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Beginning YoungStar: Child Care Provider Tip Sheet

Wisconsin child care providers and programs can prepare for Wisconsin's YoungStar quality rating and improvement system by completing the following activities:

Preparing to Have Educational Qualifications Evaluated and Updating Information on The Registry

Tip # 1: Update teacher/provider qualifications on The Registry

Actions for Group Child Care

- Ensure that all Lead Teachers and Center Director qualifications are current and accurately reflected by The Registry Career Level assigned.

Actions for School-Age Care

- Ensure that all Lead Teachers and Group Leader qualifications are current and accurately reflected by The Registry Career Level assigned.

Actions for Day Camps

- Ensure that all Lead Day Camp Counselors and the Day Camp Director qualifications are current and accurately reflected by The Registry Career Level assigned.

Actions for Family Child Care

- Ensure that the Primary Caregiver qualifications are current and accurately reflected by The Registry Career Level assigned.
- If the owner is not the Primary Caregiver/Teacher, then the qualifications of the Primary Caregiver/Teacher are evaluated for purposes of YoungStar.

Information Available Online for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Providers

The Registry Career Level information is available at:

<http://www.the-registry.org/Membership/CareerLevels.aspx>

Tip # 2: Administrators/Owners update your child care Program Profile on The Registry

Actions for Group, School-Age, and Day Camp Programs

- Review and update the licensed group center's Registry Program Profile within The Registry. This means that all current Lead Teachers are identified and attached to a specific classroom. Each classroom may only have one Lead Teacher assigned to it.
- When assigning a Lead Teacher to a classroom, please consider the teacher's formal education; training history; **scheduled work hours**; and years of experience.

- An individual Lead Teacher can be attached to a single classroom only, and a Program Director can be attached to a single child care program for points to be earned for YoungStar educational qualifications.

Actions for Family Child Care

- Review and update the program's Registry Program Profile within The Registry.
- If the owner of the program is not the primary teacher/caregiver (the person who spends the greatest percentage of time caring for the children), then the Registry Program Profile should reflect the education and training of the person who is the primary teacher/caregiver rather than the owner for the child care.

Information Available Online for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

The Registry Program Profile information is available at:

<http://www.the-registry.org/ProgramProfile/Overview.aspx>

Professional Development Planning

Tip # 3: Educational qualifications have a large impact on your program's star rating – know where you stand

Actions for Group , School-Age, and Day Camp Child Care

- Each Program Director/Administrator should review how their qualifications measure up with rating levels within YoungStar. Professional development planning should occur for the Director/Administrator.
- Individual professional development planning should occur for all Lead Teachers within a program and professional goals for the individual teacher should be identified.
- While YoungStar emphasizes qualifications of Lead Teachers and Directors, given the rate of turnover in the child care industry; the most strategic professional development plans consider the needs of ALL staff.
- The Program Director/Administrator should clearly understand each individual Lead Teachers educational background, and content training experience.
- An overall professional development goal for the program should be identified, to determine where available professional development funding should be targeted related to quality enhancement.
- Consider that if a program has more than one person listed in a classroom/group on their Registry Program Profile, the training of either individual will be counted when awarding YoungStar points for the following criteria:
 - B.2.1: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards or the School-Age Curricular Framework Training
 - D.1.3: Social-Emotional/Inclusion Training
 - D.1.4: Training in the identification, prevention, and reporting of child abuse and neglect

Only the training of this second teacher will count for YoungStar points, the educational level of this second teacher will not be counted for YoungStar points.

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood ® Wisconsin Scholarship options should be explored for staff interested in completion of credit-based instruction.

Actions for Family Child Care

- Individual professional development planning should occur for the owner/teacher or the primary provider of child care services in a family child care program.
- The teacher/provider should understand how their educational background and experiential learning relates to YoungStar quality indicators.
- An overall professional development plan should be identified to determine where available professional development funding should be targeted related to quality enhancement.
- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood @ Wisconsin Scholarship options should be explored for staff interested in completion of credit-based instruction.

