



Nature & Science

FCCERS-R Indicator	Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature/science toys should be accessible to children at least 1 hour a day. <p>Definition: Accessible – children don't have to ask the teacher to get/open materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children learn about nature from pictures, toys, poster, books, etc. By offering these toys, children are able to see and explore different nature/science activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 9 different examples of science materials are accessible daily with at least 3 of the 4 categories represented for much of the day. The 4 categories are: <i>collection of living things</i> (pinecones, bird nest, rocks, sea shells), <i>pictures, books, games or toys</i> (realistic representation), <i>living things</i> (cat, dog, garden), <i>tools</i> (magnets, magnifying glass, prisms) <p>Definition: Much of the day – is associated with the children's access to materials typically used indoors (books, art materials, and fine motor or dramatic play toys). It means that most of the time that any child is awake and able to play. No wait times or inactive times longer than 3 minutes. They must have access to materials for Much of the Day.*<i>Observation note*</i> If any child is prevented from reaching and using materials for a total of 20 minutes during the 3 – hour observation much of the day cannot be given credit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By offering a wide variety of science materials children will learn more about the world around them. Children need to experience science through experimentation and hands on learning. Children need to see realistic accurate pictures of what animals around them look like. They will not associate a cartoon cow with a real one because they don't look like the real thing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature/science toys are organized and in good repair. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toys and materials should be in good condition and not broken, torn, missing pages or covers and complete with all pieces. Animal cages/aquariums cleaned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials should be organized and grouped by type so children know where to find them. By having a well-organized area, children won't be frustrated. Children are more likely to play with the materials if it is easy to find all the pieces or turn the pages in the book.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children should experience natural objects either indoors or outdoors more than once daily. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living plant or animal in classroom to look at. Field trips to zoo/aquarium. Provider point out flowers, trees, birds, from window. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children learn about nature through a variety of activities. By having a pet, the children are learning how to care for it and watch it grow and develop. By allowing children to help feed fish or water plants, it teaches them responsibility for other living things.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children should go outdoors at least twice a week (weather permitting) where providers point out nature.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ There will be relatively few days in most areas when children will not be able to go outdoors at all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The best way for children to learn about nature is to experience it first-hand! By going outside, children are exposed to grass, trees, birds, animals, insects, dirt, rocks, wind, sun, snow, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyday events can be used as a basis for talking about nature/science.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pointing out insects, blowing bubbles, watching rain/snow.○ One example must be observed during observation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers should point out or draw attention to natural occurrences they experience with nature and science. When teachers expand on what the child is experiencing by talking about it (You are squinting because the sun is bright today), you are allowing them to learn about the many wonders of nature and science that are part of their everyday world.

SOURCE: Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS)

