



QRIS QUALITY STANDARDS WEB SITES

About QRIS

A quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, QRIS award quality ratings to early and school-age care and education programs that meet a set of defined program standards. By participating in their State's QRIS, early and school-age care and education providers embark on a path of continuous quality improvement. Even providers that have met the standards of the lowest QRIS levels have achieved levels of quality that are beyond the minimum requirements to operate. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has a High Priority Performance Goal to increase the number of States and Territories with strong quality rating and improvement systems.

QRIS are composed of five common elements:

- 1. Program Standards:** QRIS standards are built on the foundation of child care licensing requirements and add multiple steps between licensing and higher quality standards, such as those associated with accreditation.
- 2. Supports for Programs and Practitioners:** Support for providers, such as training, mentoring, and technical assistance, are included to promote participation and help programs achieve higher levels of quality.
- 3. Financial Incentives:** Financial incentives, such as quality bonuses and tiered subsidy reimbursement (which pays a higher reimbursement rate to providers who care for children from families who receive CCDF subsidies and meet standards beyond minimum licensing), are awarded to programs when quality levels are achieved.
- 4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring:** Accountability and monitoring processes are used to track progress toward, attainment of, and maintenance of program quality standards.
- 5. Consumer Education:** Most QRIS award easily recognizable symbols, such as stars, to programs to indicate the levels of quality and inform and educate parents.

Web Sites for QRIS Quality Standards

QRIS quality standards are used to assign ratings to programs that participate in QRIS, providing parents and the public with information about each program's quality. States typically use licensing standards as the starting point, or base, of the system, on which higher levels of quality standards are built. Every QRIS contains two or more levels of standards beyond licensing, with incremental progressions to the highest level of quality as defined by the State. Systems vary in the number of levels and number of standards identified in each level. The types of standards used by QRIS to assign ratings are based on research about the characteristics of programs that produce positive child outcomes.

The following tables provide the Web sites for States' QRIS standards compiled by the National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement (NCCCQI). States often have multiple sets of standards for specific types of early care and education providers, such as child care centers, family child care (FCC) homes, and school-age programs.

States Implementing QRIS

The table below includes 36 States that are implementing a statewide QRIS model. For some States, it is noted if the QRIS is being revised, operating only in limited areas of the State, or is available only for specific types of providers (e.g. providers receiving public funding).

