

## ECERS Daily Schedule Checklist

**Instructions:** Use this checklist to evaluate your daily schedule.

Question	Answer	Explanation																												
1. Does schedule include appropriate amount of time for free play/learning center time (substantial portion of the day)?	Yes   No   ?	<div><div>▪ At the “5” level, 11 items involve substantial portion of the day (1/3 of session). Most of these items relate to time spent in free play/learning centers. See chart below to determine what substantial portion of the day is for your classroom.</div><div><table><tr><th>Length of Session</th><th>Time Required</th><th>Length of Session</th><th>Time Required</th></tr><tr><td>3 hours</td><td>60 minutes</td><td>6 hours</td><td>120 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>3.5 hours</td><td>70 minutes</td><td>6.5 hours</td><td>130 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>4 hours</td><td>80 minutes</td><td>7 hours</td><td>140 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>4.5 hours</td><td>90 minutes</td><td>7.5 hours</td><td>150 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>5 hours</td><td>100 minutes</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>5.5 hours</td><td>110 minutes</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table></div><div>▪ Free play/learning centers can take place all at once (in 1 block of time) or it can be divided into more than one block of time (although it is recommended that any block of time spent in free play/learning centers be at least 15 minutes long).</div><div>▪ The following guidelines are used to determine to calculate substantial portion of the day:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Begins when 1<sup>st</sup> group of children can enter free play/learning centers</li><li>– Ends when clean up <b>begins</b></li><li>– Time is calculated based on what is observed, not what is on written schedule</li></ul></div></div>	Length of Session	Time Required	Length of Session	Time Required	3 hours	60 minutes	6 hours	120 minutes	3.5 hours	70 minutes	6.5 hours	130 minutes	4 hours	80 minutes	7 hours	140 minutes	4.5 hours	90 minutes	7.5 hours	150 minutes	5 hours	100 minutes			5.5 hours	110 minutes		
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2. Does schedule include appropriate amount of time for gross motor play (indoor or outdoor)?	Yes   No   ?	<div><div>▪ Required length of gross motor time is based on length of preschool session. Use the chart below to determine how long the gross motor time needs to be for your classroom.</div><div><table><tr><th>Length of Session</th><th>Time Required</th><th>Length of Session</th><th>Time Required</th></tr><tr><td>3 hours</td><td>25 minutes</td><td>6 hours</td><td>45 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>4 hours</td><td>30 minutes</td><td>7 hours</td><td>50 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>5 hours</td><td>40 minutes</td><td>8 hours</td><td>60 minutes</td></tr></table></div><div>▪ Gross motor time is calculated from the time children enter the gross motor area to the time cleanup in the gross motor area begins. Travel time to and from the gross motor area does not count.</div></div>	Length of Session	Time Required	Length of Session	Time Required	3 hours	25 minutes	6 hours	45 minutes	4 hours	30 minutes	7 hours	50 minutes	5 hours	40 minutes	8 hours	60 minutes												
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3. Does schedule include adequate travel time to gross motor area?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See answer above for calculation of gross motor time.</li> </ul>
4. Does schedule include time for hand washing when children arrive in classroom (at the beginning of the session)?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAE, page 124 states that children should wash hands “upon arrival into the classroom.” Also, page 110 of <i>Caring for Our Children</i> (which is what ECERS authors base health/safety requirements on) states that hand washing should take place “upon arrival for the day.” Sink hand washing or hand sanitizer can be used.</li> </ul>
5. Does schedule include time for washing hands <b>before</b> eating (meals and/or snacks)?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children must wash their hands before eating (Indicator 10.1.3)</li> <li>It is important to ensure children do not recontaminate their hands before eating. AAE, page 93 states “Care must be taken so that hands (or gloves) are not recontaminated before handling or eating food. For example, children should not be allowed to touch the floor or play with toys between handwashing and eating. Staff with washed hands, with or without gloves, should keep from touching children, toys, materials, the floor, and other things that would contaminate the gloves [or hands].”</li> </ul>
6. Does schedule include time for washing hands <b>after</b> eating (meals and/or snacks)?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAE, page 93 states “If children touch food or finger feed themselves during meals then they must have hands washed after eating to prevent the growth of germs and contamination...” Because most children touch their food while eating, it is best to plan time for washing hands after meal/snack. Hand sanitizer can be used (e.g., as they leave cafeteria) as long as their hands are not visibly soiled. If hands are visibly soiled, then they must wash hands using soap and water.</li> </ul>
7. Does schedule include time for hand washing after children leave playground/indoor gross motor area?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAE, page 124 states that children should wash hands “after being outdoors.” Hand sanitizer can be used if hands are not visibly soiled. But if hands are visibly soiled, they must be washed with soap and water.</li> </ul>
8. Does your schedule include a group story time?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required for indicator 15.3.2.</li> </ul>
9. Does your schedule include “specials” (e.g., music, gym, library)?	Yes No ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most “specials” do not count toward substantial portion of the day because children do not have “free choice.” Therefore, if your schedule includes “specials,” make sure that it does not interfere with free play/learning center time.</li> </ul>

