

## CAREGIVER OBSERVATION FORM AND SCALE (COFAS)

This is the Caregiver Observation Form and Scale (COFAS) for recording behaviors of caregivers while interacting with children in a classroom setting. This form can be used with any age group of children between infancy and 12 years of age.

Please follow the steps listed below for filling out the form and in calculating the scores for the COFAS Scale.

### STEP 1:

Fill in the needed information as shown below before beginning your observations of each caregiver.

Example:	Caregiver #1
No. of children present at the beginning of caregiver observation:	7
No. of adults (excluding yourself) present at the beginning of caregiver observation:	2
Time of Observation:	9:30 a.m. p.m.
Name of caregivers observed:	Louise Martin

### STEP 2:

Observe each caregiver for 10 consecutive two-minute periods, pausing between observations to record. For each two-minute period, observe then record whether or not you observed each behavior listed on the form. Record by using either a "1", "3", or "4" code in the block corresponding to the observation period you are in. Use the "1" code if you did observe the specified behavior, "3" if you did not observe the specified behavior, and the "4" if you are unsure of whether you observed the behavior. Before you go to the next observation period, be sure that each block for that observation period has either a "1", "3", or "4" code in it.

### STEP 3:

For each observation period record the type of activity being done by the caregiver during your observation (e.g. listening to records, reading stories, art project).

**STEP 4:**

After you have recorded all of your observations, it will be necessary to multiply these observations by the weights attached to each of the specific behaviors observed. You will note that in the far right-hand column there are a series of numbers. These numbers are the weights that you multiply the individual observation blocks by. For example, in "Speak unsolicited to a child", let's say you observe this 6 out of 10 observation blocks:

		OBSERVATION BLOCKS										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Speak unsolicited to child	1	1	1	3	4	1	1	3	1	1	4	+2

To obtain the score for this particular behavior, you do the following:

- add all the (1)'s = 6
- multiply that number (6) by the weight in the right-hand column:  $6 \times (+2) = +12$

That gives you your score (+12) for this specific behavior. Three's and four's (3) & (4) are equal to zero (0) and are not added in. They do not affect the score positively or negatively.

Let's use another example, go to "Use food as reinforcement". Let's say you observe this 2 out of 10 observation blocks:

		OBSERVATION BLOCKS										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Use food as a reinforcement	13	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-3

To obtain the score for this particular behavior, you do the following:

- add all the (1)'s = 2
- multiply that number (2) by the weight in the right-hand column:  $2 \times (-3) = -6$

That gives you your score (-6) for this specific behavior. Three's and four's (3) & (4) are equal for zero (0) and are not added in. In this case, by default, they do affect the score positively.

Proceed with all the particular behaviors, as you did above. Then total your scores as follows:

Item	1	Score	+12
	2		+ 5
	3		+12

Item	4	Score	+3
	5		0
	6		+1
	7		-3
	8		0
	9		-1
	10		+15
	11		+2
	12		0
	13		-6
	14		0
	15		0
	16		0
	17		0
	18		0
	19		0
	20		0
	21		+5
	22		0
	23		0
	24		0
	25		0
	26		0
	27		0
	28		0
	29		0

Calculate you total score:

Total score = +50

Now check this total score against the scale for COFAS:

RATING	LEVEL	RANGE IN SCORES
Good	I	(+30) to (+130)
Fair	II	(-10) to (+29)
Poor	III	(-99) to (-11)
Non-optimal	IV	(-1560) to (-100)

**CAREGIVER OBSERVATION SCALE**

## CAREGIVER OBSERVATION FORM AND SCALE (COFAS)

This form is designed to be used by the monitor in recording specific observations of caregivers' child development activities during a 30-minute period.

No. of children present at the beginning of the caregiver observation 7  
 No. of adults present at the beginning of a caregiver observation 2  
 Time of observation 9:30 AM Name of caregiver Louise Martin

