



# DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers



Secretary Eloise Anderson presented awards to child care providers who achieved a 4 Star or 5 Star rating.

Pictured left to right are: Secretary Eloise Anderson, child care provider Elizabeth Wooldridge, YoungStar Technical Consultant Marilu Rodriguez-Kroll, DCF Quality Initiatives Section Chief Coral Manning, and DCF-BELP Bureau Director Kath McGurk.

**Spring 2015**

**Inside this issue**

- 4 & 5 Star Providers Honored ..... 1
- YoungStar Evaluation Criteria Updates ..... 2
- Reporting Attendance Online 3
- Annual BID Form Request..... 3
- MECA Corner ..... 3
- 2015 YoungStar Training Opportunities ..... 4
- Updates to the YoungStar Policy Guide..... 5
- Safe Sleep for Infants..... 5
- ERSI Training ..... 6
- New YoungStar Website ..... 7
- ARR Training ..... 7
- “Wraparound” Care..... 7
- Educational Opportunities Grants ..... 8

## 4 and 5 Star Programs Recognized for Quality Improvement

Last October, just over 100 YoungStar-rated child care programs received special honors for achieving a 4 or 5 Star rating in the past year (2013-14). Each received a certificate and a gold star paperweight engraved with the program’s name.

A special YoungStar Celebration was held at the Crowne Plaza in Madison, on October 10. Five of the 104 providers being honored, along with Technical Consultants and YoungStar staff, gathered to enjoy constructive conversation, address child care concerns, and celebrate successes.

“When I was first invited to join the 4 and 5 Star recognition celebration, I was extremely honored,” said YoungStar Technical Consultant Marilu Rodriguez-Kroll. “Through my work as a YoungStar Technical Consultant I get to see programs grow. These providers used YoungStar supports to go back to school, finish their degrees, change their curriculum, improve their classroom environments and have better parent involvement,” added Rodriguez-Kroll. “I love that my job lets me be a part of this, and I love that I got to be part of the celebration that recognized these programs for all their hard work. They deserve it.”

Quality early care and education are important investments toward helping children succeed in life. “The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

*Continued on page 2*



## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

### *4 and 5 Star Celebration continued from page 1*

lies recognizes child care providers' commitment to continuous quality improvement and their desire to provide excellent early care and education to the children enrolled in your program," said Kath McGurk, Bureau of Early Learning and Policy (BELP), Bureau Director.

"YoungStar is an important program created to help ensure the success of our children in Wisconsin," said DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson, who spoke at the 2014 Celebration of 4 and 5 Star Programs. "Children, parents, and child care programs all benefit from having higher quality early learning, and thanks to YoungStar we are seeing steady improvement in the quality of care offered in Wisconsin."

"The earliest years in a child's life are the most important time for brain development," said DCF Administrator of Early Care and Education, Judy Norman-Nunnery. "Research shows that children who receive high-quality care and education are more likely to succeed in school and earn higher incomes when they enter the workforce. They have a strong foundation for success."

Out of about 4,200 programs statewide, 188 earned 4 Star ratings and 361 earned 5 Star ratings, an increase of close to 60 programs since last year. Congratulations and keep "reaching for the stars!"

*"I love that my job lets me be a part of this, and I love that I got to be part of the celebration that recognized these programs for all their hard work.*

*They deserve it."*

**– YoungStar**

**Technical Consultant  
Marilu Rodriguez-Kroll**

### YoungStar Evaluation Criteria Updates

Each year the Bureau of Early Learning and Policy at the Department of Children and Families reviews the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria to further explain any indicators identified as needing more clarification or modification. The Bureau of Early Learning and Policy creates a "Changes to YoungStar" document, which summarizes the changes.

The Changes to YoungStar for 2015 document is now available on the YoungStar website at:

[http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/evaluation\\_criteria/2015\\_eval\\_criteria/2015\\_vs\\_changes.pdf](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/evaluation_criteria/2015_eval_criteria/2015_vs_changes.pdf)

The changes or clarifications are effective for any program that applies on or after January 1, 2015, or whose anniversary date is in 2015. This year, there are general clarifications that apply to all YoungStar programs for Group, School-Age, and Family Providers.

The clarifications fall in the categories of:

- Identification of staff and who should be listed on The Registry's Program Profile and the determination for a centralized administration.

