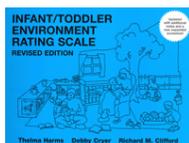


Blocks in the Child Care Setting

ITERS-R Indicator	Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blocks need to be accessible much of the day. • 3 sets of blocks (10 or more blocks per set with each block being at least 2 inches for the majority of the sides) of different types – see page 250 for examples. • Blocks need to be sorted by type. <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.*Observation note* 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> <p>Definition: Accessible – children don't have to ask the teacher to get/open materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blocks are considered one of the basic play materials for young children. Older infants and younger toddlers are mainly interested in the sensory characteristics such as how they feel, the bright colors, the sounds they make as they bang together, and the different sides they see as they grasp and turn them in their hands. Toddlers are interested in filling and dumping, or throwing them to see how they fall. As they get older, develop more eye-hand coordination, muscle control, and are able to manipulate many blocks, children eventually start building simple structures and use accessories for pretend play.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of accessories including transportation toys, people and animals (at least 5 of each) need to be accessible much of the day – see page 251 for examples • Accessories should be sorted by type and stored near the blocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessories are toys used with blocks to stimulate or expand block play. • Storing accessories near the blocks help the children know they are meant to be used with the blocks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space used for blocks play should be out of traffic and on a steady surface. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children should be able to build and pretend with blocks without interference from others. • A steady surface is necessary so the blocks do not easily fall over when stacked.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff need to be observed doing block play at least once in a 2 hour period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because children learn not only by exploring and experimenting on their own, but also by watching and imitating others, staff participation and guidance is important in expanding block play. Children usually play longer with materials when staff are actively involved in their play.



SOURCE: *Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)*