



Using the  
**TEACHING PYRAMID INFANT–TODDLER OBSERVATION SCALE**  
for INFANT–TODDLER CLASSROOMS  
Webinar

*Presented by*  
*Kathryn Bigelow, Judith Carta, Dwight Irvin, & Mary Louise Hemmeter*

**BROOKES**

## Presenters



Kathryn Bigelow, Ph.D.



Judith Carta, Ph.D.



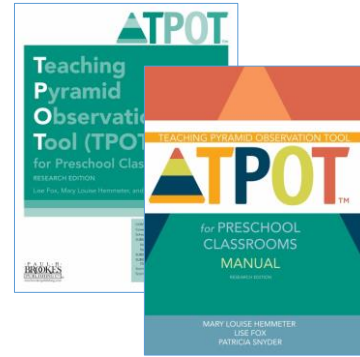
Dwight Irvin, Ph.D.



Mary Louise Hemmeter, Ph.D.



## About the TPITOS



Modeled after the TPOT

## Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children





## About the TPITOS

- **Only tool** available to measure Pyramid Model practices in infant and toddler classrooms
- **Classroom snapshot** of adult behaviors and environment that support and promote social and emotional development
- Used in **center-based settings** caring for **infants & toddlers** (up to 36 months)
  - Early Head Start, child care, early childhood special education classrooms



## How the TPITOS is used

- Determine how teachers are implementing the **Tier 1 Universal Practices** of the Pyramid Model
- Provides individual and team **feedback** to reinforce teacher strengths
- Helps guide individual and team **goal-setting** to strengthen specific teaching competencies
- Informs **coaching and professional development** efforts
- Used as an **ongoing** coaching tool, not a one time event
- Supplements other tools (ITERS, CLASS)
- Can be administered as a running TPITOS for focused observation



## Who completes the TPITOS?

- Understands the **Pyramid Model**
- Has experience working in **infant and toddler settings**
- Has a solid understanding of infant-toddler Pyramid practices
- Has, at minimum, completed the Infant-Toddler Modules
  
- Conducted by **trained observer** - coach, mental health consultant, mentor teacher, supervisor, researcher



## Comparing TPITOS and TPOT

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are they the same?           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess implementation of practices associated with Pyramid Model for promoting social-emotional development</li> <li>• Administered by trained observers</li> <li>• 2 hour observation</li> <li>• Structure:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items and indicators</li> <li>• Red Flags</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are they different?           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPITOS: Infants &amp; toddlers (0–3)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPOT: Preschool settings (2-5 years)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• TPITOS: Observe one teacher at a time               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPOT: Lead Teacher and other adults</li> </ul> </li> <li>• TPITOS: Assess practices within routines               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPOT: Across all routines combined</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|---|---|



## Structure of the TPITOS

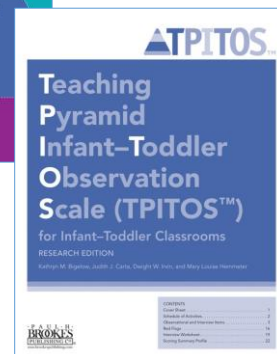
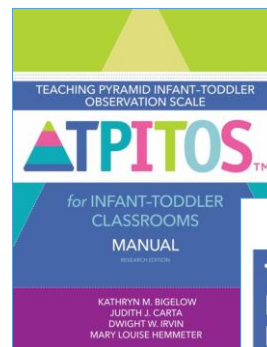


- Observation
  - 2 hour **classroom observation**
  - 15–20 minute **teacher interview**
  - **Red Flags**
- Scores provided
  - Item and Overall percent of practices implemented
  - Percent of Red Flags scored “yes”



## Products

- **Manual**
  - Administration instructions
  - Items and Indicator elaborations
  - Red Flags
  - Scoring guidance and criteria
  - Scoring clarifications (“helpers”)
- **Scoring Form**
  - Teacher information
  - Items and Indicators
  - Red Flags
  - Interview worksheet



## TPITOS Items

- 13 Observational and Interview Items

*Sample: Teacher provides opportunities for communication and building relationships.*