Question	Answer	Explanation
10. Are there any points during the schedule that children wait more than 3 minutes during transitions into and out of daily events?	Yes   No   ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 34.5.4: No long periods of waiting during transitions between daily events.</li> <li>AAE, page 361 states, “The schedule must be organized so there are no long periods of waiting between daily events. A long period of waiting means children are without any activity for <b>3 minutes or more.</b>” This is most likely to happen when routines such as hand washing or going to the bathroom are handled as large group activities, requiring children to stand in line as they finish and wait on remaining children. Notice the emphasis is on “children are waiting without any activity.” Suggestion: When children are standing in line waiting, give them something to do (e.g., sing a song or lead a finger play, engage them in a conversation, etc.).</li> <li>A “long period of waiting” can also occur before or after meals. AAE page 362 states, “...if children clean up toys, wash hands for lunch, go to the table, and then wait for more than 3 minutes with nothing to do before the food arrives, this is a long period of waiting between daily events. During this time children are waiting for the next activity with nothing to do.” This also applies to children that finish eating early and find themselves waiting with nothing to do. See question/answer below.  <b>Scenario:</b> Child throws food away after eating, comes back to the table, and sits for more than 3 minutes with nothing to do.  <b>Question:</b> Would this scenario result in a NO for 34.5.4?  <b>Answer:</b> Yes, because the child is just waiting and not engaged. However, IF teacher intentionally engaged children in conversation as they waited for remaining children to finish eating, this indicator could be scored YES (from ECERS perspective). However, Head Start performance standards 1304.23(c)(1)(2)(3) says that children who finish and become restless are to be given an alternate activity to complete. NOTE: If children are given an alternate activity (e.g., book to read, crayons/paper, etc.), make sure they wash their hands first (they can use hand sanitizer as long as hands are not visibly soiled).</li> </ul>
11. Is your written daily schedule posted in your classroom?	Yes   No   ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 34.3.2: Written schedule is posted in room and relates generally to what occurs.</li> </ul>

*Additional scheduling-related questions on next page*

## Additional scheduling-related questions/answers

12. **Question:** Does the daily schedule need to spell out specific transition times? (See below for example).

**Sample Schedule A**

7:30 Arrive in room  
7:35 Classroom meeting/circle time  
8:00 Breakfast  
8:35 Gross motor  
9:00 Restrooms/handwashing  
9:10 Learning centers

**Comment:** This schedule does not specify that hand washing must take place when children enter the classroom and after breakfast. Nor does it specify the time needed to travel to and from the gross motor area.

**Answer:** Every single transition does NOT have to be specified in the daily schedule. However, including specific transitions may make it easier to ensure enough time is allowed for transitions such as traveling to and from gross motor and that key activities are not forgotten (e.g., hand washing after meals/snacks). See sample schedule B below.

**Sample Schedule B** (same schedule as above with more transitions specified)

7:30 Arrive in room, wash hands  
7:35 Classroom meeting/circle time  
7:53 Wash hands, travel to cafeteria  
8:00 Breakfast  
8:25 Wash hands, travel to gross motor area  
8:35 Gross motor  
9:00 Clean up gross motor area, leave gross motor area ,  
restrooms/handwashing  
9:10 Learning centers

**Comment:** ECERS does not require this level of specificity. However, including this level of detail may help to ensure that key activities are not forgotten (e.g., hand washing) and that the required amount of time is allowed for gross motor and free play/learning centers.

