
Silver State Stars: Quality Rating Improvement System Project

Year Fifteen Report

Report Created by:

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Nevada Institute For Children's Research & Policy

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About the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy

The Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization whose primary goal is to advance the well-being of children in Nevada. As a research center in the School of Public Health at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, NICRP is dedicated to conducting academic and community-based research that helps guide the development of policies, practices, and programs which serve to enhance the health and well-being of children and their families. For more information about NICRP, please contact us or visit our website.

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	4
QUALITY RATING IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS) PROCESS.....	4
EVALUATION DESCRIPTION	6
DATA TRACKING SYSTEM	6
AVAILABILITY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION.....	7
COACH FEEDBACK.....	7
PRE- AND POST-COACHING ERS SCORES.....	7
STAR RATINGS AT STEPS TO STARS AND AFTER INITIAL COACHING	7
ANNUAL NEVADA SILVER STATE STARS QRIS COACHING SURVEY	7
COACHING EVALUATION.....	7
LEARNERS PARTICIPANT ACTIVITY	7
ASSESSMENT TEAM TRAINING	7
FINDINGS.....	8
DATA TRACKING SYSTEM	8
AVAILABILITY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION.....	12
COACH FEEDBACK.....	21
PRE- AND POST-COACHING ERS SCORES.....	24
STAR RATINGS AT STEPS TO STARS AND AFTER INITIAL COACHING	25
ANNUAL NEVADA SILVER STATE STARS QRIS COACHING SURVEY	26
COACHING EVALUATION.....	36
LEARNERS PARTICIPANT ACTIVITY	37
ASSESSMENT TEAM TRAINING	38
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS	40

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS) are being implemented across the country to improve the quality of early childhood education centers. These systems have been developed to provide a more objective way to assess quality in a center providing childcare. Each of these systems varies slightly in its requirements and protocols, but all have the goal of improving the quality of early childhood education. Information about each states/territories program can be found on the Quality Rating & Improvement System Resource Guide website: <https://ecquality.acf.hhs.gov/states>.

The process of implementing a QRIS in Nevada began in 2009 when experts in early childhood education were assembled to form the QRIS Workgroup. This workgroup created the Silver State Stars QRIS, which included the structure of the system (a 5-star rating system), the quality indicators used to create the star rating, and the process for technical assistance and grant funding for quality improvements in centers. In the spring of 2009, the QRIS Workgroup, along with the Nevada Office of Early Learning and Development, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE), and the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP), implemented the Silver State Stars QRIS Pilot Project. This pilot project was designed to implement the system in 24 child care centers over a two year period from 2009 to 2011 to evaluate the utility of the star rating system and processes designed to improve center quality. After working with the first 2 years of centers, changes were made to the program and improvements made to the associated processes and an additional six centers were chosen to pilot the revised program from July, 2011 to June, 2012.

In July, 2012, the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Office of Early Learning and Development officially launched the Silver State Stars QRIS in Southern Nevada and in July, 2013 launched it statewide. In June of 2014 a new Office of Early Learning and Development in the Nevada Department of Education was created by Governor Sandoval through Executive Order. This office administers multiple early childhood state and federal funding sources, including the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) which provides the majority of funding for the Silver State Stars QRIS. This new quality initiative is open to all licensed child care centers in Nevada. More information about the Silver State Stars QRIS can be found on their website: <https://doe.nv.gov/offices/oeld/ece-professionals/qris/>.

QUALITY RATING IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS) PROCESS

The original QRIS model was developed in 2009 specifically for use with center-based care providers. Since that time, two additional models have been developed which are rooted in the original model but have been modified based on the type of early childhood education provider. Therefore, there are currently three QRIS models being implemented in Nevada: a center-based model, a family child care model, and a school district model.

QRIS Process: Years 1-9

The following describes the original process a center-based or family child care provider had to complete in order to apply for and receive a QRIS star rating from the Office of Early Learning and Development. First, a director and/or owner had to attend a four-hour introduction that provided an overview about QRIS and the Environment Rating Scale (ERS).

After attending the introduction, the director and/or owner could do one of three things: 1) apply for coaching to obtain assistance in preparation for the QRIS application process, 2) prepare and submit a portfolio to begin the rating process (express track), or 3) decide that they did not want to participate in QRIS. Those that were not interested in applying for coaching or preparing and submitting a portfolio after attending the introduction could do so at a later date.

