



Policy on Head Start Participation in YoungStar

Updated: May 2017

Policy

This policy applies to Head Start, Early Head Start, Tribal Head Start and Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and Early Head Start, and Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership participation in YoungStar. In this document, these types of federally funded programs have been shortened to “Head Start.” Due to new requirements in the 2016 Head Start Performance Standards, all Wisconsin Head Start programs- with the exception of American Indian, Alaska Native, and home-based Early Head Start¹ programs- must participate in YoungStar by August 1, 2017.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) assesses grantee compliance with Head Start Performance Standards through a monitoring system that is aligned with a comprehensive five-year continuous oversight plan called the Aligned Monitoring System. Within this system, grantees are assessed over a five-year period on a number of areas. Each assessment can result in the issuance of concerns, non-compliances or deficiencies. YoungStar will be in communication with ACF to be informed of issues that rise to the deficiency level. Concerns and non-compliances received by a Head Start site will not impact their participation or rating within YoungStar. For more information on the Aligned Monitoring System, please see the [ACF webpage](#) on this topic.

Head Start sites will fall into three categories for rating purposes in YoungStar based upon the hours of child care provided in addition to Head Start programming. Please see the appropriate section below.

1. Head Start Sites with No Child Care (Stand-Alone Head Starts)

Head Start sites with no wrap around child care:

- Are eligible to receive an automated 5 Star rating if they receive no deficiencies from the ACF Aligned Monitoring System review. Concerns and non-compliances received will not impact the 5 Star rating.
- Are not eligible for any type of rating except an automated rating in YoungStar.
- Are not eligible for YoungStar technical assistance or a micro-grant.

To participate in YoungStar:

1. Site turns in YoungStar Contract to local YoungStar office or DCF.
2. Local YoungStar office notifies the Department of Children and Families (DCF) that a HS contract has been received.
3. DCF verifies the site is a Head Start; is not authorized for any hours of child care in the Wisconsin Shares program; and has the Head Start designation in the system.
4. Contract is uploaded into the YoungStar Case Management System.
5. DCF adds an automated rating process and the site is rated 5 Stars.

Deficiencies:

If a site receives a deficiency in their ACF Aligned Monitoring System review, the site is no longer eligible for participation in YoungStar and is removed from the system. If the granting agency of a Head Start site that is receiving the YoungStar automated 5 Star rating receives a deficiency on their ACF Aligned Monitoring System review, the grantee and delegate agencies that have received the automated 5 Star rating are no longer eligible for the automated 5 Star rating in YoungStar. If

¹ Early Head Start agencies that solely offer services directly to a child/family in the family's home at a time when the parent is present are not eligible to participate in YoungStar.

DCF receives written verification by ACF that the deficiency is lifted, the site that had previously been negatively impacted by the deficiency notice can be reinstated to a 5 Star rating as of the week the deficiency is lifted by ACF.

2. Head Start Sites with Three or Fewer Hours of Child Care per Day

Head Start sites with three or fewer hours of wrap around child care:²

- Are eligible to receive an automated 5 Star rating if they receive no deficiencies in their Aligned Monitoring System review. Concerns and non-compliances received will not impact the 5 Star rating.
- Are not eligible for any type of rating except an automated rating in YoungStar unless the grantee receives a deficiency in their Aligned Monitoring System review (see below).
- Are not eligible for YoungStar technical assistance or a micro-grant if they are rated using the automated rating.

To participate in YoungStar:

1. Site turns in YoungStar Contract to local YoungStar office.
2. Local YoungStar office notifies the Department of Children and Families (DCF) that a HS contract has been received.
3. DCF verifies the site is a Head Start; is not authorized for any hours of child care in the Wisconsin Shares program; and has the Head Start designation in the system.
4. Contract is uploaded into the YoungStar Case Management System.
5. DCF adds an automated rating process and the site is rated 5 Stars.