During your observation did the caregiver:		Two-minute Observation Periods										Weights	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	Speak unsolicited to a child	01	1	1	3	4	1	1	3	1	1	4	+2
	Use the child's dialect	02	3	3	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	3	+1
	Respond verbally to a child's speech	03	1	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	1	3	+2
	Read or identify pictures to a child	04	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	+1
	Sing or play music with a child	05	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	+1
	Speak slowly and clearly to a child at all times	06	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	+1
	Interrupt or cut off a child's verbalization	07	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	-3
	Scream or yell at children	08	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-30
	Allow noise level to become so high it is hard for observer to understand children	09	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-1
<b>SOCIO-EMOTIONAL</b>	Give affectionate physical contact to child	10	3	3	4	3	1	4	1	1	1	1	+3
	Make activity suggestion to a child	11	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	+1
	Physically punish a child	12	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-100
	Use food as reinforcement	13	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-3
	Make fun of or ridicule a child	14	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-30
	Let other children make fun of or ridicule a child	15	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-30
	Verbally criticize, scold or threaten a child	16	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-30
	Isolate a child physically	17	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-1
	Ignore a child's request	18	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	-5
	Interrupt a child's activity and prevent its completion	19	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	-5
	Leave the child alone	20	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-40
<b>MOTOR</b>	Foster development of child's gross motor skills	21	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	+1
<b>COGNITIVE</b>	Show impatience or annoyance with child's questions	22	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	-2
	Use terms which are above a child's reasoning ability	23	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	-3
	Deal in abstract concepts without concrete examples	24	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-3
	Show intolerance with a child's mistakes and not accepting faulty thinking	25	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-2
<b>CARE-GIVING</b>	Prepare or serve food for a child	26	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0
	Prepare activities or arrange the room	27	3	3	1	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	0
	Do nothing	28	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-15
	Talk with other adults	29	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-5
Record the type of activity: (e.g., listening to records, reading a story, art project, etc.)		<u>Snack Cognitive Games</u>											

## Criteria for Recording Caregiver Observation

### 01. Speak unsolicited to a child.

Infant, Preschooler & School Age - any time an adult makes any type of verbalization to a child where the child has not initiated or spoken to the adult first. The important aspect here is that the adult is the initiator and not the child.

A----->C, not C----->A  
(1) (3)

### 02. Use the child's dialect.

Infant, Preschooler & School Age - the adult (caregiver) speaks in the child's appropriate dialect or attempts to use the child's dialect (e.g., Black Appalachian, creole or pidgins dialects). The important aspect here is that the adult is sensitive to cultural differences as it relates to language. Although there is a standard form of English which is generally used in public schools in a formal setting; sensitivity and acknowledgement of a child's cultural underpinnings expressed through his dialect should be fostered in the preschool language. There should be an opportunity for both standard English and the child's particular dialect to be used. Just using standard English with no regard for the child's dialect should be scored a "3".

### 03 Respond verbally to a child's speech.

Infant - any verbalization, including baby talk, cooing, babbling to the infant is appropriate. The child will initiate with a verbalization and then the adult responds.

C----->A & A----->C      C----->A but the adult does not respond  
(1) (3)

The baby talk, cooing and babbling to the infant is appropriate in the first 12-18 months depending on the individual child's developmental level.

Toddler & Preschooler - from 18 months and above, the adult when she/he responds to the child should not be cooing, babbling, or engaging in baby talk. The adult should be expanding on the child's speech, acting as a model for the child.

School-Age - the adult should engage in adult-type verbalization with the child.

### DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES - LANGUAGE

child does:

- 3 months - spontaneously laughs, attends to voice with smiling/cooing
- 6 months - coos to music, babbles extensively; turns to sound of bell
- 9 months - says "da-da"; mocks sounds in the environment
- 12 months - follows simple instructions; imitates words
- 15 months - two word vocabulary; indicates wants by pointing
- 18 months - ten definite words in vocabulary; asks for two things by appropriate words

- 21 months - combine two words to form short phrase/sentence
- 24 months - labels any three common objects; "what's this?"--  
cat, dog, etc.
- 27 months - uses plurals, knows first name when asked
- 30 months - three word sentences are present; knows concept of "one"
- 33 months - knows last name and sex; uses "I" or self-reference
- 36 months - four word sentences are present
- 39 months - gives first and last name; names most common  
objects and pictures
- 42 months - complete sentences used consistently; knows concepts  
of "animals", "toys"
- 45 months - identifies three colors; show me the blue one; sings  
simple song
- 48 months - comprehends: "what do we do when hungry"; grasps  
number concept "two"
- 51 months - mastery of Y, J, K, G, F, and D sounds; repeats a five  
word sentence
- 54 months - averages five-word sentences; follows a sequence of  
three directions
- 57 months - tries to use new words spontaneously; understands some  
abstract words
- 60 months - no infantile speech is present; name or labels at  
least six colors

The adult should be fostering in the child the above developmental areas or at least their attainment. Adult should not be fostering in a child a lower developmental level if the child is operating at a higher level.

#### **04 Read or identify pictures to a child**

Infant, Preschooler, School-age - whenever the adult takes time with a child to help the child recognize, pick out, identify, etc. pictures in picture books or help a child to read at the older age ranges. (Code 1)

#### **05 Sing or play music with a child**

Infant, Preschooler, School-age - whenever an adult sets up a musical experience either by playing an instrument, singing songs, rhythm band, etc. If the children are actively mobile, i.e., marching then code "1" for (21) gross motor skills, If the children are sitting and listening to music do not code (1) for (21).

