Thinking More about Language and Interactions

FCCERS-R

Purpose: This document addresses many of the requirements found in the Listening and Talking and Interaction subscales. The focus is primarily on indicators at the 3, 5, and 7 level. It is important to review each item entirely to ensure that no indicator at the 1 or "inadequate" level applies to the program. Answering the questions and referring to the FCCERS-R will build familiarity with requirements, while offering a chance to reflect on current practices and situations.

Preparation: Refer to the FCCERS-R (spiral bound edition published in 2007) when completing the questions. To better understand the scale format and structure, review the instructions for scoring on page 8 in the FCCERS-R and the definitions of common terms on pages 9-11. It will also be helpful to refer to a copy of the most current NC Additional Notes (available at ncrlap.org). There are many questions, so completing them all will likely take several reflection/review sessions.

The items included here consider many aspects related to promoting children's development and building relationships. Responsive interactions for all children, including those with disabilities, is key. There is much focus on the language and interactions with children throughout the day. This includes during various routines, as well as different types of activities, such as those that are social, instructional, planned, and spontaneous. Attention is given to warm and respectful interactions, and promoting social skill development. The important work that family child care providers do to supervise and guide children for safety and teaching purposes is recognized.

Tips:
- If you are confused about a question, look at the item in the FCCERS-R and check any Notes for Clarification or NC Additional Notes to identify the specific indicator and requirement to which it refers.
- Describe the current practices that occur when answering the questions. Remember, this is not about a "right answer" but rather a way to build understanding about what occurs every day.
- Using the worksheet on an ongoing basis can help verify that children experience enriching, positive, and age-appropriate language and interactions. Additionally, this process emphasizes how interactions, social communication, and guidance practices contribute to building positive relationships with all children.
- Answering the questions with someone else (other FCCH providers, technical assistance specialist, etc.) promotes sharing of perspectives and may draw attention to different details.

Date(s) completed: _____   Age groups: _____

Worksheet completed by: _____

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Item 13 Helping children understand language (p.32)
</div>

Are children talked to during both routine care and play activities throughout the day? **Y / N**

Consider any issues with background noise. Have these been minimized so that children are able to hear language? **Y / N**

Is the tone used with children consistently positive or neutral? **Y / N**

Consider any times when phrases are used that include negative language, rather than telling children what they should do. How can the following phrases be reworded to offer positive guidance?

"Uh-uh, not in your mouth" _____

_____

"No climbing" _____

_____

"We don't hit" _____

_____

Consider interactions with children. Is the language about things the children are interested in or playing with? **Y / N**   Is communication individualized for each child, such as by using simpler language with younger children, or adapting communication for children with disabilities? **Y / N**

Are words used to label and describe many objects, actions, feelings, and experiences? **Y / N**

If **yes**, give two examples:

_____   Do these types of examples occur throughout the
_____   day? **Y / N**
_____
_____   Do these types of examples occur during both
_____   play and routines? **Y / N**
_____

<div style="background-color:green; color:black;">

Item 14 Helping children use language (p.33)
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Children communicate verbally and non-verbally in many different ways (e.g., babbling, words, crying, pointing, gestures, nodding, facial expressions). Think about all of the ways children communicate and consider the following questions:

Does the provider usually understand what children are trying to communicate? **Y / N**

Are responses handled in a positive and timely manner? **Y / N**

Do responses usually address the child's need or interest? **Y / N**

How do adults respond when: 1) A child is crying while their bottle warms up or a child asks to eat?
_____
_____

2) A child is crying because another child stepped on their hand? _____
_____

How are wait times reduced for meals or nap for children who are hungry or tired, and also for children who are upset/crying: _____
_____
_____

Are the children encouraged to communicate with one another? **Y / N** If **yes**, how does this occur?
_____
_____
_____
_____

For verbal children, are the words and ideas the children say expanded on? **Y / N** If **yes,** list two examples of word(s) a child has said and the words the provider used to respond: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Describe the type of questions the children are asked: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are back-and-forth conversations with children encouraged and/or modeled by responding or repeating sounds and/or words, then waiting for the child to respond? **Y / N**

Is there a good balance between provider language/input and children's language/input? **Y / N**

Are the things that older children say written down and show it to them? Describe:
_____
_____

ITEM 27 Supervision of play and learning (p. 56)

Consider the following challenges related to supervision. Check any that occur, and think about how supervision practices are adapted for different situations:

- ☐ Areas of the playroom(s) or gross motor space that may be difficult to visually supervise
- ☐ Any times the provider leaves the room, for example to complete routine care or access materials or supplies
- ☐ Play or routine times when working with one child or a small group of children

Describe plans to make sure all children are properly supervised throughout the day:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What happens when a problem, such as a conflict or a minor accident occurs? _____
_____
_____
_____

Do many positive interactions occur with children related to their play activities? **Y / N**   Describe two recent examples: _____
_____
_____
_____

What happens when children are having difficulty becoming engaged or using materials? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How is supervision adjusted to meet the different needs of each child in the group? Consider younger children or those that are more active vs. children who are older or more independent. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ITEM 28 Provider-child interaction (p. 57)

Is there a balance between children's independent play and provider input into their activities? **Y / N**

Is appropriate physical contact often used to show warmth throughout the day? **Y / N**   If **yes**, in what ways does this occur? _____
_____
_____

Consider how the provider interacts and relates to children and check all that apply:

- ☐ The provider seems to enjoy spending time with the children.
- ☐ There is much smiling and talking throughout the day.
- ☐ Most, if not all, adult responses are warm and responsive.
- ☐ Interactions are sensitive to each child's feelings and reactions.
- ☐ Interactions remain positive even in challenging situations.

