



Teaching Pyramid Infant–Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS™)

for Infant–Toddler Classrooms

RESEARCH EDITION

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Get an inside look at the TPITOS tool!

This excerpt includes filled-in samples of several pages from the tool including Observational and Interview Items, Red Flags, and the Scoring Summary Profile.

To learn more about TPITOS and place your order, visit
www.brookespublishing.com/tpitos

INTRODUCTION

The *Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS™)* for *Infant-Toddler Classrooms, Research Edition*, is an assessment instrument designed to measure the fidelity of implementation of practices associated with the *Pyramid Model* in center-based infant and toddler classrooms. The TPITOS provides a snapshot of the adult behaviors and classroom environment variables associated with supporting and promoting the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers. The TPITOS Scoring Form is made up of Items, or categories, of teacher practices. The three types of Items are 1) Observational Items, 2) Interview Items, and 3) Red Flags.

Observational Items: Practices observed through direct observation.

Interview Items: Practices reported by the observed teacher during the follow-up interview.

Red Flags: Practices that are not consistent with the *Pyramid Model*.

There are 13 Observational and Interview Items. Within each of these Items are two to nine Indicators that describe a specific aspect of teacher behavior. There are 11 Red Flags, each of which includes examples and nonexamples of the Red Flag behavior.

The TPITOS is completed based on a 2-hour observation of an individual teacher in an infant or toddler classroom (birth to 3 years) and a follow-up interview with the teacher being observed. The goal is to follow and record the behavior of one teacher across as many routines as possible, including free play (e.g., children are free to select toys from shelves), structured group activities (e.g., circle time), care routines (e.g., diapering or toileting), and outdoor activities (e.g., sandbox play). The observer should see at least three different types of routines, for a minimum of approximately 15 minutes per routine, within the 2-hour observation period.

USING THE TPITOS SCORING FORM

The observed conditions in a classroom should be representative of typical conditions for that setting. Observation times should be structured so that the teachers and children present, and the routines observed, are typical for that setting. Ideally, **at least three children** should be present, and **at least three different routines** should be observed during the **2-hour observation**. The number of routines observed may vary depending on the setting and time of day. When multiple routines are not observed, it will then be important to determine if more observation time is needed. Please see the Manual for more information.

BEFORE STARTING THE OBSERVATION

Prior to starting the observation, complete page 1 of the TPITOS Scoring Form and add the following: 1) date of observation, 2) program/center, 3) classroom, 4) teacher name or identification code (ID), 5) observer name or ID, 6) start time of the observation, 7) number of adults present when the observation begins, 8) number of children present when the observation begins, and 9) age range of the children present. Before the observation you must ask the teacher the following two questions and record the responses on page 1 of the TPITOS Scoring Form:

- “Are there children present today who are unable to communicate with you in the same way as other children in the class because they have language delays or disabilities? If yes, how many?”
- “Are there children present today who need information presented to them in a different way because they are dual language learners (DLLs)? If yes, how many?”

DURING THE OBSERVATION

During the observation period, it is recommended that observers take extensive notes on the practices teachers use within each routine. Then, after the observation and interview, observers should use these notes to score the Indicators in the TPITOS Scoring Form. Use the Schedule of Activities on page 2 of the TPITOS Scoring Form to record the activities or routines observed, approximate start and end times, the total number of minutes for each activity, and any relevant notes for each activity. This information can be filled in on the TPITOS Scoring Form during the observation or after the observation based on your notes.

Because the observation is designed for both infant and toddler classroom environments, **some Items and Indicators are not relevant for every environment** (e.g., Items addressing challenging behavior or peer interactions are pertinent for toddlers but not infants, in most cases). For Indicators that do not apply as readily to *infant* care settings, the word toddlers is used and underlined. These Indicators may be scored as N/A if they are not applicable to the age group you are observing. When observing in a mixed-age setting, observers should use discretion and good judgment to determine the best approach to such Items. Please refer to the Manual for **Elaborations**, which further define and provide examples and nonexamples for each Indicator.

OBSERVATIONAL AND INTERVIEW ITEMS

Please refer to the Manual for complete scoring directions. The Observational and Interview Items appear on pages 3–15 of the TPITOS Scoring Form. To score these Items, record Y for Yes, N for No, or N/A for Not Applicable in the appropriate cells based on the presence or absence of the Indicators. The Indicators for which N/A can be scored are identified with a **N/A**. Additional clarification is provided in Appendix B.