Coaching – If a provider wanted assistance in making improvements to their program prior to submitting an application, the provider could apply for a coach through the Children’s Cabinet. The program director or owner completed a Coaching Request Form and then a coach was assigned to the provider. Before coaching began, an Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessment was conducted in order to inform the coach and the provider about areas that needed improvement. Once the assessment was complete, the director and/or owner signed a Memorandum of Understanding and coaching began. The coach and the provider then developed a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) based on the assessment results and determined materials or trainings that were needed to improve the quality of the program. Coaching was available for a maximum of 18 months for approximately 12-18 hours per month. The coaches developed specific benchmarks that each program needed to meet in order to remain in the coaching program and these benchmarks were reviewed every six months. During the second six months of coaching, providers were able to apply for a Program Improvement Grant in order to purchase materials to enhance their classrooms and improve the quality of their program. If a coach determined that no materials were needed, a provider could request funding for training or facility improvements with the purpose of helping them improve the quality of their program. After the 18 months of coaching was complete and a provider had received a star rating (process detailed below), providers could continue to receive coaching for maintenance and continued improvement for 8-10 hours per month if desired.

Application for a Star Rating – Once a provider was ready to apply for a star rating, they completed and submitted an application and portfolio to the Office of Early Learning and Development. Once the application and portfolio were received, a QRIS assessor contacted the provider to schedule an Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessment. After the portfolio was reviewed by the Office of Early Learning and Development, staff informed the program if the portfolio was missing items or did not meet certain criteria. At this point the provider had two weeks to respond with any changes. After the two weeks had passed and the formal ERS assessment had been completed, the provider was assigned a star rating that was valid for 18 months. The provider was notified in writing of their official star rating. If a provider was unsatisfied with their star rating, they could appeal. The director and/or owner had 30 calendar days to notify the Office of Early Learning and Development of their appeal in writing and provide detailed justification (including reference to a specific indicator or score) of the objection with the rating. If a provider was only missing one or two criteria required to reach the next star level and was able to document that the criteria were met prior to the 18-month renewal process, the provider could submit that documentation for consideration of a new star rating early.

Steps to Stars Process – Initiated in Year 9

Steps to Stars, a new QRIS process model, was developed and initiated in Year 9. With the new Steps to Stars process, after enrolling in QRIS, centers and family child care (FCC) providers are provided with six months of administrative support in order to prepare their materials to receive an initial star rating. Once rated, programs can receive 24 months of coaching before they are reassessed. Star ratings are valid for 24 months. Steps to Stars is broken up into three steps which are described below. Programs are expected to complete Step 1 and Step 2 within the first six months of enrolling in QRIS.

Step 1 – The first step in participating in Steps to Stars is to attend a QRIS Introduction Training. These trainings are conducted by the Office of Early Learning and Development (OELD) and focus on the QRIS process. After attending a QRIS Introduction Training, center directors or FCC providers interested in enrolling in QRIS must submit the Silver State Stars Application online. After the application is received by OELD, the center director or FCC provider receives an EasyFolio username and password. Within two weeks of submitting the application, a Coaching Coordinator contacts the center director or FCC provider to assist them in logging in to EasyFolio to upload their Child Care License and their Child Care Subsidy Agreement.

Step 2 – The next step in participating in Steps to Stars is to complete a pre-program self-reflection exercise. This exercise is available online and helps to identify a program’s areas of strength and needs for improvement. Next, participants bring their completed pre-program self-reflection exercise to a scheduled 16-hour Nevada Registry Approved Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Training. During this training, the ERS scales used to assess centers and FCC programs are explained and participants complete a Reflective Action Plan (RAP) based on their pre-program self-reflection. After the ERS Training, center directors and FCC providers are expected to make quality improvements to their programs based on the RAP and complete a post-program self-reflection to assess their progress. Once satisfied with their post-program self-reflection results and within three to six months of submitting their Silver State Stars Application (see Step 1), participants are expected to submit an Application to be Assessed. After submitting the Application to be Assessed, participants review the following with the Coaching Coordinator: group size, ratios, director qualifications, Professional Development Plans (PDPs), documentation for Quality Indicators, ERS assessment results, Brigance screening, and the RAP. After this information has been reviewed with them, the center director or FCC provider has 30 days to submit any additional documentation that might impact their rating. At the completion of Step 2, centers and FCC providers receive their initial Silver State Stars QRIS Rating which is valid for two years.