- 2 – 9 Indicators under each Item
- Total of 78 Indicators

*Sample: Teacher talks often to individual children.*

**TPITOS™**

ATI

OBSERVATIONAL AND INTERVIEW ITEMS

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.						
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.						
CBR3	Teacher comments on children's interests, activities, or actions.						
CBR4	Teacher imitates and/or expands upon children's vocalizations or imitates actions.						
CBR5	Teacher listens and responds to children's attempts to communicate.						
CBR6	Teacher encourages child communication, skills, behaviors, and activities through positive, descriptive statements.						
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.						
CBR8	Teacher uses alternative strategies for communicating with children who have language delays or are DLLs.						
						YES TOTAL:	
						NO TOTAL:	

## TPITOS Scoring Form

- Indicators are scored "yes," "no," or "not applicable"
- Form indicates
  - Items scored via observation or interview
  - Items that can be scored N/A

**TPITOS™**

ATI

OBSERVATIONAL AND INTERVIEW ITEMS

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

	INDICATOR	FREE PLAY	STRUCTURED GROUP	CARE ROUTINES	OUTDOORS	Y/N	NOTES
RD01	Teacher's tone remains calm, supportive, and positive during children's distressed or challenging episodes.						
RD02	Teacher immediately responds to children in distress to assess children's status.						
RD03	Teacher provides positive attention to toddlers when they have calmed down and are behaving appropriately.						
RD04	Teacher uses a challenging situation as an opportunity to help children recognize and deal with emotions.						
RD05	Teacher provides support to toddlers who are angry or upset to help them with problem solving, when appropriate.						
RD06	Teacher uses strategies such as redirection and/or planned ignoring with individual toddlers 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)?"						Obs.  Int.
RD07	Teacher uses a variety of strategies to console, soothe, or calm children who are in distress and individualize 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)?"						Obs.  Int.
						YES TOTAL:	
						NO TOTAL:	
NOTES:							

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## TPITOS Elaborations

- Elaborations are descriptions of each Indicator
  - Definitions
  - Scoring criteria
  - Indicators that are appropriate for toddlers
  - Whether “n/a” can be scored



Bigelow, Carta, Irwin, & Hommeyer

### PP12. Teacher encourages children to be aware of and care about their peers in the classroom.

To score Yes, you should witness the teacher intentionally bringing attention to a peer who is present or absent. For example, the teacher makes toddlers aware of a peer who is out sick, or the teacher might help a toddler provide comfort to a peer who is upset about losing a pet. Score No if the teacher is clearly missing opportunities to help toddlers learn to care for one another (e.g., a child brings a toy to another child who is upset during parent drop-off, and the teacher does not acknowledge the interaction).

### PP13. Teacher encourages children to initiate or maintain interactions with their peers during activities and routines.

To score Yes, you should see at least two occasions of the teacher helping children initiate/maintain interactions with their peers. For instance, the teacher might encourage two infants to face each other during feeding times and comment on each other's activities. The teacher might point out when one infant is crawling toward another and say, "I think she's coming over to see you." The teacher helps a child play alone with large blocks understand that an approaching, curious peer would like to play blocks with her. The teacher provides suggestions (e.g., "tag-Jenny on the shoulder and ask if you can play") to a child who has difficulty entering a group of peers who are playing with cars and trucks. The teacher encourages a child to get other children involved in an activity (e.g., teacher suggests Ben take the book to Amy). Score No if you see fewer than two instances of the teacher helping a child initiate or maintain an interaction with a peer.

### PP14. Teacher helps toddlers work cooperatively during activities/routines.

To score Yes, you should see the teacher provide toddlers with ideas as to how they can work together. For example, a teacher suggests one toddler hand another a block to put in a basket at cleanup time. The teacher helps a toddler give a toy to a peer to put away during cleanup. The teacher helps toddlers work together to build a dragon by giving children assigned roles (e.g., one child is the tail builder, and another one is the piece finder). Score No if instances of toddlers working cooperatively together are stopped by the teacher (e.g., children are making a boat together with playdough and the teacher directs them to work with the playdough by themselves) or when the majority of opportunities to help children work cooperatively are missed by the teacher. Score N/A if there are no toddlers present.