For **Items 1–7**, provide a score for each Indicator during each type of routine observed. For instance, if you observed free play, a structured group activity, and a care routine, each Indicator receives a score under each routine. The overall Indicator score is based on the score most frequently given across routines. This will be addressed in the Ending the Observation section. For **Items 8–11**, provide a score for each Indicator based on the overall observation period, *not* within specific routines. One score is given for the whole observation. Record this score in the shaded Y/N column.

For **Items 12 and 13**, provide a score based on teacher reporting during the interview. These Items are identified by *Int.* in the Notes column. Determine the score for each Indicator based on the teacher’s responses.

For **Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11**, some Indicators are scored by either observation or interview and are identified by *Obs.* and *Int.* in the Notes column. Observers should first try to score these Items based on the classroom observation. Then, if the observation does not provide enough information or evidence to score that Indicator, observers may ask the related interview question and use the teacher’s response to score that Indicator.

The Interview Worksheet (pp. 19–21) lists all the Items, Indicators, and questions that may be addressed in the interview. You may use this worksheet to see all interview questions in one place. After the interview, transfer scores from the Interview Worksheet to the appropriate cells in the TPITOS Scoring Form to calculate accurate Item totals.

RED FLAGS

Please read the descriptions of the 11 Red Flags (pp. 16–18) and consider them throughout your observation. Most Red Flags focus on the teacher being observed, although some are scored for the overall classroom as indicated by cell shading. **All Red Flags must be scored.** Circle Yes or No in the appropriate cell based on the presence or absence of the Red Flag behavior. If a teacher you are not actively observing demonstrates a Red Flag practice, record this in the Notes column for future reference.

ENDING THE OBSERVATION

When you have completed your observation, record the number of children and adults in the classroom and the time the observation ended on page 1 of the TPITOS Scoring Form. You may proceed directly to the interview or do so at another time the same day or the next day, if necessary. Score all TPITOS Indicators, including Red Flags, **immediately** after completing the observation and interview.

Once the 2-hour observation and the interview is complete, determine the overall Indicator scores for **Items 1–7** in the shaded Y/N column based on the score most frequently given across routines. For example, if Yes is recorded for two of three routines, mark Y in the shaded Y/N column. Conversely, if Yes is recorded for only one of the three routines, mark N in the shaded Y/N column. If there are even numbers of routines scored Y and N, refer to Chapter 5 of the Manual for scoring instructions. Complete directions for determining total scores for all Items can be found in the Manual.

Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS™) for Infant-Toddler Classrooms

RESEARCH EDITION



Date of observation: 9/10/2018 Start time: 9:30 AM
 Program/Center name: Southside Child Care Center End time: 11:30 AM
 Classroom name: Twos Class
 Teacher name/ID: Mary Richards Observer name/ID: Tonya Jones

Please note if the observation is interrupted or stopped because the teacher or majority of children leave the classroom or are engaged in an activity or routine that is not observed. If that occurs, indicate the time you stopped the observation, the time the observation was resumed, and the length of time the observation was suspended.

Time observation stopped: _____ Time observation resumed: _____

Length of time (in minutes) the observation was suspended: _____

Notes, if applicable: _____

Number of adults present when

observation begins 2 observation ends 2

Number of children present when

observation begins 9 observation ends 9

Age range of children present:

Years/Months 2 years, 0 months to Years/Months 2 years, 10 months

To most effectively answer Item 1 (CBR8) and Item 8, ask the teacher the following questions and record the response PRIOR TO THE OBSERVATION:

"Are there children present today who are unable to communicate with you in the same way as other children in the class because they have language delays or disabilities? If yes, how many?" ☐ Yes (# of children _____) ☒ No

"Are there children present today who need information presented to them in a different way because they are DLLs? If yes, how many?" ☐ Yes (# of children _____) ☒ No

OPTIONAL: "Is there additional information you would like to share with me before we begin the observation (e.g., goals, challenges)?" _____

NOTES:

[illegible]