- The learning environment and curriculum category around curriculum alignment, child portfolios, and the use of intentional planning to improve and track child outcomes.
- Business and professional practices clarifications.
- General clarification on the health and well-being indicators.



If you have any questions regarding the information on the Changes document, please contact your Technical Consultant.

The **Clarifications for the Environment Rating Scales** are updated for 2015 and are located at: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/ers.htm>.

The **American Montessori Society accreditation** has been accepted as equivalent to a 4 or 5 Star rating in YoungStar. The Accreditation policy is located at: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/policy.htm>.

**YoungStar Evaluation Criteria and Point Detail** is available here: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/point-detail.htm>.





## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

### Reporting Attendance Online at Child Care Provider Information (CCPI) on the Web

CCPI gives child care providers an easy and efficient way to report attendance, view information about your Wisconsin Shares authorizations, and payment information related to your child care center.

In CCPI you can:

- Enter attendance online for payment reimbursement from the Wisconsin Shares program.
- View up-to-date information on your child care authorizations.
- Print paper copies of attendance report forms.
- View summarized and detailed information about your payments.

- View current and historical regulation and accreditation status about your center.

CCPI also provides information through Announcements, which includes both county/tribe-specific and statewide information of interest to child care providers. The website includes a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section that provides answers to common questions about the Wisconsin Shares subsidy program.

View the **CCPI User Guide** here: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/publications/pdf/478.pdf>

Visit the **Wisconsin Shares web page** for additional information about the program. <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/default.htm>

Read this PDF to learn how to **request access to CCPI**. <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/ccpi/pdf/req-access-ccpi.pdf>

### Annual Background Information Disclosure Form Request

Watch your mail for the request for a completed Background Information Disclosure (BID) form. Each licensee and household member age 12 and above must complete and submit a BID form to the Caregiver Background Unit.

The BID collection process is separate from fingerprint background checks. *BID forms are required even if you have already submitted fingerprints for a fingerprint-based background check.*

For more information, visit the Caregiver Background Check webpage <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/licensed/CBC.HTM>

### MECA Corner

*(Milwaukee County Providers Only)*

#### Staggered Payments

MECA's Provider Services Unit has begun a new attendance processing method called Staggered Payments. Staggered Payments began with the January 18, 2015 attendance-reporting period. Staggered Payments splits the providers of Milwaukee County into two groups based on the first digit in their provider number. Each group has a designated week to turn in their Attendance Report Form (ARF) or enter attendance in CCPI. Group 1 includes all providers whose number begins with an odd number. Group 2 includes all providers whose number begins with zero or an even number.

The goal of Staggered Payments is to provide Milwaukee County child care providers with improved customer service, improved communication between liaisons and providers, and improved dependability of payments.

Are you wondering how this provides better customer service and more timely payments? Staggered Payments will provide a more even distribution of work amongst the liaisons. With only half of the providers submitting attendance in a week, it allows the liaisons more time to answer phone calls, address questions and issues, and the biggest benefit to providers – to process more attendance the week it was turned in! It really is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

The new Attendance Schedule for 2015 and other information about Staggered Payments is located here: [http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/meca/staggered\\_pay.htm](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/meca/staggered_pay.htm).





## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers



### Be the **STAR** in YoungStar

Whether YoungStar achieves quality improvement within a given child care program is largely dependent on you, the provider or director in charge. That is why it is crucial for programs en-

rolled in YoungStar to get the most they can from it. Here's how.

#### Seek and Maintain Guidance

Your YoungStar Technical Consultant (TC) is your lifeline. Use them! Choose to receive free one-on-one technical consultation when completing your YoungStar contract and once enrolled do not delay sending in your YoungStar contract renewal. A quick response gets you ahead in processing your renewal and prevents families at your program enrolled in Wisconsin Shares from being told that they need to find another child care program—which is what happens if you wait until 30 days or less before your anniversary date to renew.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/contract.htm>

#### Tell Staff & Families of Your Progress

Transparency is a plus in any business, but is especially crucial when your business is children. Make staff and families aware of when YoungStar services occur and of program changes that result. This keeps staff engaged and it shows parents that you are continuously working on quality improvement for their children. Create your

group/family or your school-age/Day Camp Registry program profile, and make sure you regularly update it, to keep your program information current and accountable. <http://www.the-registry.org/ProgramProfile/Overview.aspx>

