



# Step Up To Quality General Overview



# Quality Matters

Because Early Experiences  
Last A Lifetime



**For a majority of Ohio's children, those experiences occur outside of their home and in the care of non-relatives.**



## Consider this:

- 62% or more children under the age of six live in homes where all adults have jobs

Source: School Readiness Solutions Group

- Approximately 300,000 children are enrolled in regulated settings (Head Start, child care and certified family child care)

Source: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

- Approximately 95,000 children receive child care subsidy monthly

Source: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services



**There are 1,892 days from the time a child is born until they enter school. 85% of a child's brain is developed a little more than half way through this remarkable journey.**



**Research shows that the number of words a child enters Kindergarten with is the greatest predictor of school success.**



## Consider this:

- 130,000 children entered Kindergarten last year in Ohio, and 40,000 of these children needed intervention services
- Several thousand of these children will repeat kindergarten or a primary grade and only 1 in 8 will catch up
- 36% of fourth-grade children read below grade level

Source: Ohio Department of Education



# **How can a quality rating system support children's development & learning?**



- Clearly defines the elements of quality
- Provides targeted supports and resources to improve program quality system-wide
- Informs the public about the importance of quality programs
- Recognizes programs that achieve higher levels of quality



## The Goals of Step Up To Quality are to:

- Improve the quality of early care and education settings in order to support children's optimal development and learning.
- Provide parents with an easy to use tool to assist them in selecting quality early care and education programs for their children.



## Partners

- Ohio Department of Job & Family Services,  
Bureau of Child Care & Development
- Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association
- Build Ohio
- Ohio Department of Education,  
Office of Early Learning & School Readiness



# History

- 1998:** Oklahoma implements the first statewide Quality Rating System
- 1999-2000:** In Ohio, a Public/Private Partnership including 60 stakeholders develops criteria
- 2003:** Build Ohio identifies Step Up To Quality as a high priority
- 2005:** Pilot implementation begins in 9 counties
- 2006:** Governor Taft earmarks \$5 million a year for 3 years in TANF funding for SUTQ, and implements statewide  
  
School Readiness Solutions Group (SRSG) recommends quality rating as a strategy for moving toward a licensing system based on NAEYC accreditation standards



## Step Up To Quality Design

- Includes both structural and process quality benchmark indicators based on research
- 3 levels of quality above Ohio's health and safety licensing standards, each building on the prior step



**All steps above Ohio's health and safety licensing standards are good steps for children.**



**The research is clear, quality early care and education supports both school and life success and the following benchmarks matter most.**



## Step Up To Quality Benchmarks

- Numbers Matter
- Qualified Administrators and Teachers Matter
- Specialized Professional Development Matters
- Administrative Supports Matter
- Children's Experiences Matter



**Numbers matter because smaller groups of children allow teachers to respond and support children's individual development and learning needs.**



**Qualified administrators and teachers matter because the early care and education profession requires specialized knowledge and competencies, just like in other professions.**



**Specialized professional development matters because research and best practices are always emerging. Therefore, working with children requires us to close the gap between what we know and what we do in order to support their development and learning.**



**Administrative supports matter because good teachers work in good programs. Good teachers who are treated professionally and compensated adequately are essential if all children are going to be prepared for school and for life.**



Children's experiences matter because children who are in programs where they are kept safe from harm, nurtured emotionally and socially, whose interests are considered and supported, learn because they want to and not because they have to.



**Are you ready to Step Up and  
provide a quality program for  
Ohio's youngest citizens?**



## Programs are eligible if:

- They have not received a letter of intent to revoke their child care license in the past 48 months
- They have not had a serious risk non-compliance in the past 12 months



**Programs that do not have systems in place to keep children safe from harm are not quality programs. Licensing compliance is the foundation for quality programming.**



**Programs that have had serious risk non-compliances in the past 12 months may apply to be an Emerging Star when they have demonstrated a commitment to keeping children safe from harm by having at least one licensing inspection without serious risk non-compliances.**

(Part time programs are not eligible at this time)



## Programs that meet the eligibility criteria need to:

- Read the guidance document
- Go to [www.stepuptoquality.org/](http://www.stepuptoquality.org/) and apply online
- Go to [www.ohpdregistry.org](http://www.ohpdregistry.org) and complete the Professional Development Registry for all Administrators, Lead Teachers, and Assistant Teachers



## The Professional Development Registry:

- Assigns points for:
  - Formal Education
  - In-service Training & Continuing Education Units
  - Experience
  - Credentials & Certifications
- Computes a score to designate the professional development level needed to meet requirements within each step.
- Provides a center report to the Step Up Licensing Specialist which will be used to verify Step requirements.



## Next Steps

- Programs that apply who have serious risk non-compliances will be notified by letter that they are not eligible
- Programs that meet eligibility criteria will be notified by letter that a verification visit will occur within 90 days
- Programs who have a serious risk non-compliance prior to their verification visit will receive a letter that they are not eligible



## Next Steps

- Programs that are ready have a complete Evidence Binder.
- All Evidence Binder requirements are contained in the Guidance Document.
- Programs that do not have complete Evidence Binders will result in the visit coming to an end and can reapply after 6 months from the date of the visit.



Step verification visits are unannounced, and can occur anytime after the receipt of your verification visit letter.

**BE READY!**



The following resources are available and can be found at [www.stepuptoquality.org](http://www.stepuptoquality.org):

- The Guidance Document: which provides detailed information regarding all of the policies and procedures that govern SUTQ
- Who to call when and their contact information
- A complete listing of the serious risk non-compliances
- Step Up To Quality approved trainings



- Programs that earn a Star Rating will be notified by letter and will also receive their Step Up To Quality certificate
- Marketing materials will be delivered to your program shortly after receipt of your letter and certificate



## ■ Star Rated programs who maintain licensing compliance and Step Indicators will receive the following:

- Annual Quality Achievement Awards

The amount of the award is based on license capacity and the ratio of subsidized children to enrollment. Enrollment is based on the program's last licensing inspection.

- Access to T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships



■ **Emerging Star programs will receive the following:**

- Intensive onsite technical assistance visits twice a month for up to 12 months
- After receiving a Star Rating, quarterly technical assistance visits will occur until the program's rating is renewed.



**After your program's hard work to earn a Star rating, it is heartbreaking to have to either suspend or remove the rating. So, make sure systems are in place to keep your program from having any serious risk non-compliances.**



## Step Up To Quality

- Assists parents in making more informed choices on behalf of their children
- Recognizes programs committed to achieving higher standards for the children and families they serve



**Thanks for Stepping Up!**