1. Teacher provides opportunities for communication and building relationships.

| | INDICATOR | FREE PLAY | STRUCTURED GROUP | CARE ROUTINES | OUTDOORS | Y/N | NOTES |
|------------|--|-----------|------------------|---------------|----------|-----|-------|
| CBR1 | Teacher talks often to individual children. | Y | Y | Y | | Y | |
| CBR2 | Teacher joins in children's activities and follows the child's lead by matching the focus of his or her attention to the child's focus of attention. | Y | N | Y | | Y | |
| CBR3 | Teacher comments on children's interests, activities, or actions. | Y | N | Y | | Y | |
| CBR4 | Teacher imitates and/or expands upon children's vocalizations or imitates actions. | Y | Y | Y | | Y | |
| CBR5 | Teacher listens and responds to children's attempts to communicate. | Y | Y | Y | | Y | |
| CBR6 | Teacher encourages child communication, skills, behaviors, and activities through positive, descriptive statements. | Y | Y | N | | Y | |
| CBR7 | Teacher provides opportunities for children to initiate social interactions and provides time throughout interactions for the child to take a turn or form a response. | Y | N | N | | N | |
| CBR8 | Teacher uses alternative strategies for communicating with children who have language delays or are DLLs. | | | | | N/A | |
| YES TOTAL: | | | | | | 6 | |
| NO TOTAL: | | | | | | 1 | |

NOTES:

7. Teacher responds to children in distress and manages challenging behaviors.

| | INDICATOR | FREE PLAY | STRUCTURED GROUP | CARE ROUTINES | OUTDOORS | Y/N | NOTES |
|-------------|--|-----------|------------------|---------------|----------|-----|---|
| RDC1 N/A | Teacher's tone remains calm, supportive, and positive during children's distressful or challenging episodes. | Y | Y | N/A | | Y | Remained calm when toddler ran away from circle time. |
| RDC2 N/A | Teacher immediately responds to children in distress to assess children's status. | Y | Y | N/A | | Y | |
| RDC3 N/A | Teacher provides positive attention to <u>toddlers</u> when they have calmed down and are behaving appropriately. | Y | Y | N/A | | Y | |
| RDC4 N/A | Teacher uses a challenging situation as an opportunity to help children recognize and deal with emotions. | N | N | N/A | | N | Didn't use feeling words to describe feelings of the children when upset about truck |
| RDC5 N/A | Teacher provides support to <u>toddlers</u> who are angry or upset to help them with problem solving, when appropriate. | Y | N | N/A | | Y | |
| RDC6 N/A | Teacher uses strategies such as redirection and/or planned ignoring with individual <u>toddlers</u> who are in distress or engage in occasional episodes of challenging behavior. Interview Question: "Tell me what strategies you follow when children have occasional episodes of challenging behavior (e.g., physical aggression, screaming, taking others' toys)?" | Y | Y | N/A | | Y | Obs Teacher used favorite song to encourage toddler to rejoin circle time. Int. |
| RDC7 N/A | Teacher uses a variety of strategies to console, soothe, or calm children who are in distress and individualizes responses according to children and situations. Interview Question: "Tell me about different ways that you comfort children who are in distress (e.g., picking up an infant, problem solving with a toddler)?" | Y | N | N/A | | Y | Obs Int. |
| YES TOTAL: | | | | | | 6 | |
| NO TOTAL: | | | | | | 1 | |

NOTES:

Red Flags

Red Flags are practices that are inconsistent with the Pyramid Model. Circle Yes or No based on the presence or absence of Red Flags for the teacher, entire classroom, or both as indicated. Because Red Flags indicate problematic practice that may require immediate feedback, you may use the Notes column to record Red Flags demonstrated by other adults in the classroom.

| PRACTICES | TEACHER | CLASSROOM | NOTES |
|---|---------|-----------|-------|
| Responsive to Individual Children | | | |
| 1. Children spend large amounts of time disengaged, without assistance from this teacher to become engaged. Examples: Children are left in play area for extended periods of time without teacher engagement; teacher is on his or her cell phone for long periods of time. Nonexample: Teacher sits on the floor with children, is supportive of children, and is engaged in a finger paint activity but glances at his or her phone briefly. | Yes | No | |
| 2. Teacher rarely speaks to and/or engages children. Examples: Teacher gives a bottle to an infant and does not say anything to the child. Or, teacher sits on floor next to children playing but does not talk to children. Nonexample: Teacher is an English language learner and struggles with some vocabulary or pronunciation while interacting with children but is generally speaking with and engaged with children. | Yes | No | |
| 3. Teacher seldom makes eye contact with children during interactions. Examples: Teacher changes a diaper without looking at the child's face. Teacher consistently fails to make eye contact with children when discussing instances of challenging behavior. Nonexample: Teacher makes eye contact on occasion but not as frequently as deemed necessary during care routines. This would, however, be scored No in Item 2 (Teacher uses a warm, responsive tone, makes eye contact, and smiles in his or her interactions with individual children [DWR3]). | Yes | No | |
| 4. Classroom staff expect children in the class to be on the same schedule for activities such as feeding or diapering instead of attending to individual children's needs for personal care. Examples: Infants nap on the same schedule, and there is no indication that this schedule would be flexible for children on a different sleep schedule. Meals and snacks are offered only at predesignated times without exception. Nonexamples: Teacher attempts to offer nap time to an infant who seems fussy and tired during a structured activity (e.g., art) but after approximately 15 minutes takes the infant out of the crib after it is clear the infant will not be napping. Teacher does not let all children go outside with the teaching assistant because to do so would put the center out of the adult-child ratio requirement. | | Yes | No |

