



YoungStar Definitions

Accreditation

Accreditation is a formal, voluntary process in which an entity other than DCF verifies the quality of a child care or school-age program. Like YoungStar, accreditation also requires programs to meet standards that exceed minimum State regulatory requirements, involves extensive self-study, and has positive effects on program quality.

Anniversary Month

This is the month that a program is given their initial rating in YoungStar. Programs receive a YoungStar Renewal Contract or Request for Off-Year Services Application to be completed and returned to their local YoungStar office in advance of their Anniversary Month each year.

Day Camp Counselor

In a day camp program, a Counselor has responsibilities that include planning, implementing, and supervising the daily activities for a designated group of children in the program, under the direction of a Site Supervisor/Coordinator/Director/ Administrator. A Day Camp Counselor will also assist in program planning, communication with families, and relations with the community.

Group Child Care Program

A group child care program is a licensed program that provides care and supervision in a child care center for 9 or more children for less than 24 hours a day.

Group Leader

In school-age care, a Group Leader has responsibilities that include planning, implementing, and supervising the daily activities for a designated group of children in the program, under the direction of a Site Supervisor/Coordinator/Director/ Administrator. A Group Leader will also assist in program planning, communication with families, and relations with the community.

Family Child Care Program

A family child care program is a licensed or certified program that provides care and supervision in a home-based setting for 4 to 8 children (licensed provider) or up to 3 children under the age of 7 (certified provider) who are not related to the provider for less than 24 hours a day.

Formal Rating

A Formal Rating is a process by which Technical Consultants and rating observers (ERS Observers) rate different aspects of a program. The assigned Technical Consultant will complete the full Evaluation Criteria rating document with the program and the assigned ERS Observer will come into the program to complete classroom/program observations using one or more of the following Environment Rating Scales: ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, SACERS-U. The agency that holds the



Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rating & Improvement System

YoungStar Contract will ensure that ERS Observations will occur in a valid and reliable approach across all six regions in Wisconsin. ERS Observers will have previous experience and reliability with utilizing evidence-based tools and will complete accurate and valid observation assessments based on the Environment Rating Scales.

Four Year Old Kindergarten (4K)

When offered, 4-Year-Old Kindergarten is universal and open to all children. When a district offers 4K, it must be open for all age-eligible children in the district. More and more school districts are taking community approaches to four-year-old kindergarten by offering the program in an array of settings including schools, child care, and Head Start.

Head Start

Wisconsin is home to many Head Start and Early Head Start programs operated by a variety of unique organizations—many of which provide both Head Start and Early Head Start services. Children from birth to age five are age-eligible for Head Start (preschool children ages three to five) or Early Head Start (birth to age three and pregnant women). Specific criteria have been established for who is eligible to participate. Stand-alone Head Start programs and those that offer three or fewer hours of child care per day are eligible for a 5 Star rating in YoungStar as long as the program has no deficiencies identified by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Lead Teacher

In a group child care program, a Lead Teacher has responsibilities that include planning, implementing, and supervising the daily activities for a designated group of children in the program, under the direction of a Director/ Administrator. A Lead Teacher will also assist in program planning, communication with families, and relations with the community.

Micro-Grants

Micro-Grants are available to child care and school-age programs that request and participate in YoungStar technical consultation. Micro-Grant resources will be used to support child care providers' quality improvement plans. Quality Improvement Plans will be created by providers in consultation with technical consultants from the local YoungStar offices.

Primary Family Provider

In a family child care program, the Primary Family Provider has responsibilities that include planning, implementing, and supervising the daily activities for a group of children; engaging in program planning; communicating with families; and building relations with the community.

Professional Development Technical Consulting

Participants in YoungStar have an opportunity to get support in the development of individual and or program professional development plans. These plans will allow programs to identify opportunities



Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rating & Improvement System

for meeting goals related to qualifications and competencies. This service can occur onsite with the program's assigned Technical Consultant or in conjunction with Wisconsin Early Childhood Association professional development staff members.

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Quality Improvement Planning is an ongoing cycle of self-study and assessment, and planning for improvement within the child care program. A quality improvement plan is used to document, implement, and evaluate goals related to the quality of a program on an ongoing basis.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

A quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, QRIS award quality ratings to early and school-age care and education programs that meet a set of defined program standards.

QRIS are composed of five common elements: (1) standards; (2) accountability measures; (3) program and practitioner outreach and support; (4) financial incentives; and (5) parent/consumer education efforts.

Regulatory Compliance

Licensed Providers

Licensed providers will be out of regulatory compliance upon receipt of notice from the Department of Children and Families that the program has 1) been revoked; 2) been denied a license; or 3) has had their license suspended. For programs that are found to be out of regulatory compliance, the provider's rating will be changed to a one star.

All three regulatory actions, the revocation, denial and suspension, have an associated appeal right, as described in Ch. 227, Wis. Stats.