How are responses adjusted to be sensitive to each child's variety of feelings and moods as they change throughout the day? _____
_____
_____
_____

ITEM 29 Discipline (p. 58)

When establishing expectations, are children's ages and developmental levels considered, with adjustments made as needed? **Y / N**

If different age groups are enrolled, give two examples for each age group of how expectations vary for children. **Hint**: Think about the types and structure of different activities or aspects of the daily schedule.

Younger children:
_____
_____

Older children:
_____
_____

Describe how challenging or unwanted behaviors are addressed: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Describe approaches to addressing conflicts between children: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are guidance strategies usually positive? **Y / N**

If guidance strategies are not effective and the behaviors continue, what happens next?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are children's positive behaviors recognized with comments or other positive attention? **Y / N**

Think about how the program is set up (e.g., daily schedule, space and arrangement, types of materials) and how these different aspects can impact behaviors. Consider these questions:

Does the layout of the child care space reduce interruptions and discourage running? **Y / N**

Is there a separation between active and quiet areas to help reduce distraction? **Y / N**

Are transition strategies used to reduce waiting times and keep children engaged? **Y / N**

If **yes,** list some strategies used: _____

_____

_____

_____

Is there a variety of interesting choices in all areas to keep children busy and engaged?   **Y / N**

If **no**, list ideas for any areas where additional/different materials could encourage more use of an area or reduce conflict: _____

_____

_____

Are there duplicates of popular materials or a system used to help children with turn-taking?   **Y / N**

Does the daily schedule have ample free play time that allows children to have extended, meaningful play experiences?   **Y / N**

Is children's' play often facilitated (e.g., children are not often alone in play areas or waiting while routine care occurs for others, children are not alone in a swing or bouncy seat for a long time, etc.)?   **Y / N**

Is there ample time scheduled for active and energetic play?   **Y / N**

Especially for younger children, are routine care needs met in a timely, individualized manner? **Y / N**

Give two recent examples of when explanations were provided about how a child's actions affected someone else. **Hint**: see page 58 for examples**:** _____

_____

_____

_____

Describe how children are supported in using communication when social problems occur: _____

_____

_____

_____

Are there professionals to help if there is a child with very difficult or unusual behaviors?   **Y / N**
If **yes**, list options: _____

_____

ITEM 30 Interactions among children (p. 59)

How are the children encouraged to interact with each other? _____

_____

_____

When children have difficulties getting along, does the response encourage appropriate interactions and behavior (e.g., tell them what to do, instead of what not to do)?   **Y / N**

How are positive social skills modeled for the children? _____

_____

_____

Are the actions, intentions, and feelings of children explained to others? Describe: _____
_____
_____
_____

Is attention drawn to positive peer interactions? Describe:_____
_____
_____
_____

Describe activities that encourage children to work or play together: _____
_____
_____
_____

     How often do these occur? _____

Reflection for future planning: After completing this worksheet, it can be helpful to go back and think more about the answers. Were there any questions that were answered "no" instead of "yes?" If so, this could help identify areas to work on. It can also be helpful to break bigger topics into smaller steps so that changes and progress can be easily recognized. Hopefully this worksheet was a helpful beginning to an ongoing self-study practice and suggest continuing with an action plan after completing the reflection questions below.

List areas where strengths were noted in program language and interactions:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

List areas where improvements could be made or there are new ideas to think about:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are there any issues you will work to change right away? Describe how so:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are there issues that will take more time to change? What are these and what resources may be needed?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Want to find out more?

Not all FCCERS-R indicators are covered in this worksheet, so review the FCCERS-R carefully and seek out resources, as needed, since relying on these questions alone to prepare for an assessment will not be sufficient. We encourage you to review other resources found on the ncrlap.org website to stay informed about any updates and continue to build your understanding of the FCCERS-R and the assessment process.

- Look for general information about the assessment process and also specific FCCERS-R resources. These resources may offer ideas about what to focus on or supplement ideas you were already considering.
- Check out the answers to Frequently Asked Questions or send a new question to ncrlap@uncg.edu.
- Register for free online training webinars. Some are live webinars; others are pre-recorded and offer training credits (contact hours). Call 1-866-362-7527 or register online at ncrlap.org.

When planning for program enhancement, always consider the unique features of the program such as ages and abilities of the children enrolled, the number of providers, and overall goals and/or philosophy. Programs may also seek advice from their DCDEE Child Care Consultant, local CCR&R and/or Smart Start Partnerships, or other child care agencies.

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References:

Harms, T., Cryer, D., & Clifford, R. (2007). Family child care environment rating scale. (Revised edition). New York, NY. Teachers College Press.

NC Additional Notes (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.ncrlap.org.