### PP15. Teacher provides positive descriptive comments to children who are engaging in positive peer interactions.

To score Yes, you should hear the teacher support positive peer interactions through positive statements on two occasions. For example, the teacher tells a toddler, "You did a good job sharing the blocks" when sharing of this classroom material occurs. The teacher provides a positive statement to infants who are both playing with an activity box (e.g., "He sees you smiling, and he likes it."). The teacher tells toddlers they are doing a great job taking turns running through the sprinkler. Teacher describes a toddler's positive behavior toward another (e.g., "You handed Danny a block so he could finish his tower"). Score No if the teacher fails to acknowledge a child's positive behavior toward a peer on two occasions.

Indicator Elaboration

Scoring criteria

Toddler-specific

n/a

## TPITOS Items

1. Communication & building relationships
2. Warmth and responsivity
3. Peer interactions
4. Active engagement
5. Responsive and teaching about feelings
6. Feedback about expectations
7. Responsive to distress/challenging behavior
8. Strategies/modifications for disabilities/delays, dual-language learners
9. Schedule, routines, and transitions
10. Room environment
11. Collaboration
12. Engaging parents
13. Communication with families







## TPITOS Routines

- Items 1-7 scored across routines
  - Free play
  - Structured group
  - Care routines
  - Outdoors



## Observation/Interview Items

- Observation/Interview Indicators
  - If you are unable to score the indicator during the observation (as noted on scoring form), ask the interview question

*Sample: Strategies and modifications for children who are dual language learners*

OBSERVATIONAL AND INTERVIEW ITEMS				TPITOS
8. Teacher uses specific strategies or modifications for children with disabilities/delays or who are dual language learners (DLLs).				
	INDICATOR	Y/N	NOTES	
SMD1 N/A	Teacher uses or reports using specific strategies or modifications to support the social-emotional development of children with disabilities/delays. Interview Question: "Can you describe any specific strategies, modifications, activities, or materials you use with children with disabilities or delays to support social-emotional development?"		Obs.	Observe or Interview
			Int.	
SMD2 N/A	Teacher uses or reports using specific strategies or modifications to promote social-emotional development with children who are DLLs. Interview Question: "Can you describe any specific strategies, modifications, activities, or materials you use with children who are DLLs to promote social-emotional development?"		Obs.	
			Int.	
		YES TOTAL:		
		NO TOTAL:		



## Interview Worksheet



- 20 Indicators that can be scored via teacher interview are consolidated on an Interview Worksheet
- Ask “Observe/Interview” items only when they could not be scored via observation
- Interview is conducted immediately after the observation

**INTERVIEW WORKSHEET**

TPITOS

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher name/ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Program/Center name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer name/ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Classroom name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** The appendices of the items, indicators, and questions from the Teaching Pyramid Follow-Up Observation Scale that pertain to the interview. You may use this worksheet to score of interview questions in one place. This worksheet contains items and indicators that are scored only during an observation as well as observational items that may be scored based on teacher reporting. The left and right sides of the worksheet are for Observational items that also include an interview question.

**Before beginning the interview:** Circle the items that have not yet been scored through observation and should be addressed in an interview. For these items, a suggested interview question is provided. You may use additional clarifying questions or provide the teacher with additional clarifying information or needed feedback prior to the Y/N column and add any relevant notes to the Notes column. If you use the worksheet during the interview, please transfer your scores back to the TPITOS items in the TPITOS Scoring Form so that accurate item totals can be calculated.