#### Assess Yourself

You can complete your group or family program self-assessment with your TC, but doing it alone provides more time to work with your TC on a plan of action for quality improvement, and lets you identify what you truly want to accomplish in your program. If you have done past self-assessments and want to approach it from a new angle, call or e-mail your TC. They have several self-assessment options for you to choose from.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/selfassess-family.htm>  
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/selfassess-group.htm>

#### Real Communication Means Being Candid

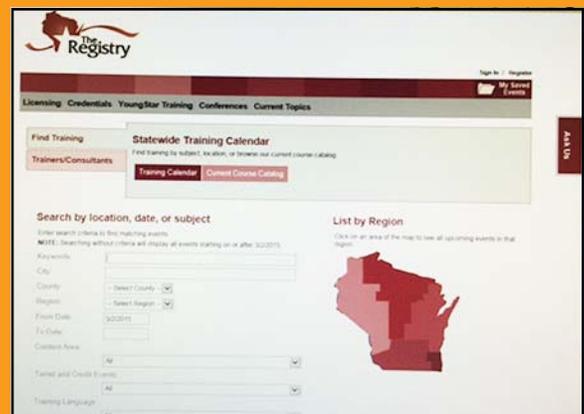
Your TC is always willing to connect—between visits and throughout the year. Talk to your TC about questions or concerns you have, or if you feel like you are not getting what you need from your TC visits. Your TC's goal is for you to use their time and expertise however it most benefits your child care program. You won't hurt their feelings if you want to make adjustments so that YoungStar works more efficiently for you and the children and families you serve.

Follow these simple guidelines and be the **STAR** of your program's success, and yours.

## 2015 YoungStar Training Opportunities

YoungStar wants to support you on your way to quality. There are many training opportunities for professional development, networking, resource gathering, and fun. These opportunities are made available at low- or no-cost to participants throughout Wisconsin due to the generous support of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families for YoungStar success.

To learn about additional professional development opportunities near you, please visit The Registry <https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/default.aspx> and sign up for a training today!





## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

### Updates to the *YoungStar Policy Guide*

The *YoungStar Policy Guide* provides comprehensive guidance on all YoungStar policies. Thus, the *YoungStar Policy Guide* is an important reference for child care and school-age providers navigating through the details of YoungStar.

Just like the child care and school-age programs that participate in YoungStar, the YoungStar program itself is continually improving, and policies have changed to make these improvements possible. The *YoungStar Policy Guide* was revised in December 2014 to include, among other updates:

- Changes in **terminology**. For example, the term “Formal Rating with Observation” has been simplified to “Formal Rating.”
- More information about the relationship between **YoungStar and Wisconsin Shares**.
  - As an example, the updated *YoungStar Policy Guide* has more detail on the requirements for Wisconsin Shares authorizations. Also, on December 29, 2013, tiered reimbursement rates for 4 Star providers increased to 10%.
- The addition of **day camps** as YoungStar Track 4. Licensed day camps that enroll children participating in Wisconsin Shares are now required to participate in YoungStar.
- New **accreditations** accepted by YoungStar. The American Camp Association (ACA) and the American Montessori Society (AMS) have been added to the accreditations YoungStar will accept.
- The new ***YoungStar Participation Policy***. The updated (10/9/2014) version has been included as Appendix A of the *YoungStar Policy Guide*, with links to English and Spanish versions.
- More details on **YoungStar quality indicators**, including:
  - Updates on **trainings and tools** that help providers meet the quality indicators in all four categories (Provider Training and Educational Qualifications, Learning Environment and Curriculum, Business and Professional Practices, and Child Health and Well-Being).
  - An in-depth explanation of the **Provider Training and Educational Qualifications** quality indicators, including information on:

- The titles and responsibilities of staff in YoungStar programs.
- The Registry’s Career-Level Certificate, Individual Profile, and Program Profile<sub>2</sub>
- YoungStar staffing requirements, how to assign YoungStar staff in The Registry Program Profile, and how to handle staffing changes.

YoungStar policy documents, including the *YoungStar Policy Guide*, can be downloaded from <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/policy.htm>.



### Sleep Safe Campaign

The Safe to Sleep® campaign (formerly the Back to Sleep® campaign) promotes ways to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related causes of infant death. The campaign messages are based on recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. These recommendations include ways that parents and caregivers can reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death by making a baby’s sleep environment safer. Babies who usually sleep on their backs but who are then placed to sleep on their stomachs, such as for a nap, are at very high risk for SIDS. It is a requirement for everyone who cares for children under one year of age to use the back sleep position for all sleep times—for naps and at night.

