



Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Infant and Toddler  
6 Weeks up to 36 Months

The Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Infant and Toddler was developed to conduct observations of teaching practices with groups of children from 6 weeks up to 36 months. It is used to satisfy the Level 3 requirements for program self-assessment. This tool is based upon the Maryland State Department of Education's [Healthy Beginnings Guidelines](#) and is aligned with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) Infant and Toddler tools published by Teachstone.

**Requirements for ACR 2:**

- 1) Conduct a self-assessment for at least one classroom/designated space from each age group (i.e. for at least one infant group and at least one toddler group) based upon enrollment at the time of the observation.
- 2) Upload the **Summary Score Sheet** page to your Maryland EXCELS profile in ACR 2.

**Guidelines for the Observer:**

- Prior to conducting an observation, review the types of teacher-child interactions listed on the following pages. The observer will focus on how the teacher(s) are interacting with the children.
- Best practice is to conduct the observation on a "typical day". A typical day would have: at least 75% of enrolled children in attendance; no substitute teachers/special guests; no parties/special events; etc.
- Observe children and teacher(s) engaged in a variety of activities and routines, including independent play, snack or mealtime and diapering/toileting.
- A thorough assessment of one classroom could take about 2 hours, but does not need to be conducted continuously.
- To support your **Program Improvement Plan** (see ACR 3), we encourage you to use this self-assessment in every classroom/designated space with children from ages 6 weeks up to 36 months.



### Procedures for the Observer:

- 1) Complete a separate self-assessment for each classroom/designated space you will observe.
- 2) Best Observer Practice is to...
  - a) Blend into the background and, as much as possible, position yourself out of the line of sight of the teacher(s). Move around the room, as needed, when activities and groupings change.
  - b) Check the Daily Schedule to avoid being in an area that a teacher or child might want to use soon.
  - c) Keep your focus on the teacher(s) and limit your interactions with the children.
  - d) Make sure you can hear interactions between the teacher(s) and children. The children's reactions to what the teacher(s) are saying and doing is an indication of the effectiveness of any interaction.
- 3) Take notes using any methods that help you remember what you observed (tally marks, brief notes, abbreviations, video, etc.).

### Upon completion of each observation:

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 at all, 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 a teacher-child interaction taking place throughout the observation.

*Continued on the following page...*

#### 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.



If there is more than one teacher, 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 teacher who **Consistently** engaged with the children, while the other teacher 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.

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, 29 Total Points divided by 5 rows of Teacher-Child Interactions equals an **Average Score** of 5.80.

<b>(SAMPLE) PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Teacher-Child Interactions</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Responding to a child with positive facial expressions, actions and words</b> <i>Examples of various observer note taking methods: Teacher 1: // // // // //      Teacher 2: frowned a lot Ø</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>Using a soft tone of voice</b> <i>T1: sang // // // ; always spoke softly      T2: spoke softly w/crying baby // // // //</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>Playing with materials with a child</b> <i>T1: used doll, books, rattle //      T2: used rattle, mobile, bear, dolls</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>Following a child's lead during play</b> <i>T1: switched to book when doll dropped      T2: tapped mobile when it stopped spinning</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>Providing choices during play, routines, and chores</b> <i>T1: changed diaper while child was crying/fussy xxx      T2: changed toys when toddler moved away</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total Points ÷ Teacher-Child Interactions: 29 ÷ 5 = 5.80</b>	<b>Total Points</b> <b>29</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...</i>	<b>Points</b>
Responding to a child with positive facial expressions, actions and words.	
Using a soft tone of voice.	
Playing with materials with a child.	
Following a child's lead during play.	
Providing choices during play, routines, and chores.	
Acknowledging and labeling feelings.	
Being clear and consistent about limits and expectations.	
Reinforcing and acknowledging positive behaviors.	
Giving reassurance when upset.	
Total Points ÷ 9 Teacher-Child Interactions: <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>LANGUAGE Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <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>	<b>Points</b>
Engaging in conversation 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.	
Redirecting a child's behavior while on their level using a calm, positive tone.	
Total Points ÷ 8 Teacher-Child Interactions: <b>Average LANGUAGE 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>COGNITIVE Teacher-Child Interactions</b> <i>Cognitive Development involves discovering and learning through mathematical, scientific, and social exploration. Teachers support this development by...</i>	<b>Points</b>
Encouraging each child to explore a variety of materials.	
Asking guiding questions to extend experiences.	
Asking open-ended questions.	
Enforcing rules consistently.	
Encouraging each child to use self-help skills.	
Encouraging each child to try new activities and skills.	
Total Points ÷ 6 Teacher-Child Interactions: <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 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. Teachers support this development by...</i>	<b>Points</b>
Assisting a child while she/he learns new skills.	
Encouraging each child's independence while being patient with her/his efforts.	
Offering assistance if a child becomes overly frustrated.	
Praising a child's efforts to do things for her/himself.	
Total Points ÷ 4 Teacher-Child Interactions: <b>Average PHYSICAL 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.





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**Summary Score Sheet**

*Upload the completed Summary Score Sheet for each classroom/designated space to ACR 2 in your Maryland EXCELS profile.*

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

Program/Provider Name:	License # or Registration #:	Classroom/ Designated Space:
Staff Name(s):		
Date of Self-Assessment:	Number of children present:	Activities Observed:
Name of Observer:		

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.