Table #1. States Implementing QRIS and Their Web Sites

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Arizona	Quality First http://qualityfirstaz.com/	Quality First Points Scale http://www.azftf.gov/WhatWeDo/Programs/QualityFirst/Documents/Quality%20First%20Points%20Scale.pdf
Arkansas	Better Beginnings http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/	Better Beginnings Rule Book – includes separate standards for centers, family child care, and school-age care http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/sites/default/files/pdf_files/ProvidersandTeachers-Providers-Centers-BetterBeginningsRuleBook.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Colorado	Colorado Shines http://coloradoshines.force.com/ColoradoShines	Colorado Shines QRIS Point Structure Guide for Quality Levels 3-5 http://coloradoshines.force.com/ColoradoShines/resource/1428604188000/ColoShinesQRISPDF
Delaware	Delaware Stars for Early Success http://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Early Child Care Programs Standards (2014) http://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/ECE-Standard-7.1.20141.pdf ■ Family Child Care Providers Standards (2014) http://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/FCCStandards7.1.2014R.pdf ■ Large Family Child Care Providers Standards (July 2014) http://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/LFCCStandards7.1.2014R.pdf ■ School-age Only Programs Standards (July 2012) http://www.dieec.udel.edu/sites/dieec.udel.edu/files/pdfs/stars/SA%20Standards%20Feb%202012%20REV7-18-12.pdf
District of Columbia	Going for the Gold http://www.learnDC.org	Standards not available on the Web
Georgia	Quality Rated https://qualityrated.dec.state.ga.us/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality Rated Rating Rubric https://qualityrated.dec.state.ga.us/Content/Documents/PM_RatingRubric.pdf ■ Program Manual https://qualityrated.dec.state.ga.us/Content/Documents/PM_ProgramManual.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Idaho	IdahoSTARS Quality Rating & Improvement System http://idahostars.org/?q=gris	Steps to Quality (includes both Child Care Centers and Child Care Home Based Providers) http://idahostars.org/?q=steps-to-quality
Illinois	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ExceleRate Illinois QRIS. http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com/ ■ Illinois Quality Counts http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/qrs/overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ExceleRate Illinois Quality Standards Overview Chart for Programs http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com/docman/resources/13-overview-of-charts ■ ExceleRate Illinois Quality Standards Overview Chart for Licensed Family Child Care http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com/docman/resources/52-fcc-overview-chart ■ Illinois Quality Counts QRS Training Tiers – License-exempt Family Child Care Homes http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/docman/qrs/8-l-e-training-tier-chart/file
Indiana	Paths to QUALITY http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2554.htm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Standards for Participation: Licensed Child Care Centers http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/files/CentersPTQStandards.pdf ■ Standards for Participation: Licensed Child Care Homes http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/files/HomesPTQStandards.pdf ■ Standards for Participation: Unlicensed Registered Child Care Ministries http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/files/MinistriesPTQStandards.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Iowa	Iowa Quality Rating System http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Care Center Chart http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/QRS%20NEW%20Center%20Chart%202-1-11.doc ■ Child Development Home Chart http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/QRS%20NEW%20Home%20Chart%202-1-11.doc
Kansas	Kansas Quality Rating Improvement System http://www.ks.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/KQRIS.pdf Operating only in some areas of the State.	Rating Criteria Chart http://www.ks.childcareaware.org/PDFs/KQRIS%20Process%20and%20Rating%20Criteria-2013.pdf
Kentucky	STARS for KIDS NOW Child Care Quality Rating System http://chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/dcc/stars/default.htm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ STARS for KIDS NOW Level Requirements for Type I Centers http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/5CBCD8A7-BE83-4444-9FB6-80CFB68558D7/0/11302009TypeIGrid.pdf ■ STARS for KIDS NOW Level Requirements for Type II Licensed Family Child Care Homes http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/BA1999BF-FA4B-4DD9-B665-946CC24E3633/0/11302009TypeIIGrid.pdf ■ STARS for KIDS NOW Level Requirements for Certified Family Child Care Homes http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/EFC282BC-0264-4573-88D3-9692F588BE53/0/11302009CertifiedGrid.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Louisiana	Quality Start http://www.qrslouisiana.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How to Get Your Stars http://www.qrslouisiana.org/child-care-providers/how-to-get-your-stars ■ Quality Start Model (August 2013) http://www.qrslouisiana.org/assets/files/QS-Model-Aug-2013.pdf
Maine	Quality for ME http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/qualityforme.htm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Standards for Child Care Centers http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/quality_cbc.pdf ■ Standards for Family Child Care Homes http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/quality_fcc.pdf ■ Standards for School-Age Care http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/quality_sac.pdf ■ Standards for Head Start Programs http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/quality_headstart.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Maryland	<p>Maryland EXCELS</p> <p>http://www.marylandexcels.org/</p> <p>Implementation of this revised QRIS system began in July 2013. While participation is voluntary, for programs accepting Child Care Subsidy, participation will be required by July, 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Care Center Standards (2014) http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/data/ck/sites/217/files/Child%20Care%20Center%20Standards%20March%202014%20(5).pdf ■ Family Child Care Standards (2014) http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/data/ck/sites/217/files/Family%20Child%20Care%20Standards%20March%202014.pdf ■ School-age Only Standards (2014) http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/data/ck/sites/217/files/School%20Age%20Only%20Standards%20March%202014.pdf ■ Public Pre-K Standards (2013) http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/data/ck/sites/217/files/EXCELS%20Public%20Pre-K%20Standards_revisedNov_2012%20(2).doc
