What Are the Advantages of an Environment Rating Scale Assessment?

**Improves Children’s Daily Experience**
Focus is on what actually occurs for the children during the day—not just policies or guidelines!

**Comprehensive—Big Picture Snapshot**
Early childhood professionals know that it takes many different things to create lasting quality. It’s easy to get lost in the details! ERS assessments can help you identify strengths and challenges in health and safety, learning materials, schedules, guidance and supervision, adult-child communication and interaction, parent relationships, staff development and space and furnishings.

**Blueprint for Quality Improvement**
The Environment Rating Scales are great team building tools. Many programs use an ERS tool as a step-by-step guide to tackle ongoing quality improvements throughout the year.

Formal assessments are also offered through Iowa State University Extension and Outreach as part of the Iowa Quality Rating System. Programs receive scores and a feedback report identifying strengths as well as areas needing improvement.

**Great for Marketing!**
Quality improvement equals a better experience for children and parents. Parents who are satisfied are the best and most cost-effective marketing tool available to you.

I strongly suggest the Environment Rating Scale for any child care setting that is striving for excellence. It identifies areas that are on track and also areas that need improvement. My favorite part of the ERS is when I see the teachers sense of pride as they see their efforts translate to a high score on a specific indicator.

—Sandy Nelson, Director, Little Friends of Living Faith, Clive, Iowa

Positive Parenting at Trinity’s ERS assessment was a helpful and positive experience. It brought an awareness to the staff and an increased level of ownership, resulting in an overall sense of pride for the quality of care at Positive Parenting at Trinity.

—Michele Hancock, Director, Positive Parenting at Trinity, Davenport, Iowa

Completing an ERS assessment in addition to participating in QRS really shows which providers are going above and beyond the basic state requirements. This is comforting not only to families in your child care, but sets you apart from others (so good for marketing) and should also make you as a provider feel good about everything extra you are doing to keep the children safe, healthy and on the right track developmentally.

—Tracy Ehlert, Owner, Child Development Home—Babies 2 Kids Learning Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

**DID YOU KNOW THE ERS SCALES ARE...**

- Research-based and evidence-based
- Recognized nationally and internationally
- Based on child development research
- Thoroughly field-tested

Thirty states use one or more of the scales as part of their Quality Rating Improvement System.

Additional Information

**Iowa State University Extension and Outreach**
www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/ers

**Iowa Quality Rating System**
www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs

**Environment Rating Scales Institute**
www.ersi.info
Ways you will benefit:

   Mark-it up, take notes—it’s your guide on the side.

2. Be prepared—avoid surprises!
   Learn how to use the ERS tools to self-assess your own program.

   Hear about challenges and accomplishments from other early childhood professionals working to make a real difference for children.

4. Curious about other programs?
   Go on a class field trip! Practice using the scale and learn how other programs make quality a priority.

5. Get inspired.
   Gain support and guidance to move forward on that quality improvement plan.

6. Get the inside track.
   Learn what a formal ERS assessment involves.

7. Earn credit.
   • 8 hours Iowa Department of Human Services child care licensing professional development credit
   • Approved for National Administrator Credential (NAC) continuing education units
   • Approved for Iowa State University Continuing Education Units
   • Meets Iowa QRS requirements (2 points)

Find and register for an Environment Rating Scale Class on the Iowa Child Care Provider Training Registry.
https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/TrainingRegistry

Join us for an ERS class!
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offers training on all four scales throughout the state. Each workshop series consists of four 2-hour workshops. Workshops are fun, interactive and “hands-on.”

Environment Rating Scales

- Infant/Toddler / Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R)
  Center programs with children ages birth–2 1/2 years

- Early Childhood / Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R)
  Center or preschool programs with children ages 2 1/2 years–5 years

- Family Child Care / Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS-R)
  Child development homes with children ages birth–12 years

- School-Age Care / Environment Rating Scale (SACERS)
  Center or school programs with children ages 5–12 years

It was a great experience during the whole process. It assures that we are providing a safe and quality environment for the children in our care. I would encourage others to get involved with the QRS process. Be a positive center and help grow quality environments for young children in early childhood education.

—Heidi Lunn, Director, St Paul Lutheran Preschool, Treynor, Iowa

It has been extremely valuable in helping us to apply for local grants—we have used the information and recommendations in the ERS assessments to show what work needs to be done or what items need to be purchased in order for us to move forward on the continuum towards the highest of quality standards.

—Deb Gustafson, Executive Director, Scott Family Y, Davenport, Iowa

Feeling confused and overwhelmed about quality improvements?
Not sure where to start?
Struggling to make hard earned improvements last long-term?
Take a closer look at the Environment Rating Scales.