



**NATIONAL CENTER ON**

**Afterschool and Summer Enrichment**

# **Creating a Successful Formula To Engage School- Age Programs in Quality Improvement Systems**

October 18, 2016



# NCASE Goal



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The broad goal of NCASE is to ensure that school-age children in families of low-income have increased access to afterschool and summer learning experiences that contribute to children's overall development and academic achievement.



# Session Goals



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Participants will explore strategies for creating a successful plan to incorporate school-age programs in quality improvement and quality rating improvement systems (QRIS).



# Agenda



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- Welcome and Overview
- Discussion: Successes and challenges
- History and Trends in Quality Improvement and QRIS
- States Discussion:
  - Pennsylvania
  - Maryland
- Summary
- Close

# Working Definitions



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- **School-Age** care refers to the age of children served; differentiated from infant, toddler, and preschool care.
- **Out-of-School Time** refers to programming outside of the school day, including before and after school, summer, weekend, and family or center-based child care.
- Our National Center name is **Afterschool and Summer Enrichment**, and we use this interchangeably with Out-of-School Time.

# What is School-Age Quality?



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- Low child-to-staff ratios
- A positive social-emotional climate
- A clear program structure/supervision
- Autonomy and choice for children and youth
- Continuity with the regular school day
- Strong staff management and business practices
- Data collection and evaluation

Afterschool Alliance (2013). *Evaluations backgrounder: A summary of formal evaluations of afterschool programs' impact on academics, behavior, safety and family life*. Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance. Retrieved September 9, 2016 from [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/evaluations\\_backgrounder\\_2013.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/evaluations_backgrounder_2013.pdf).

# Summer Learning Loss



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- More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college (Alexander et al, 2007).
- Research suggests that 3-4 consecutive summers of high quality learning beginning in pre-kindergarten can get kids reading on grade-level by third grade, making them 4 times more likely to graduate from high school.

*Summer Learning Loss with Brian Williams, NBC.* Retrieved September 9, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZolcNG3GVCs>.

# School-Age Quality Improvement History



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- NIAS-National Improvement and Accreditation Study (1991-1995)
- School-age Care Environment Rating Scale (1996 and 2014)
- National Afterschool Assn. Accreditation System, now with Council on Accreditation (1998)
- Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins (2001)
- Wallace Foundation City System-Building Initiative (2003)
- 29 states have standards and 6 states in process (2014)

# Quality Rating Improvement System



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- Builds on foundation of licensing
- Has multiple steps of increasing standards
- Offers supports and incentives
- Provides easily recognizable symbols for quality levels



- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Changes in standards and focus on interactions and teaching/learning
- Financing strategies
- Supports: Technical Assistance (TA) & Communities of Practice (CoP)
- Trying new tools
- Family engagement

BUILD E-Book. *Chapter 8: Impact of the Early Learning Challenge on State QRIS (2015)*. Debi Mathias. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Chapter8Mathias.pdf>.

# CQI Definition



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CQI is related to the internal “owning” of a process by the team in the program. It is going beyond meeting the externally applied regulations and standards-and moves the lever for change internally, under the control of the program participants themselves.

BUILD Initiative, 2013. *Continuous Quality Improvement: An Overview Report for State QRIS Leaders*. Wiggins, K. and Mathias, D. BUILD Initiative. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/mrobinson%40buildinitiative.org/2013-05-06%2008%3A45/Continuous%20Quality%20Improvement%2C%20An%20Overview%20Report%20for%20State%20QRIS%20Leaders.pdf>.

# State Discussion



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- How has each state's system developed and what are plans for the future?
- How do you involve school-age in planning your system? How can we increase participation?
- What strategies are you using that reflect unique school-age needs?
- How are you incorporating CQI concepts?
- How did you develop standards and choose assessment tools?
- What supports and incentives do you offer?

# Pennsylvania Keystone STARS QRIS

- 2002 Launch of voluntary, block system with 4 levels with ERS tools
- 2015 participation was 64% center-base and 13% school-age
- 2016 change initiatives:
  - ✓ Integrated Services
  - ✓ STARS Revisioning
  - ✓ TA Revisioning

# Afterschool Quality Project

- September 2012 and now starting 5<sup>th</sup> cohort
- Supports program requirement to have a CQI Plan
- School-age Technical Assistance Specialists in all 5 Regions provide up to 40 hours TA
- Five-step CQI process:
  1. Prepare the program community for change;
  2. Create and prepare a CQI team;
  3. Collect data (program assessment, surveys with director, staff, children, families, hosts/schools);
  4. Create an action plan;
  5. Implement action plan.