Deficiencies:

If a site receives a deficiency in their Aligned Monitoring System review, the site is no longer eligible for the automated 5 Star rating in YoungStar. If the granting agency of a Head Start site that is receiving the YoungStar automated 5 Star rating receives a deficiency on their Aligned Monitoring System review, the grantee and delegate agencies that have received the automated 5 Star rating are no longer eligible for the automated 5 Star rating in YoungStar. The site is then eligible to receive an automated or technical rating for 2 or 3 Stars or a formal rating if all other formal rating prerequisites are met. If DCF receives written verification by ACF that the deficiency is lifted, the site that had previously been negatively impacted by the deficiency notice can be reinstated to a 5 Star rating as of the week the deficiency is lifted by ACF.

3. Head Start Sites That Provide or Are Paid by Wisconsin Shares for an Average of More Than Three Hours of Child Care per Day

Head Start sites with more than three hours of wrap around child care per day:

- Are not eligible to receive an automated 5 Star.
- Are eligible for any type of rating in YoungStar following normal YoungStar rating policies and procedures.³
- Are eligible for YoungStar technical assistance or a micro-grant.

To participate in YoungStar:

1. Site turns in YoungStar Contract to local YoungStar office.
2. Site is rated through the typical YoungStar rating process.

Deficiencies:

ACF deficiencies do not affect these sites because the sites are not eligible for the automated 5 Star rating.

² If Wisconsin Shares funding is blended with Head Start funding to provide services, and the time that is child care versus Head Start is not easily separated, the number of hours per week that a child is authorized to attend a program will be divided by five to find the average hours of child care per day. So, if one child is authorized for more than 15 hours per week, then that program is considered a program that is not stand-alone Head Start.

³ Providers that would like a Formal Rating must have at least two consecutive hours of child care programming available for observation and must be in business at the current physical location for at least one calendar year before requesting a Formal Rating.

Other Policies that Apply to Head Start Programs Participating in YoungStar:

- a. Head Start sites that provide more than three hours of child care in the summer or on school breaks **may** be eligible for the automated 5 Star rating if, at all other times of the year, they provide or care for children from families participating in the Wisconsin Shares program for an average of three or fewer hours of child care per day.
- b. Programs that have one Head Start classroom and at least one other child care classroom that operates more than three hours per day are not eligible for the automated 5 Star rating.
- c. Participating Head Start sites that are not eligible for the automated 5 Star rating will be rated using the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria for Group Programs unless they are a certified or licensed family provider. In which case, they will be evaluated using the Evaluation Criteria for Family Child Care.
- d. YoungStar rating will not be completed during Head Start or 4 Year Old Kindergarten (4K) programming when that portion of the programming is not wholly or partially funded by Wisconsin Shares payments from families. If the funding is blended and not easily separated, YoungStar rating **may** be done during the blended funded programming upon approval from DCF.
- e. Head Start programs must meet specific requirements outside of YoungStar to qualify for Wisconsin Shares wrap around child care authorizations. Please see the [Child Care Policy Manual Chapter 2, Section 2.2.13](#) for details regarding the specific reimbursement requirements.
- f. All other YoungStar policies and procedures apply to Head Start participants and must be followed.

Newly-Opened Sites Under a Current Grantee or Service Model Delivery Changes to Sites

If a current Head Start grantee opens a new site, the new location will be treated as all other existing locations and must follow all rules laid out above. For example, if the site is a stand-alone Head Start, it would immediately be eligible for the automated 5 Star rating. If a site had more than three hours of child care programming, it would be eligible for an automated or technical rating the first year in that physical location and then a formal rating after the first year.

If the Head Start grantee does not change, but the site changes service delivery model (for example: from offering child care wrap-around to offering zero hours of child care), the program should notify the local YoungStar office and the eligibility for the automated 5 Star rating will be re-evaluated.

Changes to Head Start Grantees, Delegates or Sites

When Head Start grants are redetermined by the ACF, DCF requests a list of Head Start sites (grantees, delegates and/or partners) from the grantees and/or ACF. DCF reviews the programming at each site and determines whether YoungStar participation is necessary and if any of the sites are eligible for a 5 Star automated rating. If a site was allowed to have an automated 5 Star rating under a previous grantee or under previous Head Start policy, they are not automatically eligible for the automated 5 Star rating under a new grantee. The DCF staff review of individual sites will make this determination.