

Build a Quality Child Care Business with DCF's YoungStar Program



Maintaining a high-quality child care business isn't easy. It takes hard work and dedication. DCF's YoungStar program is here to help. YoungStar is Wisconsin's child care quality rating and improvement system. Our goal is to help child care programs like yours be as successful as possible. Our 5 Star rating system gives providers an objective measure of their program's quality. We reward excellence and offer a clear and continuous path to improvement. The best part is that all regulated Wisconsin child care providers can participate at no cost.

How does YoungStar measure quality?

YoungStar rates child care providers in multiple categories. It takes into consideration the program's size and structure. The number of stars a program receives is based on many factors. The four key areas are:

1. The Provider's Education and Training

- Has the staff been trained in early childhood education and development?

2. The Learning Environment and Curriculum

- What types of activities and learning materials are provided for the children?
- What are the lesson plans like, and how do they help brain development?

3. The Program's Professional and Business Practices

- Does the business run smoothly and responsibly?
- Is staff treated fairly?
- Do the provider and staff engage parents and families?

4. The Children's Health and Well-Being

Are all the needs of the child being addressed?
Such as:

- Safety
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Social engagement



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Why your business should shoot for the stars

It's simple, YoungStar is designed to help providers improve and succeed. Our quality-based evaluation process helps programs like yours recognize their strengths and identify areas for improvement. Then, we offer a clear path to achieve real progress—but that's just the start. YoungStar benefits providers in many other ways, like:

- Creating financial incentives to encourage providers to continually improve
- The ability to accept Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy payments from families
- Providing opportunities to earn credits with a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship, connect and network with other programs, and access low-cost training opportunities
- Free support from a YoungStar coach
- Giving your program a state-recognized star rating that reflects your program's quality
- Allows families searching for YoungStar-rated programs to find you through the Child Care Finder

Ready to join YoungStar?

Almost any Wisconsin regulated child care provider can participate in YoungStar. Applying only takes a few simple steps, and we'll guide you through the process. Get started today at dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/contract.

Already part of YoungStar?

YoungStar ratings are renewed every other year, so you can earn more stars as the quality of your program improves. Below are three tips to help you get the highest possible rating.

1. Review Your Registry Profile

Enter your staff's latest education and training information, assign a Lead Teacher to each classroom, and keep this information updated.

2. Create a Quality Improvement Plan

Assess your program's strengths and weaknesses. YoungStar coaches can help providers set goals and timelines, assign responsibilities, and decide how to measure their progress.

3. Build Your Skills

YoungStar offers many free and low-cost opportunities for professional development. Visit youngstar.wi.gov to find planning tools, consultation support, training programs in your area, and information on scholarships for credit-based education through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Wisconsin.



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

To learn more about YoungStar for providers, visit
dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers.

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families is your trusted source of information, resources, and support for child care providers!

The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access services, receive information in an alternate format, or need information translated to another language, please call the Division of Early Care and Education at 608-422-6002. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled can use the free Wisconsin Relay service by dialing 711 to contact the department.