Information Available Online for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship information is available at:

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/>

Information regarding what credit-based instruction is available can be obtained from the websites of individual institutions of higher education and also is available in a geographic representation at the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association website:

http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/teach/index.php?category_id=2618

Become familiar with the current educational qualifications and competencies of teaching staff and identify opportunities for on-going professional development needs of the program staff utilizing the Professional Development Planning Tool available through the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association:

http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/advocacy/index.php?category_id=3267&subcategory_id=7717

Program Quality Self-Assessment

Tip # 4: Take time to evaluate your program and map out your quality improvement journey through a Quality Improvement Plan

Actions for Group, School-Age, Day Camp Child Care

- Complete a self-assessment of the following: educational qualifications of staff and administration; business practices; environments and curriculum; and health and well-being of children.
- To perform a self-assessment, you may use a variety of self-assessment tools, including but not limited to the following:
 - Optional Self-Assessment Tool for YoungStar
 - Creative Curriculum for Preschool Implementation Checklist
 - Creative Curriculum for Infants/Toddlers/Twos – Implementation Planning Tool
 - Program Administration Scale
 - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (ITERS – R, ECERS-R, and SACERS-U)
 - HighScope Preschool Program Quality Assessment (PQA)
 - NAEYC Accreditation Self-Assessment Observable Criteria Tool
 - NAC self-assessment
 - City of Madison self-assessment
- In collaboration with staff, identify areas of strength and areas where program improvement is needed. Develop a concrete, specific, and “doable” quality improvement plan. Set goals, timelines, assign responsibility, and identify a way to check in on progress toward achieving action steps.

Actions for Family Child Care

- Complete a self-assessment of the following: educational qualifications of providers/teachers; business practices; environments and curriculum; and health and well-being of children.
- To perform a self-assessment, you may use a variety of self-assessment tools, including but not limited to the following:
 - Self-Assessment Tool for YoungStar-Optional
 - Business Administration Scale
 - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (FCCERS – R)
 - NAFCC Accreditation Self Study
- You may want to find a “buddy” who has your same passion for quality child care and create a support system to share ideas and check-in on progress.

Information Available Online for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

- Contact your YoungStar Regional Office for examples of Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) templates and **visit sample forms for:**
 - Birth to Five Programs: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/ys-sample-qip.pdf>
 - School-Age Programs: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/ys-sample-qip-schoolage.pdf>
 - QIP Spanish: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/spanishqip.pdf>

Learn about Relevant Training and Technical Assistance Opportunities in Your Area

Tip # 5: Trainings related to the quality indicators in YoungStar are available near you

Actions for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

- Be a good consumer of training and technical assistance services. Many services will become available at low or no cost to child care providers who are part of YoungStar. Anyone who promises quick fixes and an easy journey doesn’t understand quality improvement in early care and education. Buyers beware!
- Ask providers of training and technical assistance how they are related to the YoungStar; how they’re related to The Registry; and how the professional development opportunities they are providing are related to YoungStar.

Information Available Online for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

Department of Children and Families YoungStar trainings:

<http://supportingfamilies.together.org/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Training-Calendar.pdf>

Department of Children and Families YoungStar Child Care Finder page:

<http://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov>

The Registry Training Calendar:

<https://the-registry.org/myregistry/default.aspx>

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association:

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/conference/>

Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs):

Find a regional community-based organization near you:

<http://supportingfamilies.together.org/families/find-child-care/>

or call **1-888-713-KIDS** for information about opportunities near you.

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners – Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Training opportunities:

<http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels/trainings/training-opportunities/>

Wisconsin Child Care Administrators Association:

<http://www.wccaa.org/home>

Wisconsin Family Child Care Association:

<http://www.wisconsinfamilychildcare.org/>

Wisconsin Afterschool Association:

<http://waaweb.org>

Familiarize Yourself with the Tools for YoungStar Raters and the Technical Consultants

Tip # 6: Before requesting and submitting an application for a Formal Rating, be sure to familiarize yourself and your staff with the Subscales and Items within the Environment Rating Scale Tools

Actions for Licensed Group Child Care, School-Age and Day Camp Programs

- The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R), the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R), and the School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS-U) are suitable for use in evaluating inclusive and culturally-diverse group-based child care programs. The scales have proven to be a reliable and valid ways of determining the quality of a program.
- The Environment Rating Scales, in general, are used to assess the following in group child care programs:
 - Arrangement of space-both indoors and outdoors,
 - Materials and activities offered to the children,
 - Supervision and interactions (including language) that occur in the classroom, and
 - Schedule of the day, including routines and activities.
- The Program Administration Scale views the classroom environment through a combination of data collection from many sources including interviews, document review, and observation. This scale measures the overall quality of administrative practices of early care and education programs and serves as a useful guide to improve programs.
- Review the Evaluation Criteria that will be used to evaluate group, family and daycamp providers at:
 - <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/point-detail>

