

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
OBSERVATION SCHEDULES AND RATING SCALES:**

**Preliminary Scales for the Measurement of the Physical Environment of
Child Care Centers and Related Environments**

Second Edition

Gary T. Moore

**Center for Architecture and Urban Planning Research
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

**Publications in Architecture and Urban Planning
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ABSTRACT

This packet of schedules, scales, and procedures is intended for the systematic assessment of the quality of the physical environment of child care centers and related early childhood environments. Already in use in several places in North America, these instruments are reissued for research purposes only. A more comprehensive effort is currently underway to revise and extend these scales in order to develop an integrated set of validated scales for the description and evaluation of the physical environment of child care centers and related early childhood environments. Pp. vi + 74; rating scales.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE CENTER

Recommendations for Child Care Centers, by Gary T. Moore, Carol Gee Lane, Ann B. Hill, Uriel Cohen, & Tim McGinty, third revised edition 1994.

Recommendations for Children's Play Areas, by Uriel Cohen, Ann B. Hill, Carol Gee Lane, Tim McGinty, & Gary T. Moore, 1979.

Case Studies of Child Play Areas and Child Support Facilities, by Uriel Cohen, Gary T. Moore, & Tim McGinty, 1978.

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PREFACE

Enclosed are some of the observation schedules, rating scales, and procedures we have used in recent research on child-environment relations.

The preliminary procedures contained in this report are intended for describing and measuring limited aspects of the physical environment of child care centers and related environments. They were developed and tested in the early 1980s and have been used in a series of studies reported in the literature (see references below). They are based for the most part on a very few of a set of 115 patterns or working hypotheses about the relation of the physical environment of child care centers to subsequent social and cognitive behavior and development. The patterns were developed in conjunction with colleagues at the Center for Architecture and Urban Planning Research (references also below). The research testing the scales and instruments was conducted for the most part in conjunction with my doctoral dissertation in environmental psychology, accepted by Clark University in 1982. Immediately after the development of these scales, there was some interest in their use by others in the child development, child care, and environmental psychology research communities. Results obtained by using them have been reported in the scientific literature.

For some years, I misplaced the originals of the scales as our group moved on to other research questions and design applications. Numerous inquiries over these intervening years led me to want to find or reconstruct the original scales. Thanks to recently moving buildings, and turning my files upside down, the scales and other instruments have been recovered. We are reproducing them here in their original form in the hope they will be of some assistance to those interested in characterizing and evaluating the physical environment of child care centers and related early childhood environments.

My thanks to my colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee who worked with me in developing the original patterns for child care centers -- Uriel Cohen, Tim McGinty, Rick Jules, Carol Lane, Ann Hill, Barbara Armstrong, John Rahaim, and the staff of the Children's Environments Project from 1979 to 1983. My appreciation also to the Canada Council for the Arts and Humanities who underwrote the research on which the scales were based, and to my advisors at Clark University -- Professors Seymour Wapner, Ina Uzgiris, and William Damon -- who assisted in their construction via sharp insights and critiques. Thanks also to my former students Naomi Leiseroff and Marlene Sobczak who helped calibrate the scales and conduct the initial reliability tests on them. And my thanks to my current student, Nancy Genich, for uncovering the scales during our move. My gratitude to Elizabeth Prescott, Thelma Harms, and Bettye Caldwell, and their colleagues, whose own scales provided much of the impetus for the development of these instruments. Appreciation is extended also to Chris Gehman of the Childcare Resource and Research Unit at the University of Toronto for alerting me to a group of subsequent scales developed for evaluating the quality of child care centers.

I have labelled our scales "preliminary scales" for two very particular reasons. One, though they have been used in a series of our own and other investigators' studies in a number of places in North America, the results of which have been reported in the literature, and though some reliability and validity checks have been done on them, they are not as methodologically rigorous as you -- or I -- would now want. They are appropriate at this time, I believe, for *research purposes only*. Second, at the present time, two of my students and I are embarking on a pair of projects to develop a more complete and more methodologically rigorous set of scales for the description and evaluation of child care physical environments. If you are interested in these, please keep in touch and we'll let you know as soon as they are available.

Finally, my thanks and apologies to my colleagues over the years who have asked for these scales -- thanks for keeping asking so we would keep the search alive here, and apologies that you have had to wait so long for them. I hope they are still of some use to you.

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