Make it a successful and positive experience!

1. Take a class!
   Learn how to use the ERS tool as a blueprint for quality.

2. Learn together.
   Work as a team. Discuss and share what you learn with others.

3. Explore additional resources.
   Check the Iowa State University Extension & Outreach Website for additional resources, training suggestions and ERS update information.


5. Develop a quality improvement plan.
   Prioritize changes, identify resources, create a timeline. Put your plans into action!

Learn about training and other resources

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

Iowa Quality Rating System Iowa Department of Human Services
dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs

Environment Rating Scale Institute
www.ersi.info (ERS updates and clarification notes)

Register for a class
https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry

Download self-assessment forms or quality improvement plans
www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs/forms
THE OBSERVATION
During the 3-hour observation period, the assessor will use the ERS scale to rate the following areas:
• Space and furnishings
• Personal care routines
• Language
• Activities
• Interactions
• Program structure

For Center Programs Only
Random selection of classrooms — ensures assessments are fair and unbiased!
• Classrooms are selected at random each day.
• Assessors will observe one third of the classrooms in your program. This includes at least one classroom from each age group that needs a specific Environment Rating Scale (i.e. — one infant/toddler classroom, one school-age classroom).

Remember to consider the number of children over 30 months of age — this determines whether the ITERS or ECERS will be used for assessment in toddler or two-year-old rooms.

THE INTERVIEW
Following the observation, the ERS assessor will meet with the provider or classroom teacher to discuss activities or features of the program that were not observed during the 3-hour observation period.

What if my “typical day” falls apart?
When your assessment is scheduled, your assessor will give you a phone number to call if you need to reschedule the assessment.

Why does the ERS Assessor limit talking and interaction with adults and children during the observation?
This helps assessors remain focused to do their best for you. When an assessor is friendly and talkative, children may not interact with you in the same way. They may also be distracted from participating in daily activities.

Our assessors try very hard to be quiet observers. This causes less disruption to your program and helps to ensure the assessment is accurate, fair, and unbiased.

Remember to schedule a visit on a typical day!
• Avoid days when field trips, special guests, performances, or special activities are planned.
• At least half of the children enrolled in the classroom must be present for most of the observation period.
• Only staff that are normally assigned to the classroom should be present on the day of the observation. Additional staff who are not normally assigned to the classroom being observed will be asked to leave.

THE ASSESSMENT DAY

What happens after the assessment?
Timeline
• Within 2-3 weeks of the assessment, a feedback report will be sent to the program.
• Reports include strengths as well as areas where improvement is needed.

Feedback
• For each item scored below a 5, specific feedback will be given regarding the reason for the score.
• The feedback is not meant to be a “got-cha,” but rather educational information to help programs identify areas of growth for quality improvement.

Celebrate your strengths:
• Share your strengths and accomplishments with families and your community.
• View the feedback as a blueprint for making meaningful changes that will improve the children’s daily experience.
• Remember that happy, productive children will make your work more meaningful, too!

Questions?
• Your ERS Assessor will be happy to discuss areas needing further clarification.
• Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Consultants are also available to you to answer program quality questions.
• With your permission, your ERS Assessor can share and discuss the feedback report results with BOTH you and your CCR&R consultant.

Looking to the future — improving all the time!
• For assistance in developing a new quality improvement plan, please contact your Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) consultant.
• Find a CCR&R consultant in your area at www.iowaccrr.org