Visit the **Safe to Sleep® web site**, <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sts/Pages/default.aspx>, to order FREE educational materials to share with parents, read myths and facts about safe infant sleep, find tummy time tips, and discover other helpful resources.

The Safe to Sleep® campaign is led by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in collaboration with other organizations.





## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

### Wisconsin YoungStar Staff Receives ERSI Training

Last fall, staff from the Environment Rating Scale Institute (ERSI) traveled to Wisconsin to work with YoungStar Consortium staff and provide training for child care providers on the Environment Rating Scales.

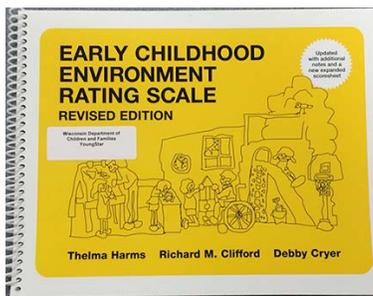
#### Inter-Rater Reliability Observations

The training began with inter-rater reliability observations in 16 child care programs in the Waukesha area. Staff from Supporting Families Together (SFTA) and Department of Children and Families (DCF) conducted a three-hour observation of the program, immediately followed by a debriefing session about the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS), Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS) and School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) observations.

A score of 85% or higher is required for raters to be considered reliable. The average scores from these observations with staff from ERSI are as follows:

- ECERS 81%-95%
- ITERS 69%-97%
- FCCERS 85%-100%
- SACERS 77%-95%

Of the many topics discussed, diversity and “much of the day” were key items of discussion.



Staff from local YoungStar offices, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA), SFTA and DCF also attended a full-day training with staff from ERSI. The day focused upon two subscales that tend to score lower: personal

care routines and activities. Hand washing, diapering/toileting, meal/snacks were extensively covered and raters had the opportunity to practice calculating “substantial portion of the day” and applying it to various examples of activities. Comments from participants included:

- “I think that this material will help me be a little more strength-based when doing an ECERS/ITERS. I have

a better understanding of some pieces which I will give to programs in my consultation.”

- “Great information for scoring Substantial Portion Of the Day (SPOD) for art and how to count the materials for science, math, art...”
- “Sanitizing vs. disinfecting clarification was helpful.”
- “This has helped me to target program needs and their improvement to help the children in care to make it a more quality program.”

#### ECERS-R Training for 4K Programs

Additional training for 4K programs and YoungStar staff on the ECERS-R with Debby Cryer, one of the original authors of the Environment Rating Scale, was also conducted. This training gave insight into the research behind the development of the ECERS, how the scales are used to measure quality and explained how the tool can guide quality improvement plans. Comments from participants included:

- “Amazing Training! I can’t remember when I’ve enjoyed a training this much! I will remember that when you do something good, you have to give up something good and no program is perfect advocating for teachers and changes in the system.”
- “Match educator effectiveness up with ECERS - just had not thought about it before!”
- “Engagement of children – focus on what is happening with materials – not just that the materials are there.”

#### General Session on ERS

The last event of ERSI week included a general session on all of the Environment Rating Scales, covering the research behind the scales and the uses for programs today. Comments from participants included:

- “I could listen to Debby talk all day long. She had such amazing information to share and explained her beliefs and research in a way that was meaningful to me.”
- “I want to change how large group times work and making sure that the children are really engaged. No more lining up or waiting in lines for my kids!”
- “Stress to my staff the need to have repeated exposure to a varied and meaningful experiences”
- “Many changes to ensure children are fully engaged and are spoken to and language is strong.”





## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

### Wisconsin Shares Attendance Reporting Requirements (ARR) Training



Do you have questions about reporting attendance for reimbursement from the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program? If so, we have the class for you!

Jonathan Ward, Regional Child Care Trainer, will be traveling around the state to offer **free** Wisconsin Shares Attendance Reporting Requirements (ARR) classes to providers interested in learning or reviewing the basics of accurate attendance reporting.

During the training, Jonathan will:

- Help you understand child care authorization notices
- Provide an overview of the Attendance Report Forms (ARF) and the benefits of signing up for the free Child Care Provider Information (CCPI) system
- Have you practice reporting attendance
- Offer resources and much more

Additionally, if you are a Registry member, you can obtain 2.5 hours of continuing education for taking the class!

