



YoungStar

Frequently Asked Questions: YoungStar Evaluation Criteria: Educational Qualifications

March 3, 2017

Note: Almost all questions have been revised since June 10, 2013; questions that have been substantially revised or added since the last update are highlighted.

YoungStar is a 5 Star quality rating and improvement system that supports child care and school-age care providers in the areas of education, learning environment & curriculum, business & professional practices and the health & well-being of children. Through this rating system the state addresses several key issues in Wisconsin's child care system. YoungStar:

- Focuses on improving outcomes for children by improving the overall quality of care
- Creates multiple pathways to professional development opportunities and better quality for child care and school-age programs
- Creates a clear, understandable tool for parents to choose quality child care
- Creates incentives and provides support for programs to improve services, particularly for low-income children
- Improves accountability for the Wisconsin Shares system

Questions on YoungStar Evaluation Criteria: Educational Qualifications

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Answers about YoungStar Evaluation Criteria: Educational Qualifications

EDU-1. How important is education in our profession?

Research indicates that providers with higher levels of education are associated with higher quality care. Many studies can be found that testify to this association, including:

- *The Carolina Abecedarian Project*, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1999): <http://abc.fpg.unc.edu/> .
- National Center for Early Development and Learning, 1995, NIEER Working Paper - *The Impact of Teacher Education on Outcomes in Center-Based Early Childhood Education Programs: A Meta-analysis*, by Pamela Kelley and Gregory Camilli (2007): <http://nieer.org/research-report/the-impact-of-teacher-education-on-outcomes-in-center-based-early-childhood-education-programs-a-meta-analysis>.
- *Child Care & Early Education Research-to-Policy Connections, No. 3: Impact of Training and Education for Caregivers of Infants and Toddlers*, by J. Lee Kreader, Daniel Ferguson, Sharmila Lawrence, 2005: http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_625.html.
- Adams, D.B., Roach, M.A., Riley, D.A., and Edie, D. (2002). *Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership Issue Brief No. 9: What is the relationship between child care directors and quality?* University of Wisconsin-Extension: Madison, Wisconsin: <http://www.sohe.wisc.edu/outreach/wccrp/pdfs/brief9.pdf>.

Research demonstrates the value of credit-based instruction, and other states with quality rating and improvement systems confirm that education is linked to higher quality early care and education settings, which lead to improved outcomes for children.

EDU-2. How can I further my education?

YoungStar continues to collaborate with institutions of higher learning to make it as convenient as possible to take credit-based coursework, including fully online courses. If you have not yet completed any credit-based instruction, you may begin professional development planning that supports completion of credits and over time build into credentials and/or degrees. The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) offers free Professional Development Counseling to help child care and school-age providers create customized plans for professional development. WECA Professional Development Counselors understand the strengths you bring to your profession and the challenges you face and will work with you to design a professional development plan that fits your needs.

For more information on WECA's free Professional Development Counseling service:

- Go to <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/PDcounseling/>, or
- Call 1-800-783-9322, and select option 3 when prompted.

WECA can also help you:

- Learn about *T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Wisconsin Scholarships* to help you pay for credit-based coursework: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/>
- Explore *credit for prior learning (CPL)* opportunities to determine if your experience and previously completed, non-credit, specialized training can translate into credits: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/CPL/>

To learn more about the Early Childhood Education program in the Wisconsin Technical College System, check out:

- Infant Toddler Certificate - <http://www.wistechcolleges.org/explore-careers/certificates/early-childhood-infant-toddler-certificate>
- Early Childhood Education - <http://www.wistechcolleges.org/explore-careers/program/early-childhood-education>

Wisconsin's institutions of higher education (IHEs) want to support your success and have created innovative methods of coursework delivery to support the early care and education workforce, including evening, accelerated, hybrid, and on-line classes, in addition to credit for prior learning opportunities and community-based delivery of coursework. WECA offers an interactive map to help you discover early childhood continuing education and degree opportunities across Wisconsin, offered by technical colleges, private colleges, and public universities:

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/wisconsin-universities-colleges/>

The Registry Credentials can be stepping stones to advancement in the early care and education field. These credit-based programs are focused on job-specific skills so students can apply the practical knowledge they've learned to their current positions. Plus, for providers interested in obtaining associate's or bachelor's degrees, credentials can be the foundation for future credit-based instruction. Accredited technical colleges and universities located throughout the state of Wisconsin offer credential coursework. To learn more about the following Registry Credentials, go to:

<https://www.the-registry.org/Credentials/Overview.aspx>

The Registry Credentials
Administrator
Afterschool & Youth Development
Family Child Care
Inclusion
Infant Toddler
Leadership
Preschool
Program Development

EDU-3. What is the relationship between YoungStar and The Registry?

