



## Accreditation Policy

YoungStar accepts the following accreditations as equivalent to a 5 Star rating:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - **Tier 3 – Accreditation +**
- Association for Early Learning Leaders' National Accreditation Commission
- City of Madison Group and School-Age Accreditation

YoungStar accepts the following accreditations as equivalent to a 4 Star or a 5 Star rating:<sup>1</sup>

- Council on Accreditation (COA)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- City of Madison Family Child Care Accreditation
- American Camp Association (ACA)
- Satellite Accreditation for Family Child Care
- Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (WELSSA)

YoungStar accepts the following accreditations as equivalent to a 4 Star or a 5 Star rating:<sup>2</sup>

- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
- Cognia - NCA/SACS/NWAC (formerly AdvancED)
- American Montessori Society (AMS)

When a provider becomes accredited or extends/renews their accreditation, it is the responsibility of the provider to send their certificate of accreditation/re-accreditation to the Department of Children and Families via fax: **608-422-7156** or via email to: [youngstar@wisconsin.gov](mailto:youngstar@wisconsin.gov)

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<sup>1</sup> If a provider is accredited by COA, NAFCC, Satellite, City of Madison, WELSSA, or ACA, the provider will automatically receive a 4 Star rating. If the provider meets the educational requirements of a 5 Star provider in their respective YoungStar rating track, that provider would be eligible for a 5 Star rating.

<sup>2</sup> If a provider is accredited by NECPA, Cognia, or AMS AND the provider meets the educational requirements of a 4 Star program in their respective YoungStar rating track, that provider would be eligible for a 4 Star rating. If a provider is accredited by NECPA, Cognia, or AMS AND the provider meets the educational requirements of a 5 Star provider in their respective YoungStar rating track, that provider would be eligible for a 5 Star rating.



**YoungStar cannot recognize a provider as accredited until the certificate of accreditation/re-accreditation is received.** The valid dates of the accreditation will be entered into the YoungStar system and the YoungStar rating and any corresponding Child Care Bridge Payment will reflect the accredited status effective the first of the month following the date that the provider provides DCF with proof of accreditation.

**NOTE:** DCF will consider accepting additional accreditations through a process of reviewing and comparing the accreditations' demonstrated competencies to those of the current NAEYC standards. Policies have been established that provide the opportunity for additional accrediting bodies to submit an alignment of their quality standards to the NAEYC standards for review by DCF. If requested, DCF will allow accrediting bodies to provide clarification and additional information to support their application.

However, if the quality standards do not meet the threshold (80% overall match and all required items met), the accrediting body must wait one calendar year from the original submission to resubmit an application for reconsideration. If approved, DCF will not recognize currently accredited providers until written verification is provided stating that those providers have been reviewed under the new, approved standards.

#### Voluntary lapse

If a provider's accreditation lapses or expires, the provider's rating will drop to a pending 2 Star rating effective the first of the month following the expiration date. The provider will be given a 90-day grace period to begin or conclude an onsite rating before the 2 Star rating is activated. Any drop in star rating may negatively affect the provider's Child Care Bridge Payment.

In anticipation of an accreditation expiring, a provider may complete a YoungStar Rating Type Change Form, available through their local YoungStar office, and request an onsite rating to replace a rating based upon accreditation. Providers are eligible for Technical Assistance to prepare for a rating, if desired. The provider will be placed into the normal queue for YoungStar services with other providers who are applying for YoungStar for the first time and renewing providers.<sup>3</sup> Onsite ratings can generally be completed within

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<sup>3</sup> Programs will be placed at the end of the queue but before 1 Star rated providers.



4 (no ERS observations needed) to 12 weeks (ERS observations needed for rating) from the date that the provider requests to be rated by their local YoungStar office.

It is in the best interest of the provider to allow plenty of time for a replacement rating to be given in order to avoid the negative effect on Child Care Bridge Payment. If a provider knows they will be allowing their accreditation to lapse or expire, we recommend that they submit a YoungStar Rating Type Change Form **at least six months** in advance of the accreditation expiring if possible. If the accreditation lapses before a provider has been given an onsite rating, the provider's rating will move to a pending 2 Star rating on the first of the month following the expiration date. The provider will be given a 90-day grace period before the 2 Star rating is activated to support completion of an onsite rating.

#### Involuntary lapse

If a provider's accreditation is revoked by the accrediting body for any reason, upon notification from the provider or the accrediting body that the accreditation has been revoked, the provider's rating will drop to a 2 Star rating effective the first of the month following the date the accreditation was revoked. Any drop in star rating may negatively affect the provider's Child Care Bridge Payment.

A provider may complete a YoungStar Rating Type Change Form, available through their Local YoungStar Office, and request an onsite rating at any time to replace a rating based upon accreditation. Providers are eligible for Technical Assistance to prepare for a rating, if desired. The provider will be placed into the normal queue for YoungStar services with other providers who are applying for YoungStar for the first time and renewing providers.<sup>4</sup> Onsite ratings can generally be completed within 4 (no ERS observations needed) to 12 weeks (ERS observations needed for rating) from the date that the provider requests to be rated by their local YoungStar office.

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<sup>4</sup> Providers will be placed at the end of the queue but before 1 Star rated providers.

### **Contact Information for the Accrediting Bodies**

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):  
<http://www.naeyc.org/accreditation>
- Association for Early Learning Leaders' National Accreditation Commission:  
<https://www.earlylearningleaders.org/accreditation/accreditation-overview/>
- City of Madison Accreditation:  
<https://www.cityofmadison.com/commserv/CommunityAccreditation.html>
- Council on Accreditation (COA):  
<https://coanet.org/accreditation/>
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC):  
<https://nafcc.org/accreditation/>
- Satellite Accreditation for Family Child Care:  
<https://www.reachdane.org/programs/satellite.cfm>
- American Camp Association:  
<https://www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/accreditation-standards/accreditation>
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA):  
<http://necpa.net/page/NECPAStandards>
- American Montessori Society (AMS):  
<http://amshq.org/School-Resources/AMS-School-Accreditation>
- Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (WELSSA)  
<https://cls.welsrc.net/download-cls/welssa/>
- Cognia - NCA/SACS/NWAC (formerly AdvancED):  
<https://www.cognia.org/services/accreditation-certification/>