# Environment Rating Scales:
# Implementation of Space and Furnishings Practices

## Why these practices are important for children's development

A safe, stable, accessible, and nurturing environment supports the optimal growth and development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. A high-quality environment also helps to promote positive behavior and learning outcomes.

## Key Implementation Practices

- Provide enough quality furniture for routine care, play, and learning. Furniture should be accessible for all ages and abilities of children (tables/chairs for different sizes of children).
- Ensure the furnishings in the indoor space are clean, in good repair, and safe for children.
- Arrange space and furniture for easy visual supervision of all children.
- Organize materials for children's convenient and independent use (toys organized by type, labeled containers, uncluttered shelves, enough play space, etc.).
- Include furniture for comfort (soft furniture, rugs, pillows), self-help (steps near sink, low open shelves, etc.), and enhanced learning and play (graduated bookshelf, easel, etc.)
- Display many interesting, engaging, and age-appropriate materials throughout the room at children's eye level. Displays should include colorful, simple pictures, posters, and photographs (including photographs of children and their families). Point out and talk to children about displays in the environment. Change displayed materials regularly to match themes, seasons, and children's interests.
- Provide adequate space for gross motor play. Ensure that the space is safe (allows adequate supervision, sufficient cushioning where children may fall, etc.), regularly cleaned, and accessible for children's different ages and abilities.
- Stimulate a variety of children's gross motor skills (climbing, pedaling, crawling, walking, etc.) by providing different types of equipment (both portable and stationary) in the environment that is safe and encourages children to be active.

## Additional Resources

- Reflective Exercise: Experience Your Space from the Perspective from an Infant or Toddler
  https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/itrg/Reflective%20Exercise%20Explore%20the%20Environment.pdf
- What can teachers do to make the classroom environment more conducive to children's learning and development?
  https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/env/cresource/q1/p02/
- Adapting the Child Care Environment for Children with Special Needs
  https://childcare.extension.org/adapting-the-child-care-environment-for-children-with-special-needs/





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