Actions for Family Child Care

- The Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R) is suitable for use in evaluating inclusive and culturally-diverse family child care programs. The scale has proven to be a reliable and valid ways of determining the quality of a program.
- The FCCERS-R is used to assess the following in family child care programs:
 - Arrangement of space both indoors and outdoors,
 - Materials and activities offered to the children,
 - Supervision and interactions (including language) that occur in the classroom, and
 - Schedule of the day, including routines and activities.

- The Business Administration Scale views the classroom environment through a combination of data collection from many sources including interviews, document review, and observation. This scale measures the overall quality of business practices of family child care programs and serves as a useful guide to improve programs.
- Review the Evaluation Criteria that will be used to evaluate family providers:
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/evaluation-criteria/2016-eval-criteria/2016-ys-evaluation-criteria-family.pdf>

Information Available Online for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

Information regarding the Environment Rating Scales is available at:
<http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/>

Information regarding the Program Administration Scale is available at:
<http://cecl.nl.edu/evaluation/pas.htm>

Information regarding the Business Administration Scale for family child care providers is available at:
<http://cecl.nl.edu/evaluation/bas.htm>

Information regarding family child care business practices can be found at:
<http://tomcopelandblog.com/>

Tip # 7: Learn all you can about YoungStar

Actions for Group, School-Age, Day Camp, and Family Child Care

- The Department of Children and Families has great resources for the early care and education workforce related to YoungStar.
 For general information go to <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers>
 For information about how points are earned for group programs go to <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/point-detail>
 For information about how points are earned for family programs go to <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/point-detail/2016-point-detail/point-detail-family-2016.pdf>
 For information about how points are earned for school-age programs go to <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/point-detail/2016-point-detail/point-detail-schoolage-2016.pdf>
 For information about how points are earned for day camp programs go to <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/point-detail/2016-point-detail/point-detail-daycamp-2016.pdf>
- Attend a scheduled YoungStar overview or request one in your area. Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) or the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) are happy to assist you.

**Toll-free Numbers:
 SFTA and CCR&Rs: 1-888-713-KIDS**

- Look for YoungStar training opportunities at The Registry web site:
<https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/default.aspx>

Successfully Completing the YoungStar Application Process

Tip # 8 Apply to YoungStar

All licensed Wisconsin child care providers must participate in YoungStar to receive Wisconsin Shares subsidy payments. To participate in YoungStar, there is a specific contract form for each provider type. These forms are available online and through your YoungStar Regional Office. If you do not have access to the internet, please call **1-888-713-KIDS** to have the forms sent to you in the mail. If you do have access to the internet, YoungStar contracts can be found at the link below:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/contract>

Remember, you may always call your YoungStar Regional Office or the main YoungStar number for help with these forms:

1-888-713-KIDS

In Home and Out-Of-State Providers

In Home and Out-of-State providers cannot participate in YoungStar; but are required to complete and sign the following to receive Wisconsin Shares:

- **YoungStar Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract**
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/forms/pdf/2587.pdf>

Step-by-Step Instructions for Completing a YoungStar Application

For step-by-step instructions on completing the applications, please visit the following page:
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/apply>

Additional tips for child care programs completing your YoungStar application:

- For Group programs: When listing your classrooms, only list your active classrooms. Rooms you have available but that are not currently in use would not be identified.
- For School-Age and Day Camps: When listing your classrooms, only list your active classrooms. Areas you have available but that are not currently in use would not be identified.
- Make a choice on the contract about what level of participation and support you're interested in receiving. Please read the form carefully as some levels of service are dependent upon factors such as educational qualifications of the director and staff.
- Applications will be processed and services scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. Incomplete applications will lose their priority in the service cue.
- **Please call your YoungStar Regional Office for support in completing your applications or if you have any questions. To find your YoungStar Regional Office, see the map at the following web site: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/localoffice>** If you do not have access to the internet, please call the main YoungStar number

1-888-713-KIDS