



Developmental Environment Rating Scale (DERS)

What is the DERS?

The DERS focuses on qualities such as patience and persistence in children, precision and clarity in lessons, and order in the environment, which support the development of executive functions, literacy, and social-emotional learning. In Pennsylvania, the DERS is used in early childhood settings. The DERS is comprised of domains and items:

The DERS encompasses five domains:

- Initiation/Concentration
- Inhibitory Control
- Working Memory
- Linguistic/Cultural Fluency
- Social Fluency/Emotional Flexibility

The DERS is composed of 60 items in three observation categories:

- Child Behaviors
- Adult Behaviors
- Environmental Attributes

Which program(s) could use the DERS?

The DERS can be used in family, group or center-based programs. It measures quality of learning environments enrolling children ages 2.5-6 years. Although initially designed for Montessori programs, many of the concepts are universal and can easily be transferred to other early childhood settings.

The DERS Assessment Process

External DERS assessments are conducted by a reliable DERS assessor from the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) team. The DERS is a 1-hour timed observation that is conducted via an iPad app.

Internal DERS assessments are conducted by the program's internal assessment team. Programs partner with the Quality Coach and PQA team when planning for and conducting

internal assessment, and when analyzing the information collected during the internal assessment process.

How does the DERS support Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)?

The information gathered from a DERS assessment can be used by a program to understand the interactions between children, teachers, and the learning environment and to use that information to grow children's executive function, linguistic and cultural fluency, and social-emotional learning skills. The information gathered can also be used to help create the program's continuous quality improvement plan.

Additional Information/Training

Additional information on the DERS can be found at:

[https://www.ders-app.org/
Program Quality Assessment Professional Development](https://www.ders-app.org/Program%20Quality%20Assessment%20Professional%20Development)