		Y/N	NOTES
<b>3. Teacher promotes positive peer interactions.</b>			
<b>PPR</b>	Teacher uses a variety (i.e., more than one) of developmentally appropriate strategies and/or materials (e.g., books, puppets) to encourage peer-to-peer interactions.		Obs./Int.
	<b>Interview Question:</b> “What types of strategies and/or materials do you use to promote positive peer interactions?”		
<b>4. Teacher promotes children's active engagement.</b>			
<b>CAES</b>	Adults in the room work together to make sure all children are engaged.		Obs./Int.
	<b>Interview Question:</b> “Tell me how you work together with other teachers in your classroom to make sure that each child in your class gets and stays engaged.”		
<b>5. Teacher is responsive to children's expression of emotions and teaches about feelings.</b>			
<b>REF7</b>	Teacher uses a variety of strategies to teach children about feeling words.		Obs./Int.
	<b>Interview Question:</b> “What strategies do you use to teach feeling words (e.g., role play, feelings chart, talking throughout the day, reading books)? Please describe a few examples.”		
<b>6. Teacher communicates and provides feedback about developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations.</b>			
<b>CBF7</b>	Teacher anticipates potential conflict situations or instances in which behavior may not meet classroom expectations and provides guidance to children before the situations get out of control.		Obs./Int.
	<b>Interview Question:</b> “What steps do you take to minimize conflicts between children or prevent behavior that does not meet classroom expectations?”		
<b>7. Teacher responds to children in distress and manages challenging behaviors.</b>			
<b>MDCA</b>	Teacher uses strategies such as redirection and/or planned ignoring with individual children who are in distress or engage in occasional episodes of challenging behavior.		Obs./Int.
	<b>Interview Question:</b> “Tell me what strategies you follow when children have occasional episodes of challenging behavior (e.g., physical aggression, screaming, talking over others, toys)?”		

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Continued on next page 19

## TPITOS Item Scoring



- Indicators scored for each routine observed
- Overall Indicator score determined from routine scores

**OBSERVATIONAL AND INTERVIEW ITEMS**

TPITOS

**1. Teacher provides opportunities for communication and building relationships.** ← Item

	INDICATOR	FREE PLAY	STRUCTURED GROUP	CARE ROUTINES	OUTDOORS	Y/N	NOTES
CBR1	Teacher talks often to individual children.	Y	Y	N		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	N		N	
CBR3	Teacher comments on children's						

← Indicators

## TPITOS Red Flags

- 11 Red Flags

*Samples: Teacher rarely speaks to and/or engages children.*

*Children who are distressed are left unattended.*

- Scored for observed teacher or classroom



**RED FLAGS**

**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
<b>Responsive to Individual Children</b>			
1. Children spend large amounts of time disengaged, without assistance from this teacher to become engaged. <i>Examples:</i> 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. <i>None sample:</i> 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. <i>Examples:</i> 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. <i>None sample:</i> 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. <i>Examples:</i> 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. <i>None sample:</i> 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 [DIVERS]).	Yes	No	
4. Classroom staff repeat 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. <i>Examples:</i> Infants nap on the same schedule, and there is no indication that this schedule would be feasible for children on a different sleep schedule. Meals and snacks are offered only at predetermined times without exception. <i>None sample:</i> 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 room after it is clear the infant will not be napping. Teacher does not let all children go outside with the teaching assistant because he or she would put the center out of the adult:child ratio requirement.		Yes	No

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## TPITOS Red Flags

- Children disengaged
- Teacher engagement
- Eye contact
- Schedule
- Affect
- Harsh talk
- Children generally unhappy
- Distressed children unattended
- Punitive practices
- Isolation
- Lack of materials, toys, activities





# TPITOS Scoring Summary

**SCORING SUMMARY PROFILE**

Date of observation: \_\_\_\_\_ Start time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Program/Center name: \_\_\_\_\_ End time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Observer name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**OBSERVATION/INTERVIEW ITEMS SCORING SUMMARY**