Wisconsin child care and school-age providers, teachers, and directors/supervisors have their educational qualifications verified by The Registry, Wisconsin's Recognition System for the Childhood Care and Education Profession:

<http://www.the-registry.org>

Career Level Certificate

The Registry awards a certificate verifying that entry-level and continuing education requirements defined by the Department of Children and Families have been met. The certificates list each recipient's unique education and training background and provide a tool for demonstrating her or his qualities, strengths, and professionalism. Training and education are represented by 17 Registry Career Levels. Each of the staff qualifications identified in YoungStar is equivalent to a Registry Career Level. See The Registry Career Levels at:

<http://www.the-registry.org/Portals/0/Career%20Levels%209-2014.pdf>

In order to earn more than a 2 Star rating, and in order to be assigned as a YoungStar Lead Teacher/Group Leader or Director/Site Supervisor on The Registry Program Profile, lead staff must have a Career Level Certificate.

Program Profile

Programs that want to earn higher than a 2 Star will be required to complete a Registry Program Profile. Instructions for doing this are available at <http://www.the-registry.org/ProgramProfile/Overview.aspx> and in the “Application and Participation” section of this FAQ. If additional help is needed, providers can call Bridget Benson at the Child Care Information Center (1-800-362-7353).

Verification

The Registry verifies individual staff educational qualifications and training accomplishments using credit-based instruction transcripts and other training verification materials. All training is quantified by core knowledge areas (CKAs) as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, at <http://www.naeyc.org/>) or Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™ content areas as defined by the Council for Professional Recognition (<http://www.cdacouncil.org/>).

In order to earn points within the YoungStar educational qualifications indicator, the educational qualifications of Lead Teachers/Group Leaders and the Director/Site Supervisor must be verified by The Registry. This process requires a Registry Career Level for each Lead Teacher/Group Leader and the assignment of each Lead Teacher/Group Leader to a classroom/group within the Program Profile. The same process applies for licensed and certified family child care providers wishing to receive points in the Provider Qualifications category.

Licensing staff, technical assistance providers, and observation raters:

- Verify that each reported child care and school-age staff member is currently employed at an individual program
- Identify a Lead Teacher/Group Leader for each classroom/group

EDU-4. Is it a requirement to renew The Registry Certificate each year?

No, it is not a requirement to renew a Registry Certificate each year ***if***:

- The staff education and training have *not* changed, and
- The staff who are in the Program Profile have been awarded a Registry Career Level based on the 2009 Career Levels.

However, if a staff member obtains further education or training, s/he needs to renew her/his Registry Certificate to have it count for YoungStar points. So, if a staff member advances her/his education to a level that would change her/his Career Level or has taken training for which YoungStar points are awarded, it is necessary for that individual to renew the Career Level Certificate to include the new training and education.

A program must ensure that The Registry Program Profile is continuously accurate to ensure the program’s YoungStar rating – and by association Wisconsin Shares payment level to families – is accurate. The Registry Program Profile is used for the determination of education and training quality indicator points for a program, so it is important the Program Profile is based on current staffing. When staffing changes occur, it is the program’s responsibility to update The Registry Program Profile in an accurate and timely fashion, to avoid incorrect Wisconsin Shares payments to families.

EDU-5. Do qualifications for the Lead Teacher/Group Leader and the Director/Site Supervisor have to be in early childhood education?

For child care programs, the credits, credentials, and degrees identified for Lead Teachers and Directors must be related to early childhood education as determined by The Registry. For school-age programs, the credits, credentials, and degrees of Group Leaders and Site Supervisors could also be related to school-age care.

Note: YoungStar materials will mention “an Associate’s Degree in a related area.” For YoungStar, the **equivalent** to a “**related Associate’s Degree**” is **60 credits beyond high school** with at least **30 of those credits related** to early childhood or school-age care.

EDU-6. I am currently completing a credit-based educational program. Does this count toward YoungStar points?

Credits that have been *completed and verified* by The Registry are used when determining educational qualification points. Credits that are in progress do not count for YoungStar points *until* they are completed and verified by The Registry.

EDU-7. I have a DPI license and was told by licensing that I was not required to have a current Registry certificate. Do I have to get a current certificate for YoungStar?

Yes, if you would like your education to count within a program’s YoungStar rating. An example of this would be a 4K collaborative program (a program where 4K is offered in a child care setting), with the 4K program taking place in the morning and a four-year-old center-based program taking place in the afternoon. The teacher who provides both 4K and alternate hours of child care must have a Registry Career Level Certificate processed after Jan. 1, 2009, if the program intends to have the teacher’s educational qualifications count toward points in YoungStar.

