

Colorado's Next Generation Quality Rating & Improvement System

Colorado's Next Generation Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) is a method to assess, enhance and communicate the level of quality in early education and care for all licensed providers in Colorado. QRIS provides standardized criteria for all childcare providers in Colorado to be rated for quality, and provides incentives and supports to providers that wish to raise the level of quality care available at their facility.

QRIS in Colorado

Colorado is committed to improving the quality of early learning and school-age programs for families and children. For the past 20 years, early childhood experts, community stakeholders and Department of Human Services' staff have been developing QRIS strategies in Colorado which support and strengthen early learning programs. Colorado's Next Generation QRIS builds upon these best practices and connects the state with local committees such as the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and the Early Childhood Councils.

In some instances, QRIS has been referred to as TQRIS, in which the "T" stands for Tiered reimbursement, which is a system of offering a higher rate of reimbursement for Children in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) based on the rating of the facility. Presently, five counties offer tiered reimbursement and the Department of Human Services is working to increase the number of counties offering a higher reimbursement to those facilities providing higher quality early care and learning to children in CCCAP.

Why Quality Matters

Children attending a high quality Early Childhood Facility:

- Perform higher on 3rd grade assessments
- Perform higher on 8th grade assessments
- Are less likely to repeat a grade in school
- Less likely to drop out of high school
- More likely to attend college
- More likely to graduate from college
- More likely to be employed as an adult.
- Less likely to receive public assistance as an adult

Rating System

All licensed providers represent quality programs, and have met Colorado's already rigorous standards for licensing. Therefore any licensed providers will automatically be rated at level 1, which represents a strong level of quality in itself. Many providers will easily qualify for level 2 or 3 with their existing practices. Providers do not need to achieve all points in each category to improve their quality rating, allowing providers to choose the areas which best fit their existing educational philosophies. Programs which want to reach a higher level of quality can earn points in six categories:

36 Points - Leadership, Management & Administration	16 Points – Child Health
34 Points - Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development	15 Points – Learning Environment
27 Points – Family Partnerships	9 Points – Optional Point Areas

What is QRIS?

- QRIS is the result of 20 years of work from the early childhood community.
- QRIS embeds quality ratings in the licensing process, providing a method to assess, enhance and communicate quality as a critical component of licensed childcare.
- QRIS incentivizes providers to strive for higher quality ratings.
- QRIS improves outcomes for all Colorado kids by increasing access to quality education and care.
- QRIS won't threaten the licensing of those facilities already licensed.
- QRIS won't require providers to adjust their educational philosophy.



COLORADO DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION



Colorado Department
of Human Services
people who help people



OFFICE OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD

Criteria for Quality Levels

Categories	Total Points	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
1. Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development	34	10	14	20
2. Family Partnerships	27	12	15	22
3. Leadership, Management & Administration	36	16	20	29
4. Learning Environment	15	6	8	11
5. Child Health	16	6	8	12
Option: Additional points in any category	(9)			
Minimum requirement for Rating		50	65	94
Average Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Score		At least 3.75 with no classroom below a 3.0	At least 4.75 with no classroom below a 4.0	At least 5.75 with no classroom below a 5.0

QRIS Implementation and Next Steps

Colorado is currently seeking a contractor to assist in the rating process, through an open and competitive bid process. This vendor will work directly with the Department of Human Services staff, to design and launch the evaluation process as well as develop incentives for providers. This process will be completed with stakeholder input and feedback throughout, and will result in a collaborative design that best serves providers, children and families alike. The QRIS planning phase will run through the remainder of 2013, with implementation slated to begin in July, 2014.

Statewide implementation will occur in phases, with the goal of implementation:

- 2,400 Child Care Centers - State Fiscal Year 2013-14
- 3,700 Family Child Care Homes - State Fiscal Year 2014-15
- 967 School Age Children - State Fiscal Year 2015-16

Contact:

David Collins
 Director – Division of Early Care and Learning
 303-866-5946
David.collins@state.co.us



COLORADO DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