In the case of revocations, denials and license suspensions, the program will remain out of regulatory compliance until the regulatory enforcement action is resolved. Any future participation in the Wisconsin Shares program depends upon the conditions articulated in the final ruling or the settlement of the revocation case. If the program continues to operate during the revocation or denial proceedings, the provider will continue to have access to YoungStar training and technical assistance. If and when a provider is deemed to be in regulatory compliance, the provider's prior rating will be restored.

Certified Providers

Certified providers will become out of regulatory compliance upon receipt of notice from the Department of Children and Families that the program has been revoked or denied re-certification.

As with licensed providers, in the case of programs that are found to be out of regulatory compliance, the provider's rating will be changed to a one star. If the program continues to operate during the



Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rating & Improvement System

regulatory enforcement proceedings, the provider will continue to have access to YoungStar training and technical assistance. If and when a provider is deemed to be in regulatory compliance, the provider's prior rating will be restored.

Shares Suspension

If a provider is suspended from the Wisconsin Shares program, their rating will be changed to one star. The provider will remain at one star until the term of the YoungStar/Shares Participation Contract expires. At that time the provider will be removed from the YoungStar program.

If the program continues to operate after the Shares suspension, the provider will continue to have access to YoungStar training and technical assistance until such time as they are removed from the program. If the provider is subsequently reinstated, the provider's prior rating will be restored.

School-Age Care

School-age programs are defined as programs that provide enrichment activities and programming primarily during the hours before and after school, and primarily serve children ages 5 - 12. In some limited circumstances younger children may be enrolled. More information about school age care can be found on the **For Providers** section of the YoungStar web site at:

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

Site Supervisor/Coordinator/Director/Administrator

In school-age care, this person is responsible for the recruitment, hiring, and guidance of teaching staff, and – when necessary – for firing or dismissal of staff. Research shows that programs with well-qualified Site Supervisors/ Coordinators/Directors/Administrators demonstrate higher quality. This category recognizes a variety of ways to earn points by meeting higher levels of Site Supervisor/Coordinator/ Director/Administrator qualifications.

Technical Assistance/Technical Consultation (TA or TC)

Technical Consultation is a process in which YoungStar team members meet with programs at their site to support development, or refinement of a quality improvement plan. The consultant will also provide support in putting the plan into action. While the movement forward in an action plan is the choice of a program, consultants can bring many strategies and resources to achieve goals.

The consulting will be based on a program's self-assessment, draft quality improvement plan, ideas, hopes, and vision for growing the quality of the program. The technical consultant will also bring skills, knowledge of early care and education, experience supporting change, and resources based on research and best practice. Together the program and consultant will monitor progress toward quality improvement goals.

Technical Consultant

A Technical Consultant is a highly qualified individual with a combination of credit-based education and experience who will provide assistance to providers in Wisconsin. YoungStar providers will be



Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rating & Improvement System

assigned a Technical Consultant who will engage and partner with the providers in addressing areas to improve the quality of care they provide.

The Registry

The Registry is a career level system that recognizes the professional achievements of the childhood care and education profession in Wisconsin. The Registry documents verified formal and informal education on individuals in the early care and education field.

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards is a tool to provide a framework of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children that can guide the creation, evaluation, and improvement of conditions necessary for children's optimal development and create a common language. The Standards specify developmental expectations for children from birth through entrance to first grade. The Standards reflect attention to all the domains of a child's learning and development.

Wisconsin Shares

Wisconsin Shares is the child care subsidy program for working families administered by the Department of Children and Families.

Wisconsin Shares subsidy amounts are also impacted by the child care provider's star rating in the following manner:

- 3, 4 or 5 Star Provider - Programs will receive Wisconsin Shares payments directly from parents utilizing the new MyWICildCare EBT card. Each parent's subsidy amount will be calculated by first taking the county maximum or the provider's price (whichever is lower), and then the parents' copayment will be subtracted from the total. Finally, that amount will be loaded onto the card.
- 2 Star Provider - Programs will receive Wisconsin Shares payments directly from parents utilizing the new MyWICildCare EBT card. The authorized Wisconsin Shares subsidy amount will be reduced by 5% before being placed on the new MyWICildCare EBT card.
- 1 Star Provider - Families are not eligible for Wisconsin Shares subsidy amounts if they attend a 1 Star rated program. These providers' child care licenses or certifications have been revoked, denied or suspended, or their Wisconsin Shares payments have been ended due to fraud or suspected fraud.

YoungStar Quality Adjustments

One of the goals of YoungStar is to improve the quality of child care and reward high quality providers. YoungStar Quality Adjustments are paid directly to 4 Star and 5 Star child care providers who have current Wisconsin Shares authorizations to support quality services within the child care setting.

YoungStar quality adjustment levels are based on the child care provider's star rating in the following manner:



Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rating & Improvement System

- 5 Star Provider - A separate YoungStar quality adjustment, for up to 25% of current Wisconsin Shares authorization amounts, will be made directly to the selected child care program.
- 4 Star Provider - A separate YoungStar quality adjustment, for up to 10% of current Wisconsin Shares authorization amounts, will be made directly to the selected child care program.