Directions: (Observation/Interview Items 1-12)  
 1. For each item, record the number of indicators scored Yes. Enter the sum into the appropriate cell in column A. Exclude indicators scored as No.  
 2. For each item, record the number of indicators scored No. Enter the sum into the appropriate cell in column B. Exclude indicators scored as No.  
 3. Add the total for column A and column B. Enter the sum into the appropriate cell 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 cell 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 x 100)
<b>SAMPLE</b>	2	2	7	28%
1. CWS: Teacher provides opportunities for communication and building relationships.				
2. DWS: Teacher demonstrates warmth and responsiveness to individual children.				
3. PPS: Teacher promotes positive peer interactions.				
4. CAS: Teacher promotes children's active engagement.				
5. SES: Teacher is responsive to children's expression of emotions and teaches about feelings.				
6. CBS: Teacher communicates and provides feedback about developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations.				
7. RDS: Teacher responds to children in distress and manages challenging behaviors.				
8. DMS: Teacher uses specific strategies or modifications for children with disabilities/delays, or who are dual-language learners.				
9. SPS: Teacher conveys predictability through carefully planned schedule, routines, and transitions.				
10. SRS: Environment is arranged to foster social-emotional development.				
11. TCS: Teacher collaborates with his or her team (e.g., other teachers, teaching assistants, school health professionals) to support children's social-emotional development.				
12. PPS: Teacher has effective strategies for engaging parents in supporting his or her child's social-emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors.				
13. SPS: Teacher has effective strategies for communicating with families and promoting family involvement in the classroom.				
<b>TOTALS</b>				

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**SCORING SUMMARY PROFILE cont.**

**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 for the Teacher and for the Classroom. Enter these numbers into the appropriate cells in column B.  
 3. Determine the percentage of Red Flags scored Yes for the Teacher and for the Classroom. Enter these percentages into the appropriate cells in column C.  
 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 scored Yes for 2 Red Flags, divide 2 by 11 to obtain a total score of 18%.

Red Flag Item	A. Number of Red Flags scored Yes	B. Total Red Flags scored Yes	C. Percentage of Red Flags scored Yes (A/B x 100)
Teacher			
Classroom			
<b>Total</b>		11	
<b>Sample</b>	2	11	18%

**NOTES:**

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## Scoring Spreadsheet

Teacher and Classroom Name/ID: **Sarah**  
 Program Name/ID: **Little Learners**

TPITOS Item	Wave 1			Wave 2			Wave 3		
	Date	# yes	%	Date	# yes	%	Date	# yes	%
1. Provides opportunities for communication and building relationships	7/15/2018	6	86%						
2. Demonstrates warmth and responsiveness to individual children		7	100%						
3. Promotes positive peer interactions		0	0%						
4. Promotes children's active engagement		3	75%						
5. Responsive to children's expression of emotions and teaches about feelings		7	100%						
6. Communicates and provides feedback about developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations		6	86%						
7. Responds to children in distress and manages challenging behaviors		7	100%						
8. Uses specific strategies or modifications for children with disabilities/delays, or who are dual-language learners		2	100%						
9. Conveys predictability through carefully planned schedule, routines, and transitions		5	100%						
10. Environment is arranged to foster social-emotional development		5	100%						
11. Collaborates with his/her peers to support children's social-emotional development		5	83%						
12. Has effective strategies for engaging parents in supporting his or her child's social-emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors		5	100%						
13. Has effective strategies for communicating with families and promoting family involvement in the classroom		5	100%						
<b>Average of Items</b>		71	93%		0	0%		0	0%