Step 3 – After receiving an initial star rating, centers and FCC providers are assigned a Children’s Cabinet Coach. If there is no coach available, a program is placed on the waiting list and is encouraged to continue to make quality improvements to their program. Once assigned a coach, the coach works with programs to identify and select an internal coach that will assist with onsite continued quality improvement, grant funding becomes available, and coaching begins. The Children’s Cabinet Coach and selected internal coach work together for 24 months. During this time period, a Leadership Training is held and up to two people from the program are expected to attend. After the initial 24-month coaching period, or sooner with approval, the program receives an ERS assessment and is assigned a new star rating which is valid for two years.

EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

DATA TRACKING SYSTEM – From Year 4 to Year 7 NICRP monitored QRIS program progress primarily through the use of an Excel spreadsheet. NICRP developed this spreadsheet to track which and how many programs had completed each phase of the QRIS process. In Year 8, NICRP began relying on the data available in QSTAR to monitor program progress. The developers of QSTAR, Branagh Information Group, have created real time Excel reports that capture some of the same data previously monitored by NICRP through the manually updated Excel spreadsheet. The advantages of using QSTAR include that it provides real time data, the data can be obtained by NICRP at any time, and the data do not need to be manually updated by the program director. One disadvantage of using

QSTAR to monitor program progress is that the system does not provide some of the details previously monitored through the Excel spreadsheet.

AVAILABILITY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION – In order to obtain a better understanding of the availability of early care and education programs throughout the state, Google Maps was used to map the location of different programs in Nevada by their participation in QRIS.

COACH FEEDBACK – At the end of the project year, NICRP gathered feedback from all of the QRIS coaches about their experiences with QRIS. The purpose was to identify areas in the QRIS process that are working well and those that might need improvement.

PRE- AND POST-COACHING ERS SCORES – For the current report, NICRP has provided information regarding the changes in ERS subscale scores from pre-coaching to post-coaching.

STAR RATINGS AT STEPS TO STARS AND AFTER INITIAL COACHING – This year an analysis was conducted to try determine the effect of initial coaching on star ratings.

ANNUAL NEVADA SILVER STATE STARS QRIS COACHING SURVEY – The purpose of the Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey is to gather feedback from program directors and program staff about their experiences with the coaching process.

COACHING EVALUATION – NICRP recently began this evaluation whose purpose is to determine if coaching on the ERS subscales leads to higher ERS subscale scores.

LEARNERS PARTICIPANT ACTIVITY – This year QRIS began offering LearnERS to select programs as part of a pilot project. General information regarding participant activity is provided in the current report.

ASSESSMENT TEAM TRAINING – This year the QRIS Assessment Team provided data to NICRP about the trainings they conduct for inclusion in the report.

FINDINGS

DATA TRACKING SYSTEM

The process of tracking the number of QRIS Introduction Trainings held and the number of programs participating in those trainings has changed over the years. Initially, QRIS staff would scan and email the attendee sign-in sheets to NICRP after a training was held. Once QSTAR was adopted, QRIS staff began entering the attendee and introduction information into a QRIS Introduction Form in QSTAR. Both of these processes allowed NICRP to track the number of QRIS Introduction Trainings held and the number of programs participating by region. From July 1, 2012 until May 31, 2023, 52 QRIS Introduction Trainings had been held in the south with 289 programs attending and 42 QRIS Introduction Trainings had been held in the north with 237 programs attending. This year, NICRP received information about the number of participants attending the 12 scheduled QRIS Introduction Trainings held by program type which, as shown in Table 1, included 67 programs. There were also staff trainings conducted by request which included 66 participants.

Table 1. QRIS Introduction Training participation by program type (July 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024)

	Center	Family Child Care	Tribal-Based	Total
Number of Attendees	49	12	6	67

As of May 15, 2024, there were 670 licensed child care providers in the state, including centers and family-based child care programs. According to the Coaching and Rating Period Dates Report in QSTAR, there were 355 centers and family-based child care programs wait listed, participating but not rated, and in initial coaching or maintenance. Therefore, slightly more than half (53.0%) of licensed centers and family-based programs in the state are participating or waiting to participate in QRIS.