# Supporting School-age TA Consultants

Regional Supervision and Central office school-age coordinator

## Monthly Community of Practice (CoP)

- Updates on program progress
- Explore new content (relevant articles, Appreciative Coaching)
- Develop new tools (logic model, fidelity tool)
- Peer consultation and reflection
- Facilitating Communities of Practice for program leaders



# Maryland EXCELS

- Brings together previously existing quality initiatives
  - Licensing
  - Child Care Credential
  - Accreditation
  - Tiered Reimbursement
- Four sets of standards
  - Child Care Centers
  - Family Child Care
  - Public Pre-Kindergarten
  - School-Age Only



# Timeline

- 2011 RTT-ELG award provides funding to develop QRIS System.
- 2012-2013 Piloted and field tested with 330 programs from all categories except Public Pre-K.
- July 1, 2013 official launch and intensive outreach to providers.
- December 2015 state regulation requires participation in Maryland EXCELS in order to receive payment from Child Care Subsidy.
- Presently working on Peer Support Network, supporting small move-up cohorts, assessing the system for future improvement



# Outreach & Support

- Quality Assurance Specialists to provide training and TA
- Program Coordinators evaluate program materials
- Child Care Resource Centers support, including accreditation
- Involvement/support of professional associations
- Regional work groups and training
- Business partners offering incentives to participants

# Discussion



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# Summary



- Key points from discussion
- Upcoming Peer Learning Community
  - » State/Territory teams strongly encouraged
  - » 4 monthly web sessions starting November 10
  - » Topics prioritized by participant interest; could include:
    - Strengthening interactions and instructional quality
    - Leadership for CQI and business practices
    - Readiness for quality improvement
    - Increasing participation in QRIS
    - Family child care
    - Summer program quality improvement
    - Involving license-exempt programs
    - Cost of quality
    - Incentives for quality improvement
    - Effective technical assistance and coaching
    - Partnerships and policies that sustain quality improvement
  - » Watch OCC Announcements for sign-up

# References



Afterschool Alliance (2013). *Evaluations backgrounder: A summary of formal evaluations of afterschool programs' impact on academics, behavior, safety and family life.*

Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance. Retrieved September 9, 2016 from

[http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/evaluations\\_backgrounder\\_2013.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/evaluations_backgrounder_2013.pdf).

BUILD Initiative, 2013. *Continuous Quality Improvement: An Overview Report for State QRIS Leaders.* Wiggins, K. and Mathias, D. BUILD Initiative. Retrieved September 2016 from [http://qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/mrobinson%40buildinitiative.org/2013-05-](http://qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/mrobinson%40buildinitiative.org/2013-05-06%2008%3A45/Continuous%20Quality%20Improvement%2C%20An%20Overview%20Report%20for%20State%20QRIS%20Leaders.pdf)

[06%2008%3A45/Continuous%20Quality%20Improvement%2C%20An%20Overview%20Report%20for%20State%20QRIS%20Leaders.pdf](http://qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/mrobinson%40buildinitiative.org/2013-05-06%2008%3A45/Continuous%20Quality%20Improvement%2C%20An%20Overview%20Report%20for%20State%20QRIS%20Leaders.pdf).

BUILD E-Book. *Chapter 8: Impact of the Early Learning Challenge on State QRIS (2015).* Debi Mathias. Retrieved September 2016

<http://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Chapter8Mathias.pdf>.

Summer Learning Loss with Brian Williams,

NBC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZolcNG3GVCs>

# Resources



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*The Cost of Quality of Out-of-School Time Programs (January 2009) and the Cost of Quality Out-of-School Time Cost Calculator (2015).* Public/Private Ventures. Grossman, J.B.; Lind, C; Hayes, C.; McMaken, J. Gerside, A.

The Forum for Youth Investment (2012). *Continuous quality improvement in afterschool settings: Impact findings from the Youth Program Quality Intervention Study.* Smith, C., Akiva, T., Sugar, S., Lo, Y.J., Frank, K.A. Peck, S.C, Cortina, K.S. & Devaney, T. Washington, DC.

*From Soft Skills to Hard Data: Measuring Youth Program Outcomes (January 2014).*

*Measuring Youth Program Quality: A Guide to Assessment Tools, Second Edition (January 2009).* Yohalem, N. and Wilson-Ahlstrom, A. The Forum for Youth Investment.

Research for Action, July 2016. *Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in Early Childhood Education: Promising Approaches for Pennsylvania, July 2016.* Jenkins, D. and Englander, K. Retrieve September 2016 from <https://www.pakeys.org/uploadedContent/Docs/STARS/Revisioning/Quality%20Ratings%20and%20Improvement%20Systems%20in%20Early%20Childhood%20Education.pdf>.



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# RESOURCE LIBRARY



The NCASE Resource Library connects you with tools, profiles, and information on a range of key topics in Out-of-School Time.

## FEATURED RESOURCES

### State Early Care and Education Updates for 2015

This brief provides a state-by-state update on budget changes that will impact access to affordable, high quality early care and education.

### Afterschool Programs Close Achievement Gap

This infographic summarizes Dr. Vandell's research that shows afterschool is linked to narrowing the gap in math achievement by Grade 5.

### What makes a quality summer reading program?

This issue brief identifies the practices associated with program quality in both formal and informal summer learning programs. It includes basic tips on summer reading and links to related research.

## SEARCH FOR RESOURCES

Apply

Reset Selections

TOPICS/SUBTOPICS +

RESOURCE TYPE +

## RECENTLY ADDED

### Can After-School Programs Help Level the Playing Field for Disadvantaged Youth?

This journal article explores afterschool access and program outcomes for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds. It outlines recommendations for policymakers, administrators, and staff on ways to increase access and improve program quality for this population. It includes an extensive literature review and outlines a research agenda for the future.

Visit the NCASE Resource Library:  
<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ncase-resource-library>

# Contact Information

Visit the NCASE website at:

<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/national-center-afterschool-summer-enrichment>

To contact NCASE, please email us at:

[ncase@ecetta.info](mailto:ncase@ecetta.info)

Thank You!



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