#### **06 Speak slowly and clearly to children at all times**

Infant, Preschooler and School-age - the adult takes the time in how she/he talks to the child. Concern here is with the speech of the adult, is it clear, well enunciated so that you as an observer can easily understand what she/he is saying. Code "1". If, the adult rushes her/his sentences with little care given to the child's understanding of what is said, code "3".

**07 Interrupt or cut off a child's verbalization**

Infant, Preschooler & School-age - anytime that an adult does not let a child finish what they started to say. This is not as appropriate with infants because of the egocentric nature of their verbalizations. With toddlers 18 months plus, preschoolers and school-age children, so long as the adult cuts off the child's verbalization, code "1".

**08 Scream or yell at children**

Infant, Preschooler & School-age - anytime an adult raises his/her voice to get the attention of the classroom, reprimand a child, etc., code "1".

**09 Allow noise level to become so high that it is hard for an observer to understand what is being said.**

Infant, Preschooler, & School-age - anytime during your observations where it becomes difficult to hear what individual children (or caregivers are saying. Anytime that it becomes so noisy that it is disturbing the children and adults and distracting where children and adults are not completing things they have started, code 1.

**10 Give affectionate physical contact to a child**

Infant, Preschoolers & School-age - anytime the caregiver picks a child up, pats a child on the head, rocks an infant, has a child sit on the caregiver's lap, kisses a child, hugs a child, puts an arm around a child, code "1".

**11 Make activity suggestion to a child**

Infant, Preschoolers & School-age - the caregiver actually demonstrates or guides the child to another activity, gives suggestions or alternatives for activities, code "1".

**12 Physically punish a child**

Infants, Preschoolers & School-age - code "1" if you see a caregiver hit, push, shake, pull a child violently.

**13 Use food as reinforcement**

Infants, Preschoolers & School-age - anytime that the caregiver sets up a contingency that if you don't do this you will not get dessert, or eat, etc. Also, at mealtime, if the caregiver does not give the child dessert for not eating the main meal. Code "1".

**14 Make fun or ridicule a child**

Infants, Preschoolers & School-age - anytime that the caregiver either takes the child aside or in front of everyone present and brings undue attention to a child's idiosyncracies, handicaps, etc., which embarrass the child or lower the child's self-image, or to make the child feel that there's something wrong with me. Code "1".

**15 Let other children make fun or ridicule a child**

Infant, Preschoolers & School-age - if the caregiver makes no attempt to re-direct children who are making fun of another child, to get them interested in another activity, or to work with the children in getting at the roots of the particular problem. Code "1".

**16 Verbally criticize, scold or threaten a child**

Infant, Preschoolers & School-age - the caregiver does not physically do anything but threatens she/he will, puts a child down through scolding but does not shout nor make fun of the child, but is very direct in his/her criticism. Code "1".

**17 Isolate a child physically**

Infant - if a child acts up, the caregiver either confines the infant in a crib or play pen by physically removing the child from whatever she/he was doing. Note the length of isolation and place, Code "1". Place your notes on reverse side of the observation.

Toddler, Preschooler, School-age - if a child acts up, the caregiver either has the child sit in a chair by himself, removes him from the room, puts him in a time-out bay. This is done physically where the adult tells the child and if no response actually removes the child from the activity. Record the time and place of isolation, Code "1". Place your note on the reverse side of the observation.

**18 Ignore a child's request**

Infants, Preschoolers, & School-age - anytime that a child either makes a verbal or non-verbal request (infant tugging at caregiver) and caregiver doesn't respond. The caregiver doesn't even acknowledge the child by saying I'll answer that later or with a pat on the head. Code "1".

**19 Interrupt a child's activity and prevent its completion**

Infants, Preschoolers, & School-age - whenever an adult ignores individual skills of children and makes them complete the same activity at the same time. There is no built-in factor for individual differences and having children work at their individual pace--Code "1".

**20 Leaves the children alone**

Infants, Preschoolers, & School-age - whenever the caregiver, no matter what the reason, leaves the children unattended, Code "1".

(Instruction: If the adult leaves with someone else watching the children and will return shortly, interrupt your observations and continue when she/he returns. If the caregiver will not be returning for a long period of time, then observe the remaining caregiver.)

## **21 Foster Development of a child's gross motor skills**

Infants - any activity which involves rolling, sitting up, pulling up, walking, crawling, etc., Code "1".

