



Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Family Child Care  
6 weeks through 5 years

The Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Family Child Care was developed to conduct observations of teaching practices with groups of children from 6 weeks through 5 years of age, prior to kindergarten. This self-assessment is used to satisfy the Level 3 requirements for program self-assessment. It was developed using the Maryland State Department of Education's [Healthy Beginnings Guidelines](#) and [Supporting Every Young Learner: Maryland's Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy](#), and is aligned with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) Infant, Toddler and Pre-K tools published by Teachstone.

**Requirements for ACR 2:**

- 1) Conduct the self-assessment based upon enrollment at the time of the observation.
- 2) Upload the **Summary Score Sheet** page to your Maryland EXCELS online account in ACR 2.

**Guidelines for the Observer:**

- Prior to conducting the self-assessment, review the types of teacher-child interactions listed on the following pages.
- The self-assessment focuses on what the children are experiencing as the provider interacts with them.
- Best practice is to complete the self-assessment based upon a “typical day.” A “typical day” would have at least 75% of enrolled children in attendance.
- Reflect upon teacher-child interactions during a variety of activities and routines, including independent play, snack or mealtime, and diapering/toileting.
- The purpose of this self-assessment is to assist with developing your **Program Improvement Plan** (see ACR 3), your continuous quality improvements and your professional development plans.
- Taking notes is recommended to help you remember what you observed the children experience.

**Upon completion of the self-assessment:**

- 1) Decide if the teacher-child interaction in each row took place **Consistently**, **Sometimes**, or **Rarely**. Assign a score to each teacher-child interaction row based on the Points Range Descriptions listed here and found at the bottom of each page.
  - a) **Rarely**: Assign a teacher-child interaction a score of **1 point** if you did not see a teacher-child interaction taking place, or only once or twice during the observation.
  - b) **Sometimes**: Assign a teacher-child interaction a score of **4 points** if you saw a teacher-child interaction a few times, with different children, during the observation.
  - c) **Consistently**: Assign a teacher-child interaction a score of **7 points** if you saw teacher-child interactions taking place throughout the observation.

- 2) If there is more than one provider, consider the children’s average experience for each teacher-child interaction using the **Points Range Descriptions**. For example, you might assign 7 points to a provider who **Consistently** engaged with the children, while another provider who **Rarely** engaged with many children during that time would be assigned 1 point. The teacher-child interaction **Range** for that row would be **Sometimes**, so you would put 4 in the POINTS column.
- 3) To get the **Average Score** for each table, add up the Points assigned to each row to get the **Total Points**. Divide the **Total Points** by the number of rows in that table. Put the **Average Score** on the last page (**Summary Score Sheet** page). In the Sample below, 26 Total Points divided by 5 rows of Teacher-Child Interactions equals an **Average Score** of 5.20.

| <i>(SAMPLE) PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Teacher-Child Interactions</i>   | <b>Points</b>                    |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Responding to a child with positive facial expressions, actions, and words</b><br><i>Examples of various observer note-taking methods: // // // // //; 🗣️</i>                               | <b>7</b>                         |
| <b>Using a soft tone of voice</b><br><i>sang // // // ; always spoke softly</i>  | <b>7</b>                         |
| <b>Playing with materials with a child</b><br><i>used doll, books, rattle // //</i>  | <b>4</b>                         |
| <b>Following a child's lead during play</b><br><i>switched to book when doll dropped ; tapped mobile when it stopped spinning ;<br/> said, “Not now,” when child asked to leave story time</i> | <b>4</b>                         |
| <b>Providing choices during play, routines, and chores</b><br><i>changed diaper while child was crying/fussy xxx 🤔 all children had to stay on carpet</i>                                      | <b>4</b>                         |
| <b>Total Points ÷ Teacher-Child Interactions: 26 ÷ 5 = 5.20</b><br><b>Average PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Score: 5.20</b>  | <b>Total Points</b><br><b>26</b> |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points



| <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 doing the following:</i> | <b>Points</b> |
|--|---------------|
| Responding to a child with positive displays of affection.<br>(facial expressions, actions and words, smile, hug, give high five, etc.)  |               |
| Using a soft tone of voice.  |               |
| Playing with materials with a child.   |               |
| Following a child's lead during play and routines.<br>Planning alternative activities for children who finish early.   |               |
| Providing choices during play, routines, and chores.<br>Providing a balance of teacher-directed and child-directed activities.   |               |
| Acknowledging and labeling feelings and reactions.<br>Monitoring children's understanding and facial expressions.  |               |
| Being clear and consistent about rules, limits, and expectations.<br>Giving clear directions and explanations for completing activities, tasks, and transitions.<br>Using effective pacing with established routines and rules.  |               |
| Reinforcing and acknowledging positive behaviors.<br>Providing positive guidance to support appropriate behavior.<br>Providing time for children to practice self-regulation.  |               |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points