Massachusetts	<p>Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System</p> <p>http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/gris/gris.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Center and School Based QRIS Standards http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/gris/20121116-gris-center-based-standards.pdf ■ Family Child Care QRIS Standards http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/gris/20121116-gris-fcc-standards.pdf ■ After School and Out of School Time QRIS Standards http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/gris/20121116-gris-after-school-standards.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Michigan	Great Start to Quality http://www.greatstarttoquality.org/	Great Start to Quality Standards and Points (January 2013) http://greatstarttoquality.org/sites/default/files/Great%20Start%20to%20Quality%20Standards%20FINAL%20v2%2004%2025%2013%20%282%29.pdf
Minnesota	Parent Aware http://parentaware.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Indicators and Scoring – Full Rating for Center-based Programs http://parentawareratings.org/files/Indicators%20Center.pdf ■ Indicators and Scoring - Full Rating for Family Child Care Providers http://parentawareratings.org/files/Indicators%20Family%20Child%20Care.pdf ■ Indicators and Scoring- Accelerated Pathway to Rating for Head Start, accredited child care, school based pre-kindergarten, early childhood special education, and charter school programs http://parentawareratings.org/files/Indicators%20Accelerated.pdf
Mississippi	Mississippi Child Care Quality Stars http://www.earlychildhood.msstate.edu/programs/qualitystars/index.php	Mississippi State Child Care Quality Step System Criteria http://www.earlychildhood.msstate.edu/programs/qualitystars/criteria/pdfs/Criteria.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Montana	Best Beginnings STARS to Quality http://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/ChildCare/STARS.aspx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Center Matrix http://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/hcsd/documents/ChildCare/STARS/CenterMatrix.pdf ■ Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Family and Group Matrix http://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/hcsd/documents/ChildCare/STARS/FamilyGroupMatrix.pdf
Nevada	Silver State Stars QRIS http://www.nvsilverstatestars.org	<p>Licensed Center Model http://www.nvsilverstatestars.org/public/files/QRIS_Model_3.5.14.pdf</p> <p>Family Child Care, Licensed Exempt, and Tribal QRIS models are currently being piloted and will be available in 2015.</p>
New Hampshire	New Hampshire's Quality Rating and Improvement System http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcyf/licensedplus/index.htm	Licensed Plus Quality Standards http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcyf/licensedplus/documents/option1standards.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
New Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AIM HIGH https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/caregivers_and_educators/aim_high/ ■ FOCUS https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/caregivers_and_educators/focus/ <p>New Mexico is in the process of implementing the third generation of our Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) called FOCUS. FOCUS will replace AIM HIGH in the succeeding years. Programs are now encouraged to apply to participate in FOCUS as part of the Pilot Phase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AIM HIGH Essential Elements of Quality https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/caregivers_and_educators/aim_high/docs/AIM_HIGH_Essential_Elements_Final.20090401.pdf ■ FOCUS Essential Elements of Quality for Center-Based Programs (January 2015) https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/caregivers_and_educators/focus/docs/FOCUS_Criteria_Essential_Elements_of_Quality_01222015.pdf ■ FOCUS Essential Elements of Quality for Family Child Care Homes (May 2012) https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/caregivers_and_educators/focus/docs/FOCUS_TQRIS_FamilyChildCare_5-9-12rev.pdf ■ FOCUS Essential Elements of Quality for Out of School Time Programs (July 2012) https://www.newmexicokids.org/content/caregivers_and_educators/focus/docs/FOCUS_TQRIS_Out_of_School_Time_7-30-12rev.pdf
New York	<p>QUALITYstarsNY</p> <p>http://qualitystarsny.org/</p> <p>Operating only in some areas of the State.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Center-Based Program Standards http://www.qualitystarsny.org/pdf/QUALITYstarsNY-Standards-Center_Based.pdf ■ Family/Home Program Standards http://www.qualitystarsny.org/pdf/QUALITYstarsNY-Standards-Family_Home.pdf ■ Public School Program Standards http://www.qualitystarsny.org/pdf/QUALITYstarsNY-Standards-Public_School.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
North Carolina	North Carolina Star Rated License System http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/providers/pv_sn2_ov_sr.asp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How Points Are Earned http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/providers/pv_sn2_hpaе.asp ■ Child Care Rules – full text of all standards in Section .2800 http://nrckids.org/default/assets/File/StateRegs/NC/nc_2800.pdf
Ohio	Step Up to Quality http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org/sutq.php	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Center Step Up to Quality Program Standards http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org/files/sutq/ProgramStandards081913.pdf ■ Standards for Family Child Care http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org/files/sutq/stepUp-GREEN-family072414_1.pdf
Oklahoma	Reaching for the Stars http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/stars/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reaching for the Stars for Child Care Centers http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/A800CCFD-4403-46DC-90D1-D061821D9CB5/0/9939_ReachingfortheStarsforChildCareCenters_occс_07012012.pdf ■ Reaching for the Stars for Family Child Care Homes http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/0D2AAB44-3B1B-4300-BC93-CD39E30E14D9/0/9943_ReachingfortheStarsforFamilyChildCareHomes_occс_06012012.pdf ■ Policies for the differential quality rating and improvement certification are located in Sections 8.3-8.10, Subchapter 1 General Provisions, Chapter 110 Licensing Services, OKDHS Oklahoma Administrative Code 340 http://www.okdhs.org/library/policy/oac340/110/01/0008003.htm

