CUR107 - Understanding the Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R) - Handout

Welcome to CUR107
This course provides an introduction to the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) and is intended primarily for child care practitioners (teachers and administrators) whose programs are or may be subject to quality ratings by program monitors, regulatory agencies, researchers, or other formal observers, as well as anyone considering the use of ITERS or other rating scales to evaluate their own program or classroom.

Course Objectives:
By taking notes on the handout and successfully answering assessment questions, participants will meet the following objectives as a result of taking this course:

- Identify the purpose of ITERS
- Define environment, according to ITERS
- Demonstrate basic understanding of the ITERS scoring system
- Identify important factors that contribute to ratings across all ITERS subscales and items
- Demonstrate understanding of basic strategies and practices for improving quality ratings throughout the entire early care environment
- Identify developmentally appropriate practices and recommended positive guidance strategies
- Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which children’s development levels and individual needs and preferences impact teaching practices and planning in the infant-toddler environment

References:

What Is ITERS-R?

The ITERS-R and related scales are:

Basic Organization

The ITERS-R has seven subscales:
Each subscale is broken down into a number of _____________. There are a total of 39 items throughout the entire ITERS.

An item is a:

**Important Fact**
Each item is rated, or scored, from 1 to 7, according to various indicators associated with that item. Each item has 10 to 15 or more indicators, for a total of 467 indicators throughout the entire ITERS-R.

Observers use the indicators to determine _________________. Once the observer has scored all the indicators for an item, he or she determines the _________________.

There are four basic quality ratings:

- A rating of 1 indicates the program’s offerings are “inadequate” for that particular item and a 7 means it is “excellent.”

**Important Fact**
Observers use the indicators to calculate an ______________________ for a given item. Scores for individual items are then averaged to determine an overall score for the entire subscale.

**Space and Furnishings**
*Use the space provided to record important information from this section of the course.*

1. Indoor space
How Much Space Is Enough Space?

A Clean First Impression

Lighting, Ventilation, and Air Flow

2. Furniture for routine care and play

There are two types of furniture to consider:

**Furnishings for care**

**Furnishings for play**

3. Provision for relaxation and comfort

Softness

Coziness

4. Room arrangement

5. Display for children
Personal Care Routines

1. Greeting/Departing

Emotional and Social Needs

Departures

2. Meals/Snacks

Here are additional factors that drive high ratings in the meals/snacks item:
**Group size:**

**Environment:**

**Talk:**

**Fun and enriching:**

3. Nap

Managing the Nap Schedule

Safety at Naptime
4. Diapering/toileting

5. Health Practices

6. Safety Practices

**Listening and Talking**

1. Helping children understand language

2. Helping children use language

3. Using Books
Activities

1. Fine motor

**Fine motors skills:**

**Hand-eye coordination:**

The following basic toys and materials will promote the development of fine motor skills in infants and young toddlers:

- Rattles
- Puzzles with large, knobbed pieces
- Soft blocks
- Nesting toys (cups)
- Bead mazes
- Finger paints
- As they grow and develop, older infants and toddlers can move on to more challenging materials such as:
  - Puzzles with smaller pieces (but not too small as to be choking hazards) and no knobs
  - Complex rattles with finger grips
  - Toys with smaller features like pulls, knobs, push buttons, etc.
  - Block/shape sorters
  - Crayons and paintbrushes (for older toddlers)
  - Stringing beads of appropriate size

2. Active physical play

**Gross motor skills:**

**Active physical play:**

3. Art

4. Music and movement
5. Blocks

6. Dramatic play

7. Sand and water play

Important Safety Note

*Infants and toddlers can drown in as little as an inch of water.* Infants must be closely supervised during water play of any type, and buckets, tubs, or other large receptacles represent real potential safety and health risks in the infant-toddler environment. (With the right prompts and props, a cup of water can be as much fun as a bucketful.) There are safe water-play toys for infants, such as small, shallow “water mats.” Bath time is also a good time for infant water play. Safe, well-designed, clean water tables can be appropriate for older toddlers. Some centers have small wading pools, as regulations permit, but again close supervision is absolutely mandatory. *Follow all state and local health and safety standards regarding water play.*

8. Nature/science

9. Use of TV, video, and/or computer

10. Promoting acceptance of diversity
Interaction

1. Supervision of play and learning

2. Peer interaction

   **Negative peer interactions:**

3. Staff-child interaction

4. Discipline

Program Structure

1. Schedule

2. Free play

3. Group play activities

4. Provisions for children with disabilities
Parents and Staff

1. Provisions for parents

2. Provisions for personal needs of staff

3. Provisions for professional needs of staff

4. Staff interaction and cooperation

5. Supervision and evaluation of staff

6. Opportunities for professional growth