



Group Play Activities

ITERS-R Indicator	Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are never forced to participate in group play activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children are allowed to leave group as they wish and do something else. • Staff are flexible and adjust activity as children join or leave the group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enough materials for all who want to join. ○ Make more space for newcomers. ○ Stop activity when children's interest is gone. • Alternative activities are accessible for children not participating in group play. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At least 2 interesting play options available. <p>Definition: Accessible – children don't have to ask the teacher to get/open materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having children participate in group activities, where all do the same thing at the same time, requires them to set aside their own interests and participate in a setting where individual needs are not emphasized. • Because mobile infants and toddlers tend to flock to novel activities, they will frequently join a group activity that the staff initiate. Then some will stay and others will drift away, as their attention is captured by another interesting learning opportunity. Some will join after the activity has started. Children will naturally leave and join the group. Staff who can respond positively to these "comings and goings," will carry out the activity successfully. • Having alternative activities allows the child to leave the group activity if not interested and chose something that interests them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities done in group are usually appropriate. • Size of group is appropriate for age and ability of children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2-3 infants in a group. ○ 2-5 toddlers in a group. ○ 4-6 two-year olds in a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn from adults, infants and toddlers require more direct and intense interactions than older children. Younger children also have less developed social skills that make interactions with their peers in groups less meaningful. Younger children do better if they have fewer peers with whom they must share the adult. Safety may also be a factor with group size.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are usually (75% of the time) positive and acceptant with children during group time and are never negative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When staff respond positively to children it gives them the message that they are happy with the children, and seem content, relaxed, patient, respectful, and interested, helping each child to feel valuable, competent, appreciated, and loved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group activities are set up to maximize children's success. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enough space so children are not crowded. ○ Active participation encouraged. ○ Book large enough so all can easily see. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basically, if a group play activity goes well (children are interested, content, and engaged) and children want to participate, the activity is set up to meet the children's needs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff meet the needs of individual children to encourage participation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Child who is distracted cuddled in teacher's lap.○ Signing added for child with hearing difficulty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group play that works well for one infant or toddler will not necessarily work well for another. So this indicator requires staff to adjust what they do to meet the needs of a child who has difficulty participating in an activity that would otherwise be appropriate and beneficial, and who could be helped by a simple change in how things are handled.
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SOURCE: *Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)*