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| PRACTICES | TEACHER | CLASSROOM | NOTES |
|--|---------|-----------|-------|
| Promoting Emotional Expression and Social Interaction | | | |
| 5. Teacher uses flat affect when talking with infants and toddlers. Examples: While talking with a child, teacher's tone of voice is flat and lacks any emotion or enthusiasm. Teacher leads activities, such as story-book time and playtime, without any excitement and with flat affect. Nonexample: Teacher's affect is uncharacteristically flat during a brief play period of the observation, but you observe the teacher to be expressive and animated throughout most of the observation. | Yes | No | |
| 6. Teacher speaks harshly to children. Examples: Teacher uses a harsh or negative tone while responding to a child. Teacher uses large amounts of sarcasm when talking with children. Nonexample: Teacher's tone could be interpreted as "firm" when discussing ongoing biting incidences between a biter and the one bitten. Out of context this could appear harsh, but based on your observation, you see that in general, the tone of the teacher's communication to children is positive. This may, however, be scored as No in Item 7 (Teacher's tone remains calm, supportive, and positive during children's distressful or challenging episodes [RDC1]). | Yes | No | |
| Responds to Children's Distress and Challenging Behavior | | | |
| 7. Children seem generally unhappy or upset. Example: Multiple children spend a greater amount of time crying or fussing than might be expected (e.g., more than just the time it takes to finish what the teacher is doing and then responding; 5-10 minutes of not responding), or the majority of the children are unhappy or upset. Nonexample: Teacher tells children they will not be going outside because of weather conditions, and multiple children become upset until they become engaged in an indoor activity. | | Yes | No |
| 8. Children who are distressed are left unattended. Examples: Teacher fails to attend to an infant crying in a crib or infant seat. A child has climbed up the slide and become scared and upset, and the teacher fails to respond in reasonable amount of time. Note: This Red Flag may be scored for either an individual teacher or for the classroom, but not both. Nonexample: Teacher is using planned ignoring with a child but is still attempting to redirect the child toward an appropriate activity. | Yes | No | Yes |
| 9. When problem behaviors occur, teacher uses punitive practices. Examples: When problem behaviors occur, the teacher responds by ignoring the child, using time-out, asking the parent to take the child home, ridiculing the child, speaking in a harsh tone or yelling, and/or pointing out the child's behavior to other adults or children. Nonexample: Teacher firmly points out child's behavior as a safety reminder (e.g., "Remember when Pete climbed up on the shelves and they fell over? Feet on the floor, please."). | Yes | No | |

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| PRACTICES | TEACHER | CLASSROOM | NOTES |
|--|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Environmental Support for Social Engagement | | | |
| 10. The environment is set up such that children are isolated from each other for long periods of time. Examples: Infants remain awake in cribs for extended periods of time (e.g., 30 minutes after nap) or in infant seats for lengthy periods of time without the ability to interact with other children. Children spend large amounts of time (20–30 minutes) involved in solitary activities (e.g., playing with playdough alone, playing alone on the computer). Nonexample: A child who chooses to play alone with a toy is allowed to do so, but shortly thereafter, teacher approaches and follows the child's lead as he or she joins in the activity. | | Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 11. The environment is arranged in a way that prevents children from engaging with materials, toys, and/or activities. Examples: Children remain in cribs or infant seats for extended periods of time or materials, toys, or books are primarily stored out of reach of children. A room for infants and young toddlers is arranged in such a way that it is more preschool oriented. Nonexample: Materials that require teacher supervision are placed out of reach of children (e.g., art or craft materials, shaving cream for sensory exploration). | | Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| Enter number of Red Flags scored Yes and number of Red Flags scored Yes + No | Teacher | Classroom | |
| YES TOTAL: | 0 | 1 | |
| YES + NO TOTAL: | 6 | 5 | |

