



Active Physical Play

ITERS-R Indicator	Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space provided indoors for active physical play much of the day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No child should be kept restrained in a restrictive device (swing, bouncer, exersaucer, infant seat, high chair, etc.) for more than 15 minutes except for a reasonable time while actively eating, or being fed. ○ Children need to be appropriately dressed for weather. ○ Young infants can move freely on carpet. ○ Children can crawl and walk around. <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"> • Large motor movements should not be limited by clutter, crowding, or furnishings and equipment that can restrict movement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily accessible outdoor area where infants/toddlers are separated from older children is used at least 1 hour daily year round, weather permitting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must be able to take the children to the outdoor play space without undue effort or complications. When the outdoor area is located close by it reduces the time and challenges that are sometimes required to access the space. • Separation is required to protect young children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large active play area that is not crowded or cluttered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area allows gross motor activity with few restrictions. Children should be able to take advantage of the area to practice their gross motor skills to a great extent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ample materials and equipment for physical activity so children have access without long periods of waiting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be enough materials and equipment so that each child can use equipment without having to wait with no other gross motor option. And there should enough pieces of popular equipment so children do not have to wait long periods or compete, and there are enough interesting options so that no one thing is overwhelmingly popular.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some equipment can be used by each child in the group, including child with disabilities, if enrolled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is a child with special needs that requires adaptations or special equipment, then these must be provided. Even in cases where an infant or toddler has very limited gross motor skills, active physical play should not be ignored.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All space and equipment is appropriate for children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cushioning surfaces in fall zones must be adequate. ○ Equipment should not allow falls from high places. ○ No sharp edges, splinters, protrusions, or entrapment hazards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This ensures that children are safe in the outdoor play environment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor space has 2 or more (at least 1 firm and 1 soft) types of surfaces permitting different types of play. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grass, outdoor carpet, rubber cushioning surface, decking, and/or cement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children gain information about how their world works as they try out various activities on different surfaces. They also have better chances for successful practice of gross motor skills when the surface matches the skill they are practicing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor has some protection from the elements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shade in the summer. ○ Sun in the winter. ○ Wind break. ○ Good drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elements are the natural conditions associated with the outdoors and weather. The elements often provide pleasant experiences, such as warming sun or a gentle breeze. However they can also cause discomfort or problems in the outdoor space. Protection relieves discomfort or problems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials used daily stimulate a variety (7 to 9 different skills) of large muscle skills – see page 225 in All About ITERS for examples. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Crawling, walking, balancing, climbing, ball play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the equipment gives children the opportunity to use their large muscles in particular ways. The intent is to stimulate a variety of skills, rather than a limited set.

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

