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

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

• Welcome and Overview
• Discussion: Successes and challenges
• History and Trends in Quality Improvement and QRIS
• States Discussion:
  o Pennsylvania
  o Maryland
• Summary
• Close
Working Definitions

- **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?

- 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

Summer Learning Loss

• 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

- School-age Care Environment Rating Scale (1996 and 2014)
- Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins (2001)
- 29 states have standards and 6 states in process (2014)
Quality Rating Improvement System

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

- 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

CQI Definition

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.

State Discussion

• 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 5th 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
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


Summer Learning Loss with Brian Williams, NBC. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZolcNG3GVCs


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


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:

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Thank You!

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