Date of observation: 9/10/2018 Start time: 9:30 AM
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 Observer name/ID: Tonya Jones Teacher name/ID: Mary Richards

OBSERVATIONAL/INTERVIEW ITEMS SCORING SUMMARY

Directions:

Observational/Interview Items 1-13

1. For each Item, record the number of Indicators scored Yes. Enter the sum into the appropriate cells in column A. Exclude Indicators scored as N/A.
2. For each Item, record the number of Indicators scored No. Enter the sum into the appropriate cells in column B. Exclude Indicators scored as N/A.
3. Add the Totals for column A and column B. Enter the sum into the appropriate cells in column C.
4. To obtain the *percentage* of indicators scored Yes, divide the Total in column A by the Total in column C and enter the percentage score in the appropriate cells in column D.
5. Use this summary to enter your data into a TPITOS Excel Scoring Spreadsheet available at <http://www.brookespublishing.com/tpitos-scoring-spreadsheet>.

| Observational Items | A. Total number of Indicators scored Yes | B. Total number of Indicators scored No | C. Total number of Indicators scored. (A + B) | D. Percentage of Indicators scored Yes (A / C * 100) |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| SAMPLE | 5 | 2 | 7 | 71% |
| 1 (CBR). Teacher provides opportunities for communication and building relationships. | 6 | 1 | 7 | 86% |
| 2 (DWR). Teacher demonstrates warmth and responsivity to individual children. | 6 | 1 | 7 | 86% |
| 3 (PPI). Teacher promotes positive peer interactions. | 7 | 2 | 9 | 78% |
| 4 (CAE). Teacher promotes children's active engagement. | 4 | 1 | 5 | 80% |
| 5 (REF). Teacher is responsive to children's expression of emotions and teaches about feelings. | 4 | 3 | 7 | 57% |
| 6 (CBE). Teacher communicates and provides feedback about developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations. | 5 | 2 | 7 | 71% |
| 7 (RDC). Teacher responds to children in distress and manages challenging behaviors. | 6 | 1 | 7 | 86% |
| 8 (SMD). Teacher uses specific strategies or modifications for children with disabilities/delays or who are DLLs. | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 9 (SRT). Teacher conveys predictability through carefully planned schedule, routines, and transitions. | 4 | 1 | 5 | 80% |
| 10 (EA). Environment is arranged to foster social-emotional development. | 4 | 0 | 4 | 100% |
| 11 (TCP). Teacher collaborates with his or her peers (e.g., other teachers, mental health practitioners, allied health professionals) to support children's social-emotional development. | 5 | 0 | 5 | 100% |
| 12 (EEP). Teacher has effective strategies for engaging parents in supporting their children's social-emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors. | 5 | 0 | 5 | 100% |
| 13 (CWF). Teacher has effective strategies for communicating with families and promoting family involvement in the classroom. | 3 | 2 | 5 | 60% |
| TOTALS: | 59 | 14 | 73 | 81% |

RED FLAGS SCORING SUMMARY

Directions:*Red Flags 1–11*

1. Determine the number of Red Flags scored Yes for the Teacher and for the Classroom. Enter these numbers into the appropriate cells in column A.
2. Determine the total number of Red Flags scored Yes and No for the Teacher and for the Classroom. Enter these numbers into the appropriate cells in column B. For Red Flag #8, either the teacher or the classroom should be scored Yes or No, but not both.
3. Obtain the sum for column A and enter it in the Total row. You do not need to obtain the sum for column B. The total number of Red Flags scored (Yes and No) is always 11. The sum is therefore provided in the Total row in column B.
4. To obtain the percentage of Red Flags scored Yes, divide the total in column A by the total in column B and enter the percentage score in column C. For example, if you record Yes for 2 Red Flags, divide 2 by 11 to obtain a total score of 18%.

| Red Flags Totals | A. Number of Red Flags scored Yes | B. Total Red Flags scored (Yes + No) | C. Percentage of Red Flags scored Yes (A/B * 100) |
|------------------|---|--|---|
| Teacher | 0 | 6 | 0% |
| Classroom | 1 | 5 | 20% |
| Total | 1 | 11 | 9% |
| Sample | 2 | 11 | 18% |

NOTES: