



**Companion Guide to Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Infant & Toddler**  
**Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions**

Keep this Companion Guide on hand to help you focus on the kinds of teacher-child interactions to look for when conducting a Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Infant & Toddler.

<b>PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <i>Personal and Social development includes feelings about self and others, relating to adults and other children, increasing self-awareness, and building self-concept. Teachers support this development by:</i>	<b>Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <i>You might hear other examples that support these interactions.</i>
Responding to a child with positive facial expressions, actions, and words.	Smiles, hugs, uses respectful words (please, thank you).
Using a soft tone of voice.	Uses calming words and warm tone of voice and never yells.
Playing with materials with a child.	Engages with children by describing the materials or models taking turns with materials.
Following a child's lead during play.	Lets the child decide what to use, what to do, and for how long during play.
Providing choices during play, routines, and chores.	Lets the child decide where, with what, and how to play or lets the child decide how to help during routines.
Acknowledging and labeling feelings.	Uses feeling words (thrilled, sad, excited, frustrated).
Being clear and consistent about limits and expectations.	Uses the same rules every time; uses positive words.
Reinforcing and acknowledging positive behaviors.	Uses phrases such as, "I like how you are ____" or "You did ____ very nicely."
Giving reassurance when upset.	Uses phrases such as, "I know you are sad/angry/frustrated/scared. Would you like...?"



<p><b>LANGUAGE Teacher-Child Interactions</b></p> <p><i>Language Development includes understanding and communicating; early literacy (pre-reading and pre-writing); listening and speaking; expressing thoughts and ideas; and entering into conversations. Teachers support this development by:</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions</b></p> <p><i>You might hear other examples that support these interactions.</i></p>
Engaging in conversation throughout the day, using clear adult language.	Uses real vocabulary, not baby-talk, and uses a pleasant, normal tone of voice.
Putting words to what the children or you are doing.	<p>Uses self-talk: "I am putting the red block on top of the blue block!" or "I am wiping your bottom to keep it clean. The wipe is cold and wet."</p> <p>Uses parallel talk: "You are holding the red block!" or "You are holding your bottle!"</p>
Imitating sounds/repeating what a child has said.	Responds to babbling by using the correct pronunciation: "Ba, Ba? Oh, you want your bottle."
Expanding upon what a child has said.	Repeats and expands upon what a child says: "Ba, Ba! Yes, your bottle has milk in it."
Using/labeling/describing/adding/explaining new vocabulary words.	Talks about what the child is experiencing, in the moment.
Connecting examples and experiences to each child's everyday life.	Chats about what is happening in the child's life, at their home, with their family, etc.
Having "give and take" conversations with each child.	Pauses after a child makes a sound before making the next sound. Repeats their sounds or add words.
Redirecting a child's behavior while on their level using a calm, positive tone.	Gets on eye level. Uses positive phrases: "You can use this one and please give that one back to your friend."



<p><b>COGNITIVE Teacher-Child Interactions</b></p> <p><i>Cognitive Development involves discovering and learning through mathematical, scientific, and social exploration. Teachers support this development by:</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions</b></p> <p><i>You might hear other examples that support these interactions.</i></p>
Encouraging each child to explore a variety of materials.	Provides materials that engage different senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, smell).
Asking guiding questions to extend experiences.	Asks questions: “What should we do next?” ( <i>Children might not respond.</i> )
Asking open-ended questions.	Asks questions with more than one correct answer. Asks questions that require more than a one-word answer. ( <i>Children might not respond.</i> )
Enforcing rules consistently.	Conveys rules in a positive manner every time.
Encouraging each child to use self-help skills.	Gives feedback about the specific self-help skill, rather than simply saying, “Good job!” “You pulled up your pants by yourself!” or “Thank you for putting the toys away.”
Encouraging each child to try new activities and skills.	Gives feedback about the specific skill or activity, rather than simply saying, “Good job!” “Look how hard you are working on that new puzzle!”



<p><b>PHYSICAL Teacher-Child Interactions</b></p> <p><i>Physical Development includes coordinating movements; coordinating and using large and small muscle groups; improving self-help abilities; building self-help skills; and caring for self and others. Teachers support this development by:</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions</b></p> <p><i>You might hear other examples that support these interactions.</i></p>
<p>Assisting a child while they learn new skills.</p>	<p>Guides the child's hand to turn the pages of the book. Guides the child's arm when holding a spoon.</p>
<p>Encouraging each child's independence while being patient with their efforts.</p>	<p>Lets the child make a few attempts before helping and saying, "You can do it!"</p>
<p>Offering assistance if a child becomes overly frustrated.</p>	<p>Asks, "May I help you?" or "Let's try it this way."</p>
<p>Praising a child's efforts to do things for themselves.</p>	<p>Uses comments such as, "You tried for a long time!" or "That is hard to do. May I help you?"</p>