EDU-8. Who is considered the “Lead Teacher/Group Leader” when calculating YoungStar education points?

For each classroom/group listed in The Registry Program Profile, *only one* individual’s educational qualifications are considered, according to *Maintaining Your Registry Program Profile*:

Lead Teachers or Group Leaders

- A. The person who is teaching for the greatest number of hours **between the hours of 6 AM and 6 PM** in a given classroom (or with a given group) should be listed as the Lead Teacher or Group Leader on the Registry Program Profile.
- B. If two or more people work an equal number of hours between the hours of 6 AM and 6 PM, either person can be listed as the Lead Teacher or Group Leader on The Registry Program Profile.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/keep-program-profile-updated.pdf>

Therefore, the teacher who spends the most number of hours in the classroom (or with the group) would be the individual associated with that classroom/group in The Registry Program Profile.

EDU-9. Who is the Lead Teacher/Group Leader when two staff members share a classroom/group?

When looking at Lead Teacher/Group Leader qualifications for classrooms/groups within a program, the Lead Teacher/Group Leader who spends the greatest number of hours each week in the classroom (or with the group) should be identified on The Registry Program Profile as the YoungStar Lead Teacher/Group Leader. If two teachers spend equal amounts of time in a classroom (or in a group), the Director/Site Supervisor may choose which teacher to assign as the Lead Teacher/Group Leader for YoungStar education points. This choice must be reflected in the program's Registry Program Profile.

EDU-10. How is the education of a teacher counted if s/he works in more than one classroom or with more than one group? Can this teacher's educational qualifications be attached to every classroom/group in which s/he teaches?

A teacher's educational qualifications can only be attached to a *single* classroom/group, within a *single* program. The total number of classrooms/groups is used in determining the overall educational qualifications of teaching staff.

A percentage formula of Lead Teachers/Group Leaders and classrooms/groups determines the number of points awarded to the program, as shown in the *YoungStar Evaluation Criteria*:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/point-detail>

For example, Lead Teachers/Group Leaders with 6 credits in 50% of the classrooms/groups = two YoungStar points awarded.

EDU-11. Can one person serve as both Director (or Site Supervisor or Camp Director) and Lead Teacher (or Group Leader or Counselor)?

The following rule applies:

For YoungStar, the person who is designated as the Director/Site Supervisor shall be on-site for at least 25% (for *Group and School-Age* programs) or 50% (for *Day Camp* programs) of the total number of hours s/he works for the program and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Supervision of the planning and implementation of the programming for children
2. Supervision of the staff at the program/site
3. Staff meetings and orientation
4. Continuing education for the staff

The following variations will be allowed to the rule above:

- **Centralized administration:** if the program is administrated outside the center/site, the program may ask for a variation from the typical YoungStar staffing requirements. Responsibilities 1 and 2 (listed above) must be performed by a person who is on-site at the center/site for at least 25% (for *Group and School-Age* programs) or 50% (for *Day Camp* programs) of the total number of hours s/he works for the program. Responsibilities 3 and 4 may be performed by a person or persons who are located off-site.

In these cases of centralized administration, the program has two options:

- Option 1: List a person from the administrative office who fulfills responsibilities 3 and/or 4 as the Director/Site Supervisor.
- Option 2: List the person who is on-site performing responsibilities 1 and 2 as the Director/Site Supervisor. **If the program wants to choose this option and the person listed as the Director/Site Supervisor is also a Lead Teacher/Group Leader, the rules for Dual-Role (below) must be followed.**

- **Dual-role:** group programs that are licensed for 30 or fewer children or school-age/day camp sites that are licensed for 50 or fewer children may, in the following limited circumstances, have a Director/Site Supervisor who also is listed as a Lead Teacher/Group Leader in the Program Profile:
 - **To be eligible to earn 3 Stars:** The person in the dual-role has 25% (for *Group* and *School-Age* programs) or 50% (for *Day Camp* programs) of the time the program is open devoted to the responsibilities of the Director/Site Supervisor **AND** child-to-staff ratios must follow licensing requirements for licensed group centers. For example, if a *group* program is open 40 hours per week, the person in the dual-role would have to be in the Director role for 10 hours per week. The dual-role Director/Site Supervisor must also meet the educational qualifications for a 3 Star rating.