Preschoolers & School-age - any activity which involves running, somersaulting, twisting, jumping, calisthenics, etc., gymnastics (supervised by adult), Code "1".

## **22 Show impatience or annoyance with child's question**

Infants, Preschoolers & School-age - anytime that a child asks a question, and the caregiver is quick to answer to get rid of the child or is visibly annoyed that the child asked the question, Code "1".

## **23 Use terms which are above a child's reasoning ability**

Infants - whenever the caregiver uses terms and expects the children to retain the information, i.e., knowledge of colors, numbers, alphabet, sizes and shapes. Using these as descriptions on the caregivers part is o.k., but not to expect the children to use the same descriptions, Code "1".

Preschoolers - whenever the caregiver uses terms and expects the children to retain the information, i.e., knowledge of notions of association, transitivity, conservation of area, numbers, etc., Code "1".

School-age - up to 10 or 11. To expect the children to solve verbal or hypothetical problems, Code "1".

## **24 Deal in abstract Concepts without concrete examples**

Infants, Preschoolers & School-age - (to 11 yrs) presentation of an activity such as shapes without having a two dimensional or three dimensional model for the children to see, touch, manipulate. Counting without the actual physical objects present, Code "1".

## **25 Show intolerance with a child's mistakes & not accepting faulty thinking**

Infants, Preschoolers & School-age - too much emphasis placed upon "there is only one correct answer"! Not sensitive to a child's thinking being very different from an adults. For example, an infant learns about objects by mouthing them. A preschooler is egocentric, cannot transfer learning, centers on one particular perceptual entity, cannot reverse his thinking. A school-age child (more than 11 yrs) cannot solve problems involving the future, Code "1".

## **26 Prepare or serve food for a child**

Infant - preparing baby food, setting up high chair, warming a bottle, feeding a child by bottle or spoon, Code "1".

Preschooler & School-age - setting up table, serving food or helping child to serve food, Code "1".

**27 Prepare activities and/or arrange the room**

Infant, Preschoolers, & School-age - whenever the caregiver is engaged in preparing for an upcoming activity (getting materials organized) or arranging room (placement of tables or chairs) or while the activity is going on (helping a child complete the activity), Code "1".

**28 Do nothing**

Caregiver is detached from children and other adults; staring into space, not on a break. Not responsive, Code "1".

**29 Talk with other adults**

Conversation is directed to other adults -- while ignoring children--Code "1". If the conversation involves having other adults help out or to plan activities, then code "3".

## CAREGIVER OBSERVATION FORM AND SCALE (COFAS)

This form is designed to be used by the monitor in recording specific observations of caregivers' child development activities during a 30-minute period.

No. of children present at the beginning of the caregiver observation \_\_\_\_\_

No. of adults present at the beginning of a caregiver observation \_\_\_\_\_

Time of observation \_\_\_\_\_ Name of caregiver \_\_\_\_\_

During your observation did the caregiver:		Two-minute Observation Periods										Weights
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	Speak unsolicited to a child	01										+2
	Use the child's dialect	02										+1
	Respond verbally to a child's speech	03										+2
	Read or identify pictures to a child	04										+1
	Sing or play music with a child	05										+1
	Speak slowly and clearly to a child at all times	06										+1
	Interrupt or cut off a child's verbalization	07										-3
	Scream or yell at children	08										-30
	Allow noise level to become so high it is hard for observer to understand children	09										-1
<b>SOCIO-EMOTIONAL</b>	Give affectionate physical contact to child	10										+3
	Make activity suggestion to a child	11										+1
	Physically punish a child	12										-100
	Use food as reinforcement	13										-3
	Make fun of or ridicule a child	14										-30
	Let other children make fun of or ridicule a child	15										-30
	Verbally criticize, scold or threaten a child	16										-30
	Isolate a child physically	17										-1
	Ignore a child's request	18										-5
	Interrupt a child's activity and prevent its completion	19										-5
	Leave the child alone	20										-40
<b>MOTOR</b>	Foster development of child's gross motor skills	21										+1
<b>COGNITIVE</b>	Show impatience or annoyance with child's questions	22										-2
	Use terms which are above a child's reasoning ability	23										-3
	Deal in abstract concepts without concrete examples	24										-3
	Show intolerance with a child's mistakes and not accepting faulty thinking	25										-2
<b>CARE-GIVING</b>	Prepare or serve food for a child	26										0
	Prepare activities or arrange the room	27										0
	Do nothing	28										-15
	Talk with other adults	29										-5

Record the type of activity: (e.g., listening to records, reading a story, art project, etc.)