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Pennsylvania	<p>Keystone STARS</p> <p>http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=Programs_STARS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keystone STARS Center Performance Standards for FY 2014-2015 (July 2014) http://www.pakeys.org/uploadedContent/Docs/Early%20Learning%20Programs/Keystone%20STARS/2014-2015%20REVISED%20Keystone%20STARS%20Performance%20Standards%20for%20Centers.pdf ■ Keystone STARS Family Child Care Home Performance Standards for FY 2014-2015 (July 2014) http://www.pakeys.org/uploadedContent/Docs/Early%20Learning%20Programs/Keystone%20STARS/2014-2015%20REVISED%20Keystone%20STARS%20Performance%20Standards%20for%20Family%20CCH.pdf ■ Keystone STARS Group Home Performance Standards for FY 2014-2015 (July 2014) http://www.pakeys.org/uploadedContent/Docs/Early%20Learning%20Programs/Keystone%20STARS/2014-2015%20REVISED%20Keystone%20STARS%20Performance%20Standards%20for%20Group%20Homes.pdf
Rhode Island	<p>BrightStars</p> <p>http://www.brightstars.org/providers/brightstars-quality-rating/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Care Center and Preschool Quality Framework http://www.brightstars.org/uploads/CenterPreschool_framework.pdf ■ Family Child Care Quality Framework http://www.brightstars.org/uploads/Family_English_framework_1216-1.pdf ■ School-Age Child Care (K-5) Quality Framework http://www.brightstars.org/uploads/School-Age_framework.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
South Carolina	ABC Child Care Program http://www.scchildcare.org/	Quality Standards for Levels A, B, and C http://www.scchildcare.org/library/abc-quality-documents.aspx
Tennessee	Star-Quality Child Care Program http://www.tennessee.gov/humanserv/adfam/ccrcsq.html All licensed and approved child care providers in Tennessee are evaluated and issued a Report Card. Eligible providers can participate in the Star-Quality program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Star-Quality Child Care Program: Report Card for Child Care Centers http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/adfam/star-centers.pdf ■ Star-Quality Child Care Program: Report Card for Family and Group Child Care Homes http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/adfam/star-family&group.pdf
Texas	Texas Rising Star Provider Certification http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/provcert.html Only licensed or registered providers that have an agreement with a local Workforce Development Board to serve Texas Workforce Commission subsidized children participate in Texas Rising Star Certification.	Texas Rising Star Provider Certification Guidelines http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/provcert.pdf
Vermont	STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars/	STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) Standards http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/pdf/cdd/stars/Adopted_STARS_rule_FINAL.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Virginia	Virginia Star Quality Initiative (VSQI) http://www.smartbeginnings.org/qrisc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Standards for Classroom-based Programs http://www.smartbeginnings.org/Portals/5/PDFs/VSQI/QRISStandard11_4_11.pdf ■ Standards for Family Child Care Homes http://www.smartbeginnings.org/Portals/5/PDFs/VSQI/FCC_QRISStandards.pdf
Washington	Early Achievers http://www.del.wa.gov/care/qrisc/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Early Achievers Quality Standards http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/elac-qrisc/docs/EA_Quality_Standards.pdf ■ Early Achievers Companion to the Quality Standards http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/elac-qrisc/docs/EA_facility_companion.pdf

States	System Names and Web Sites	QRIS Quality Standards Web Site (When Available)
Wisconsin	YoungStar http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ YoungStar Minimum Point Requirements http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/minimum_points_required.pdf ■ YoungStar QRIS Quality Indicator Point Detail for Group Programs http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/point_detail_group.pdf ■ YoungStar QRIS Quality Indicator Point Detail for Family Programs http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/point_detail_family.pdf ■ YoungStar QRIS Quality Indicator Point Detail for School-Age Programs http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/point_detail_schoolage.pdf ■ YoungStar QRIS Quality Indicator Point Detail for Licensed Day Camps http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/point_detail_daycamps.pdf

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