Note on Day Camps: Day camp sites are eligible to earn up to 3 Stars through rating by YoungStar; to earn 4 or 5 Stars, day camps would need to be accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA, at <http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation>).
 - **To be eligible to earn 4 Stars:** The person in the dual-role has 37.5% of the time the *Group* or *School-Age* program is open devoted to the responsibilities of the Director/Site Supervisor **AND** child-to-staff ratios must follow licensing requirements for licensed group centers. For example, if a *group* or *school-age* program is open 40 hours per week, the person in the dual-role would have to be in the Director role for 15 hours per week. The dual-role Director/Site Supervisor must also meet the educational qualifications for a 4 Star rating.
 - **To be eligible to earn 5 Stars:** A full-time dedicated Director/Site Supervisor must be in place, who meets the educational qualifications for a 5 Star rating.

For more information, see the “Education and Training” section of the *YoungStar Evaluation Criteria*:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/point-detail>

Note: The person serving as the Director/Site Supervisor/Camp Director may step in to help with Lead Teacher/Group Leader/Counselor responsibilities if a staff member is ill, during staff break/meal times, when special programming or activities require more adults to be in the room or area used by children, or for emergencies.

EDU-12. How does YoungStar calculate education points for programs that operate more than one shift?

When looking at Lead Teacher/Group Leader/Family provider qualifications for a program, the Lead Teacher/Group Leader/Family provider who spends the greatest number of hours each week **between the hours of 6 AM and 6 PM** in the classroom/group/program should be identified on The Registry Program Profile as the YoungStar Lead Teacher/Group Leader/Family Provider. If two teachers spend equal amounts of time in a classroom/group, the Director/Site Supervisor may choose which teacher to assign as the Lead Teacher/Group Leader for YoungStar education points. This choice must be reflected in the program's Registry Program Profile.

In group centers, YoungStar bases these calculations on the number of *physical classrooms* (not shifts) that are available within a program, and programs should identify the teachers who spend the most time in those *physical classrooms* as the Lead Teachers. For example, if a program has the "Blue Group" in Classroom A from 8 AM to 2 PM and the "Red Group" in Classroom A from 2 PM to 7 PM, only one teacher will have to be identified as the Lead Teacher for Classroom A, even if there are two different teachers who teach in that physical space.

EDU-13. How do changes in the educational qualifications of staff affect YoungStar ratings?

Programs are given a YoungStar rating based upon staffing levels *at the time of the rating*.

Decrease in Educational Qualifications

In YoungStar, if a staff member leaves and the departure negatively affects the YoungStar rating because of a decrease in educational points, a program has 90 calendar days as a grace period to find a replacement with comparable educational qualifications and assign them to the Program Profile, before the lower rating is activated at the local YoungStar office. YoungStar provides this courtesy to each program **once** per calendar year, even if a program continually experiences staffing changes.

Increase in Educational Qualifications

If a staff member’s education level increases enough to move the program up a star rating, the YoungStar rating will change once the *individual’s* Registry Career Level Certificate is updated and the required documentation has been provided to the local YoungStar office. If the individual is not due to renew her or his Registry Membership, they can choose to wait until renewal is due (which will also mean waiting for the YoungStar rating to change) or submit the earned credits/degree to be processed separately at The Registry.

The Registry Program Profile

Programs are expected to update staffing changes (among lead staff) in their Registry Program Profiles (<http://www.the-registry.org/ProgramProfile/Overview.aspx>) as soon as they happen. Staffing information needs to be up-to-date and accurate, as this information is used to determine a portion of the program’s YoungStar rating, which in turn ensures accurate Wisconsin Shares payments to families. As local YoungStar office staff (both Technical Consultants and Rating Observers) visit a program, they verify the number of active classrooms/groups and the YoungStar Lead Teacher/Group Leader attached to each classroom/group, and compare that to the details of the Program Profile.

If the educational qualifications of a program change enough to affect the star rating (either from staff turnover or changes in Career Levels), the new rating does not become public (in other words, is not published on the website) until the program’s Technical Consultant approves the rating in the Case Management System.

EDU-14. How will YoungStar support my professional development, to help my program move from 2 Stars to 3 Stars?

