

WHY TO USE SOVASI?

- ✓ To "see your reality with different eyes".
- ✓ To be able to share with colleagues a perspective on the quality of the context in which one works
- ✓ To "evaluate" concrete situations
- ✓ To start a process of explaining educational practices that are sometimes "unconscious"
- ✓ To encourage critical group reflection
- ✓ To discuss weak and strong points, not only of the context, but also of the tool
- ✓ To proceed with indicators and reference standards
- ✓ To historicize and communicate one's path
- ✓ To identify the "elements" that interact in the "quality of the educational service"
- ✓ For

the SOVASI (scale for observation and evaluation of infant school), a tool for evaluating the pedagogical quality of the

school environment in which children aged 3 to 5 find themselves.

This is an Italian adaptation by M. Ferrari and A. Gariboldi of the ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale), a scale for assessing the quality of extra-family childhood environments, developed in the United States by T. Harms and R.M. Clifford in 1980 for the first time.

Through this scale it is possible to draw a profile of a single section of infant school on the basis of indicators that take into consideration all the different components that constitute the educational environment according to an ecological perspective: the physical space and the means available, the times and the pace of work, the methods and frequency with which the different activities are proposed, the social dimension (the quality of interactions between adults and children), the way in which the institution meets the needs of adults (operators, teachers , parents) considering, among these, the opportunities for professional growth.

The SOVASI is made up of 37 items divided into 7 subscales, each concerning a different area of interest.

Each item consists of a scale that goes from a minimum score of 1, indicating a complete inadequacy of what was observed with respect to the item considered, to a maximum of 7 (excellent score) passing through 3 (minimum score) and 5 (good score). Even numbers indicate an intermediate situation between one parameter and another, and the transition from one score to the immediately higher one can occur when all the conditions required for its attribution are satisfied.

Interest Areas of SOVASI

- 1. Routine care
- 2. Furnishings and materials available to children
- 3. Cognitive and linguistic experiences
- 4. Fine and global motor activities
- 5. Creative activities
- 6. Social development
- 7. Adult needs

Routine care

- Item 1. Welcome and farewell
- Item 2. Meals and snacks
- Item 3. Nap
- Item 4. Changes
- Item 5. Personal cleanliness

Furnishings and materials available to children

- Item 6. Furnishings for routine care
- Item 7. Furnishings for learning activities
- Item 8. Relaxation and comfortable environment
- Item 9. Space organization in the Section

- Item 10. Material put on display for children

Cognitive and linguistic experiences

- Item 11. Passive linguistic competence
- Item 12. Active linguistic competence
- Item 13. Conceptualization and reasoning
- Item 14. Spontaneous language

Fine and global motor activities

- Item 15. Fine motor skills
- Item 16. Adult supervision of motor skills activities
- Item 17. Space for global motor skills activities
- Item 18. Equipment for global motor skills activities
- Item 19. Scheduled time for motor skills activities

global

- Item 20. Adult supervision of motor skills activities

global

Creative and expressive activities

- Item 21. Artistic activities
- Item 22. Music and dance
- Item 23. Constructions

- Item 24. Sand and water
- Item 25. Symbolic play
- Item 26. Organization of the day
- Item 27. Supervision of creative and expressive activities by adults.

Social development

- Item 28. Space to be alone
- Item 29. Free play
- Item 30. Groupings
- Item 31. Awareness of specificities
- Item 32. Social climate
- Item 33. Initiatives for children with special needs problems or handicaps

Adult needs

- Item 34. Adult area
- Item 35. Professional growth opportunities
- Item 36. Area reserved for meetings with adults
- Item 37. Initiatives for parents

SOVASI example: ITEM 9 Space organization in the section

SCORE 1 = INADEQUATE. There are no defined centers of interest. The section mal arranged (e.g. the ways of passing between one area and another often disturb activities). The materials that serve the same purpose are not stored together.

SCORE 2

SCORE 3 = MINIMUM. 2 or 3 centers of interest are defined but they are poorly arranged in the section e.g. quiet activities border on noisy activities, water is not available if necessary). It is difficult to supervise these centers or the materials are disorganized.

SCORE 4

SCORE 5 = GOOD. There are 3 or more well-defined and well-arranged centers of interest (e.g. water available, suitable shelves). The quiet areas are well separated from the noisy ones. You there are play areas in each section (e.g. carpets, tables away from passage). It's easy visually monitor the various centers of interest.

SCORE 6

SCORE 7 = EXCELLENT. Everything that is included in point 5. Furthermore there are centers of interests that provide the opportunity for many learning experiences. The material promotes the autonomy of children (e.g. there are shelves with labels completely open, spaces for drying

artistic works). There is other material organized and available to modify the centers of interest

