- ★ Identify uses for incentive funds

## Resources

- ★ [Environment Rating Scales Institute](#) - Find additional information and resources about the ERS tools
- ★ [All About the ECERS-3 & All About the ITERS-3](#)- Available for purchase
- ★ [ERS Self-Reflection Guides](#)
- ★ [Quality First Participant Guide](#)- Includes additional information about the assessment process and the Quality First Star Rating Scale