You know how important a high-quality child care program is for children’s development and learning. And YoungStar recognizes that YOUR development and learning is vital to the quality of your program. The following table lists the statewide agencies that provide YoungStar professional development support, to help you build a 3 Star program:

Agency Name	Website for Professional Development Support	Phone Number
Child Care Information Center (CCIC)	https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ccic	800.362.7353
The Registry	https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/	608.222.1123

Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA)	http://supportingfamilies.together.org/early-care-education-professionals/sharpen-your-professional-skills/	888.713.KIDS
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA)	http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/youngstar/PDcounseling/	800.783.9322
YoungStar	https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers	800.362.7353

The following list demonstrates the multitude of supports available to you on your professional development journey. You may skim this list to find options that interest you, or contact one of the agencies listed above for help in navigating your options:

- Use YoungStar Tip Sheets to learn how your program can progress from 2 Stars to 3 Stars:
 - Group Child Care: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/gcc-starprogression.pdf>
 - Family Child Care: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/fcc-starprogression.pdf>
- Reflect on your goals for learning—where you are, where you want to go, and how you want to get there:
 - WECA’s *Professional Development Support Questionnaire*: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/youngstar/professional-development-questionnaire/>
 - YoungStar’s *Creating a Professional Development Plan*:
 - Instructions: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/pdpfamily.pdf>
 - Family Child Care Provider: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/pdpfamily.pdf>
 - Group Child Care – Lead Teacher: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/pdpgrouplead.pdf>
 - Group Child Care – Director: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/pdpgroupdirector.pdf>
 - Getting started: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/assets/Documents/Developing-a-Professional-Development-Plan-handout.pdf>
 - Worksheet: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/assets/Documents/PD-plan-handout-for-workshop.pdf>
- Discuss your ideas with other child care professionals:
 - Talk with a WECA Professional Development Counselor, who can offer you free, over-the-phone support in your search for further learning options and possible financial resources: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/PDcounseling/>
 - Request Technical Assistance from a YoungStar Technical Consultant, who can help you develop a Quality Improvement Plan and receive a micro-grant:
 - Your Local YoungStar Office: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/localoffice>
 - Information on micro-grants:
 - <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youngstar/pdf/microgrants.pdf>
 - Explore free services provided by the staff of the CCIC: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ccic>

- Get navigation support for The Registry and YoungStar websites.
 - Borrow books, videos, posters, and other resources.
 - Obtain learning packets customized for your needs, as well as materials for staff or parents.
- Outline your personal professional development plan with help from WECA:
 - *Journey to Quality*: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/assets/Documents/JTQ.pdf>
 - *Developing a Professional Development Plan*: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/assets/Documents/Developing-a-Professional-Development-Plan-handout.pdf>
 - *My Professional Development Plan*: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/assets/Documents/PD-plan-handout-for-workshop.pdf>
- Search for professional development opportunities in your area, often at low or no cost:
 - YoungStar Regional Training Calendar: <http://supportingfamielstogether.org/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Training-Calendar.pdf>
 - Your Local YoungStar Office: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/localoffice>
 - The Registry's Statewide Training Calendar (T-NET Training Network): <https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/default.aspx>
 - CCIC Education and Training Opportunities: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ccic>
 - Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) Training Opportunities: <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-training-opportunities.php>
 - Wisconsin Pyramid Model Training Opportunities: <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wi-pyramid-model-about.php>
 - WECA Child Care Training (including free online trainings—Child Care Business Practices Tutorial and Cultivating Childhood Wellness Through Gardening): <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/training/>
 - SFTA:
 - Training, Professional Development, Conferences, On-Site Consultation, and Networking: <http://supportingfamielstogether.org/early-care-education-professionals/sharpen-your-professional-skills/>
 - Your Local Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agency: <http://supportingfamielstogether.org/member-directory/>
 - Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Mandated Reporter Training (SCAN-MRT) (free and online): <http://wcpds.wisc.edu/related-training/mandated-reporter/Default.aspx>
 - Darkness to Light (Stewards of Children) Training (online training is \$10 per person): <http://www.d2l.org/site/c.4dICIJOkGcISE/b.6242551/>
- Find the universities and colleges closest to you that offer early childhood continuing education and degree opportunities:

- Public Universities, Private Colleges, and Technical Colleges in Wisconsin:
<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/wisconsin-universities-colleges>
- If you live in the area served by Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), check out the free courses that can support your growth from 2 Stars to 3 Stars and may even help you earn academic credit through your on-the-job experiences:
 - http://www.matc.edu/matc_news/2012_WECAClasses.cfm
 - <http://www.winsforchildrenwi.org/cms-assets/documents/87084-6144.final-early-childhood-english-flyer2.pdf>
- Put your on-the-job training and experiences towards college credit in the Credit for Prior Learning system: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/CPL>
- Obtain a scholarship through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Wisconsin: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/>
- Find out if you're eligible for a REWARD Wisconsin Stipend: <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/reward/>

As you learn and grow—and help the children in your care learn and grow—please know that YoungStar staff throughout the state stand ready to assist you in taking advantage of these opportunities!