|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Giving reassurance when upset.   |                     |
| Helping a child feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.<br>For example: Connecting activities and conversations to a child's life; speaking informally with a child to gain information about her/him. |                     |
| Building positive relationships: with children, among children, and model respectful peer-to-peer relationships.   |                     |
| Demonstrating enthusiasm, intensity, and humor.  |                     |
| Motivating children to feel competent and capable of completing a task/skill by providing feedback and encouragement specific to that task/skill.  |                     |
| Providing children with opportunities to choose to work/play individually, in small groups, or in a large group.   |                     |
| Total Points ÷ 14 Teacher-Child Interactions:<br><b>Average PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Score:</b>   | <b>Total Points</b> |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points

| <b>COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <i>Communication takes place with words, gestures, and actions in the physical layout of the classroom environment. Language Development includes understanding and communicating; early literacy (pre-reading and pre-writing); listening and speaking; expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions; and entering into conversations. Teachers support this development by doing the following:</i> | <b>Points</b> |
|--|---------------|
| Engaging in formal (to provide information) and informal (social) conversations throughout the day, using clear adult language.  |               |
| Putting words to what the children or you are doing.   |               |
| Imitating sounds/repeating what a child has said.  |               |
| Expanding upon what a child has said.  |               |
| Using, labeling, describing, adding, explaining new vocabulary words.  |               |
| Connecting examples and experiences to each child’s everyday life.   |               |
| Having “give and take” conversations with each child.<br>Speaking to a child at child’s eye level.   |               |
| Redirecting a child’s behavior while on their eye level using a calm, positive tone.   |               |
| Using effective and specific verbal feedback.  |               |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points



|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| <p>Total Points 9 Teacher-Child Interactions:<br/><b>Average COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE Score:</b></p> | <p><b>Total Points</b></p> |
|--|----------------------------|

| <p><b>COGNITIVE Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <i>Cognitive Development involves discovering and learning through mathematical, scientific, and social exploration. High-level questions and discussions are essential to support each child's concept development. An early childhood educator continuously promotes a responsive learning environment to improve the children's participation. Teachers support this by doing the following:</i></p> | <p><b>Points</b></p> |
|--|----------------------|
| <p>Encouraging each child to explore a variety of materials using multiple methods (verbal, visual, hands-on materials).</p>   |                      |
| <p>Asking guiding questions to extend experiences by asking children to explain, infer, compare, analyze, and evaluate information that has been presented.</p>  |                      |
| <p>Asking open-ended, high-level questions requiring more than a one-word response (Wh,; How, What i,; How do you know) that help children develop understanding of a concept or topic.</p>  |                      |
| <p>Introducing a topic to children by clearly stating objectives.</p>  |                      |
| <p>Encouraging each child to use self-help skills.</p>   |                      |
| <p>Encouraging each child to try new activities and skills.</p>  |                      |
| <p>Having children complete a task that requires intellectual involvement.<br/>For example: Encouraging children to solve problems and conduct experiments; engaging children with activities requiring thinking and decision-making.</p>  |                      |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points



|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Connecting prior knowledge of the children with new information.<br>Asking questions to make connections to a child's prior knowledge.                          |                     |
| Providing time for children to digest and react when information is presented.  |                     |
| Asking follow-up questions to encourage children's responses; waiting enough time for the child to respond.<br>(Asking children to elaborate on their answers.) |                     |
| Total Points ÷ 10 Teacher-Child Interactions:<br><b>Average COGNITIVE Score:</b>  | <b>Total Points</b> |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points



| <b>PHYSICAL AND FEEDBACK Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <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. Feedback is specific to a child's demonstration of skills, rather than simply a positive comment or praise. Teachers support this development by doing the following:</i> | <b>Points</b>       |
|--|---------------------|
| Assisting a child while she/he learns new skills.<br>Stating specific, concrete expectations for the skill being developed.<br>For example: Providing step-by-step instructions, as needed.  |                     |
| Encouraging each child's independence while being patient with her/his efforts.  |                     |
| Offering assistance before a child becomes frustrated.   |                     |
| Praising a child's efforts to do things for her/himself.<br>Providing children with in-the-moment, objective feedback that reinforces proficient and developing skills.  |                     |
| Developing lessons that reflect children's interests and skills, and meet each child's developmental needs and abilities.  |                     |
| <b>Total Points ÷ 5 Teacher-Child Interactions:</b><br><b>Average PHYSICAL AND FEEDBACK Score:</b>   | <b>Total Points</b> |

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points





Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Family Child Care Homes

**Summary Score Sheet**

***Upload the completed Summary Score Sheet to ACR 2 in your Maryland EXCELS profile.***

|   | AVERAGE SCORES |
|---|----------------|
| PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Teacher-Child Interactions        |                |
| COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE Teacher-Child Interactions |                |
| COGNITIVE Teacher-Child Interactions                  |                |
| PHYSICAL AND FEEDBACK Teacher-Child Interactions      |                |

|                |                 |                          |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Provider Name: | Registration #: | Date of Self-Assessment: |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|

Points Range Descriptions:

Rarely (*once or twice during 20 minutes*) = 1 point Sometimes (*three to five times during 20 minutes*) = 4 points

Consistently (*more than five times during 20 minutes, with most children*) = 7 points