Trainings will be scheduled based on demand, so please contact Jonathan at 920-559-2799 or email him at [Jonathan.Ward@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Jonathan.Ward@wisconsin.gov) if you are interested in hosting a class at your child care center or attending one in your area. Thank you for all you do for Wisconsin families, and Jonathan hopes to meet you at one of his trainings soon!

### Child Care and School Program Collaborations (Wraparound)

Children benefit when their child care provider collaborates with school districts or Head Start to offer Head Start (HS), Early Head Start (EHS), and Part Day Kindergarten (3K/4K). When this collaboration includes co-locating regulated child care with one of these programs, Wisconsin Shares may be able to help providers avoid financial disruption that can result from having children spend part of their child care day in one of these school district or Head Start programs.

Wisconsin Shares continues to pay the provider for hours spent in HS, EHS, or 3K/4K if all of the following are true:

- The HS, EHS, or 3K/4K program occurs during the hours the child is authorized for Wisconsin Shares Child Care, and
- Authorized child care occurs at the same location as the HS, EHS, or 3K/4K program, and
- The HS, EHS, or 3K/4K program is only part of the child's Wisconsin Shares day. This means that the child's authorized schedule is at least 5 hours per day *and* the child's total school program hours are 4 or fewer per day.

Wisconsin Shares cannot authorize extra hours for the purpose of paying for school program hours. Wisconsin Shares authorizations continue to be limited by the parent's need for child care while they participate in their approved activity.

**This payment policy is sometimes called "Wraparound."**



### New YoungStar Website!

The YoungStar website has a new look and is now easier to navigate. We've divided the website into four main sections: YoungStar Program, For Parents, For Providers, Find Child Care. Within each section, you'll find new and updated information, brand new videos about YoungStar and Brain Development, easier to find contracts, policies, helpful resources and more. If you bookmarked sections of the old website, be sure to update your bookmarks – especially Resources for Providers (formerly Tips and Tools).

Check it out: <http://youngstar.wi.gov>





## DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

### Educational Opportunities Grants Awarded to Wisconsin Colleges

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families recently awarded Educational Opportunities Grants to Wisconsin technical colleges and UW-Platteville, who began offering early childhood education courses at no cost to the participant in January of 2015. The Educational Opportunities Grant is an initiative funded by Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTTT-ELC) to provide access to credit-based instruction at no cost to the participant for 2 Star and 3 Star-rated child care providers across the state of Wisconsin.

Child care staff who work at 2 and 3 Star-rated child care programs are eligible to participate in these courses. The courses are offered in the evenings and on the weekends in convenient community-based locations. They are provided in-person and online. The grant requires that the schools offer courses that will help providers complete four of the Registry Credentials.

The four credentials include:

- Infant and Toddler Development
- Preschool
- Family Child Care
- After School and Youth Development



More information on the specific courses required to complete each Credential can be found here:

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

**If you have questions about the course offerings, contact the individual schools or your local YoungStar office rather than contacting DCF.**

Child care staff who work at 2 and 3 Star-rated child care programs are eligible to participate in these courses.

Contact information for each school is provided in the table below.

School	Contact Information for Interested Students	YoungStar Region	Infant/Toddler Credential	Preschool Credential	Family Child Care Credential	After School & Youth Devel.	Credit for Prior Learning
<b>Waukesha County Technical College</b>	Joan Hader 262.691.5238 jhader@wctc.edu	Southern	X			X	X
<b>Mid-State Technical College</b>	Barb Jascor 715.422.5512 Barb.jascor@mstc.edu	Northern	X	X			X
<b>North Central Technical College</b>	Brooke Schindler 715.803.1363 schindler@ntc.edu	Northern		X	X		X
<b>Moraine Park Technical College</b>	Kim Spartz 920.924.3320 kspartz@morainepark.edu	Northeastern	X			X	X
<b>Northeast Wisconsin Technical College</b>	Mary Beth Boettcher 920.498.5410 Marybeth.boettcher@nwtc.edu	Northeastern	X	X			X
<b>Milwaukee Area Technical College</b>	Sadique Isahaku 414.297.7396 isahakus@matc.edu	Milwaukee	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Western Technical College</b>	Liz Wallace 608.785.9433 WallaceE@westerntc.edu	Western	X	X	X		X
<b>University of Wisconsin - Platteville</b>	Rick Morgan morganr@uwplatt.edu	All Regions	X	X	X		X

