



## Music and Movement

ECERS-R Indicator	Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many pleasant sounding musical toys and/or instruments accessible daily, for a substantial portion of the day. The children need to be able to reach the instruments and play with them freely.</li> <li>Must have enough musical instruments for at least half of the children to use at once plus some music to listen to, such as a tape player.</li> </ul> <p>Definition: <b>Substantial portion of the day</b> – One-third of the program’s daily operating hours. Operating hours begin with the earliest time children are allowed to arrive and continue until the latest time children are allowed to stay in care.</p> <p>Definition: <b>Accessible</b> – Children don’t have to ask the teacher to get/open materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Musical instruments should be accessible to the children. They need to be able to reach them and play with them throughout the day. Music is something that can be enjoyed throughout the day with different moods and activity levels. It is important to allow children the freedom to express themselves with music and movement. Music has many benefits for preschoolers. They are able to develop critical thinking skills through musical ideas. A variety of musical instruments ensures there will be enough for several children to play with at once. Children are able to use thinking skills when allowed to creatively and independently think of how they can create different sounds, rhythms and tones with different instruments.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recorded music needs to be played for musical purposes – not as background music.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dancing, soothing at nap time, to teach a new idea, or to encourage language development.</li> <li>Music is not to be played for more than 20 minutes at a time (except at naptime).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If music is on all the time as background music, it means children and teachers both have to talk above the music in order to be heard. It also might interfere with the child’s ability to listen to spoken language which is important for speech development. Loud background music also causes children to become easily distracted so that if they are trying to work on a quiet activity that requires concentration, such as a puzzle, they lose their focus more easily.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music and movement can be formal or informal, as well as adult- or child-initiated. Music should be available as both a free choice and group activity daily.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff should initiate at least one music activity daily</li> <li>Movement/dance activity should be done at least weekly</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Musical activities can be planned but it is also important to read the child and go along with what their mood is. If they aren’t into the music, don’t force it. Turn it off and join the child in a different activity. If they are enjoying the dancing, continue the movement with another active song.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different types of music must be used regularly (a minimum of three types is recommended).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music is a cultural experience as well as a language activity. Children should be exposed to a variety of music (jazz, classical, country, multicultural, brass, etc.) Offering different music is a great way to teach about different cultures and communities and encourages appreciation for different types of music.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Music activities that extend children's understanding of music should be offered occasionally (3-4 times a year).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preschool children should have more advanced experiences that help extend their understanding of music. These experiences help children to learn more about how music is created, the many different instruments that are used, different uses of music, and how to distinguish the major characteristics of music, such as loud and soft, fast and slow, high and low tones. For examples, a parent who plays an instrument is invited in to play songs with the children as they sing along or teachers play musical games that incorporate fast and slow rhythms using recorded music. For more examples contact a Child Care Aware Coach.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creativity is encouraged with music activities. (Ex. Children asked to make up new words to songs; individual dance encouraged.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is important to encourage creativity in young children. Children are just beginning to think independently and to express themselves. Creativity is shown in music/movement as children make up and sing their own songs and dance in their own ways.</li></ul>

SOURCE: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)