13. **Question:** If children are required to brush their teeth or are taken to the bathroom in small groups during free play time, how does this impact substantial portion of the day?

**RTC Answer:** Routines done individually (e.g., brushing teeth) or in a small group (e.g., going to the bathroom) during free play will not count negatively against substantial portion of the day, even if the activities are required and children are not given a choice.

14. **Question:** When children arrive, we go to the bathroom to wash hands and then straight to the cafeteria for breakfast. Is this a problem?

**Answer:** There are two issues you will need to consider here:

- a) **Recontamination of washed hands:** After children have washed their hands before eating, they can't recontaminate their hands by touching objects such as their backpacks, coats, etc. So, you need to think about how to handle this. For example, children could go to their classroom, drop off backpack/coats and then wash hands and then go to the cafeteria. Or, if this is not possible, children could drop off their backpacks/coats on the back of their cafeteria chair (or placed somewhere in the cafeteria) and then wash hands (either using hand sanitizer or sink hand washing).

- b) **Touching of Personal Belongings:** This may or may not be an issue, depending on what children do with their belongings (e.g., coats, backpacks) while they eat. Usually, when children go to the cafeteria before they go to their classroom, their personal belongings are either 1) placed on the back of their chair, or 2) lined up or piled up somewhere in the cafeteria (e.g., on the edge of a stage or against the wall). If this is what happens in your situation, you need to make sure that children's belongings do not touch. It is ok to place belongings on the back of chairs or to line up children's belongings on the floor, etc. Just make sure they don't touch. This has become an issue since new guidance was issued by the authors (see below). Touching of children's belongings would result in a NO at 13.3.4.

### **New Guidance from Authors (July/2011)**

When determining whether furniture for routine care is sufficient, consider the sizes of cubbies in relation to what is stored in them to see if they can adequately accommodate all of each child's possessions. Each child enrolled in the group must have an individual cubby that is not shared with anyone else, with space for all possessions to be stored there. This is to reduce the spread of lice and scabies. When children's personal belonging, such as coats, extra clothing, blankets (if stored in cubbies,) are not reasonably well-separated, or if cubbies are so full that things fall onto the floor, score 3.1 "No" because the cubbies are not adequate in size based on what must be stored in them. If there is only minor touching of possessions (e.g., protruding sleeves of winter coats touching those of other children, or a small problem with other materials, but this could be solved easily by pushing things into the cubby properly, consider the cubbies adequate. **Any touching of children's personal possessions should also be considered in the Health item [13.3.4].**

### **15. Question: Two preschool classes join together for a "special" activity (e.g., music, gym, library)? Is this a problem?**

**Answer:** Preschool regulations state that the maximum group size is 20 children (704 KAR 3:410, section 6). This does NOT apply to time spent on the playground or to indoor gross motor time as long as the 1:10 adult/child ratio is met and children have choice of activities. However, the maximum group size of 20 children does apply to teacher-directed activities such as gym time or music time during which more than 20 children participate in the same teacher-directed activity (which frequently happens during "specials"). NOTE: This is a regulation issue, not an ECERS issue. See scenarios below to get a better idea of when group size is an issue.

**Scenario #1:** Two preschool classes go to the gym at the same time for a special gross motor time with the gym teacher. In this scenario, if more than 20 children were present and all were participating in the same activity led by the gym teacher, the maximum group size would be exceeded and the program would be **out of regulatory compliance**.

**Scenario #2:** During bad weather, two preschool classes go to an indoor gross motor area at the same time. A variety of gross motor activities have been set up in the gross motor area. As long as children have a variety of choices AND children do not participate in a teacher-led activity in which the maximum group size exceeds 20, the program would be in regulatory compliance.

**Scenario #3:** Two preschool classes go to the playground at the same time. The playground meets the required square footage for the number of children on the playground. As long as children have a variety of choices on the playground AND children do not participate in a teacher-led activity in which the maximum group size exceeds 20, the program would be in regulatory compliance.