**Red Flags**

	# yes	# possible	%
Teacher	1	7	14%
Classroom	1	4	25%

**Sarah**

Percentage of Indicators Scored Yes for Each TPITOS Item

7/15/2018

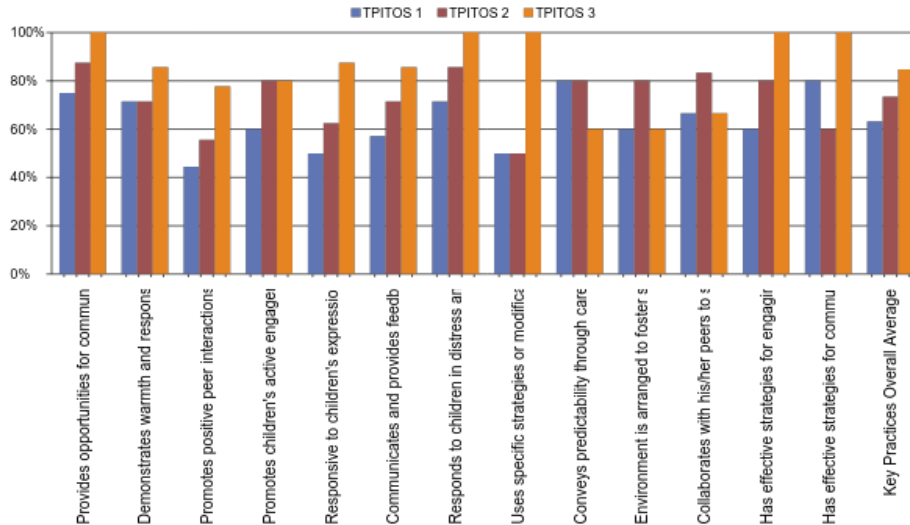
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## TPITOS Graph – Individual Teacher



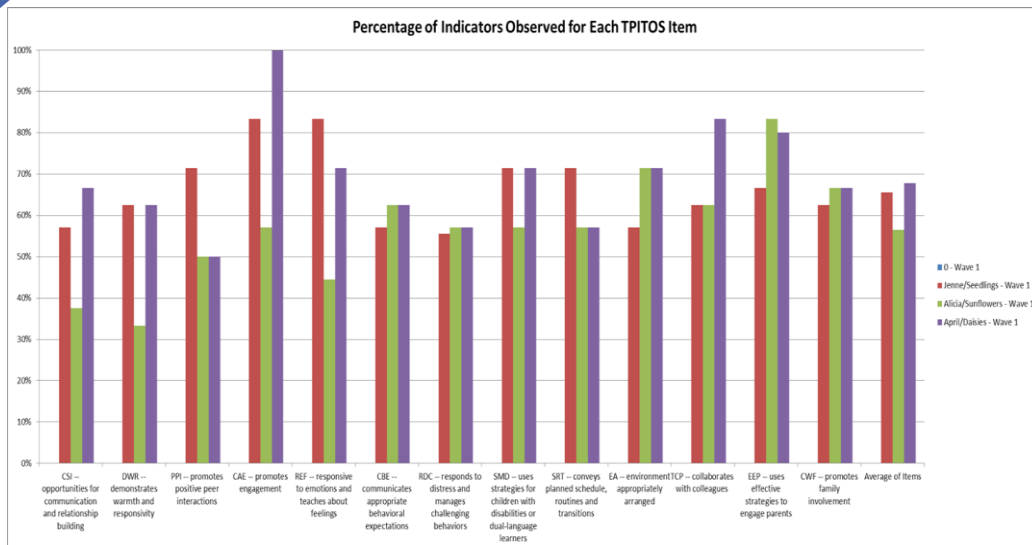
Percentage of Indicators Observed for Each TPITOS Item



## TPITOS Graph – Multiple Teachers



Percentage of Indicators Observed for Each TPITOS Item





## Benefits of Using the TPITOS

- Ensures **effective implementation** of the PBIS-based Pyramid Model
- Supports **professional development efforts**
- **Strengthens the practices** of individual teachers, teams, and entire programs
- **Monitors the success** of quality improvement initiatives
- Builds a **foundation for social-emotional competence** in the critical first years of life



“An **innovative and invaluable tool** for teachers in infant–toddler settings to create a **warm and responsive classroom environment** and to **improve children’s social-emotional skills.**”

*Jane Squires, Ph.D., Department of Special Education and Clinical Sciences, University of Oregon*



“The indicators of the TPITOS went a long way to forming **clear, attainable, practice-based learning objectives**. Teachers went from having a laundry list of goals that felt mysterious and unattainable, to having **clear next steps**. The TPITOS helps teachers build a common language among staff.”

*-Pyramid Coach*



## Training

- Certification training highly recommended for observers
- Inter-rater Reliability Training
- Will be available through Brookes on Location
- Also provided each spring at the National Training Institute (NTI) on Effective Practices: Addressing Challenging Behaviors in St. Petersburg, FL