According to the Coaching and Rating Period Dates Report in QSTAR, to date, 613 center-based, family child care, and school-based programs have applied for coaching or completed a Silver State Stars QRIS enrollment form. Please note there are 624 including the tribal based programs however these are not included in this chart as it is a pilot program. More than one-third of programs are in Maintenance (34.8%) and the next largest percentage of programs are in Initial Coaching (19.4%). The largest percentage of center and school-based programs are in Maintenance (36.9% and 52.8% respectively) whereas the largest percentage of family child care programs are Wait Listed (37.4%). The current status of all of the programs can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Status of programs that have submitted an application for coaching or an enrollment form

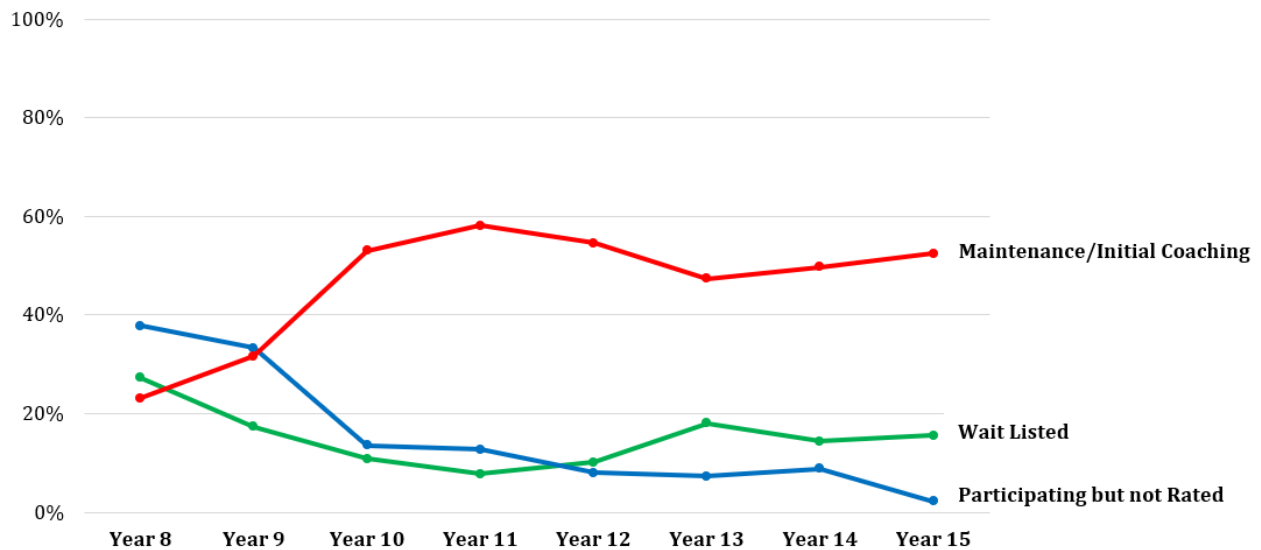
	Center	Family Child Care	School-Based	Overall
Wait Listed	9.8% (39)	37.4% (40)	1.9% (2)	13.2% (81)
Participating but Not Rated	1.5% (6)	4.7% (5)	0.0% (0)	1.8% (11)
Initial Coaching*	20.9% (83)	24.3% (26)	9.3% (10)	19.4% (119)
Maintenance	36.9% (147)	8.4% (9)	52.8% (57)	34.8% (213)
Inactive	9.8% (39)	14.0% (15)	35.2% (38)	15.0% (92)
Dropped	5.5% (22)	2.8% (3)	0.9% (1)	4.2% (26)
Closed	15.6% (62)	8.4% (9)	0.0% (0)	11.6% (71)
Total	100% (398)	100% (107)	100% (108)	100% (613)

*Note. Initial coaching for family child care and center-based programs indicates a star has been provided and coaching has begun. However, for school-based programs, a star is not given until after initial coaching so while they are participating but not rated, they are still receiving coaching. This does not include tribal-based programs.

Eleven tribal-based programs have submitted an enrollment form to participate in QRIS. However, two of these programs are inactive, four have a memorandum of agreement pending, and five are in the onboarding process.

Figure 1 below shows the percent of center and family child care programs that were wait listed, participating but not rated, and in Maintenance/Initial Coaching at the end of each project year since Year 8. It is important to note that school district program information is not included in Figure 1 because it has not been tracked annually and is unable to be determined retroactively to be included. As seen in Figure 1, this year, in comparison to last year, the percent of centers and family child care programs with the status of Participating but not Rated decreased while the percent of programs Wait Listed and in Maintenance/Initial Coaching increased slightly.

Figure 1. Percent of center and family child care programs wait listed, participating but not rated, and in Maintenance/Initial Coaching by year



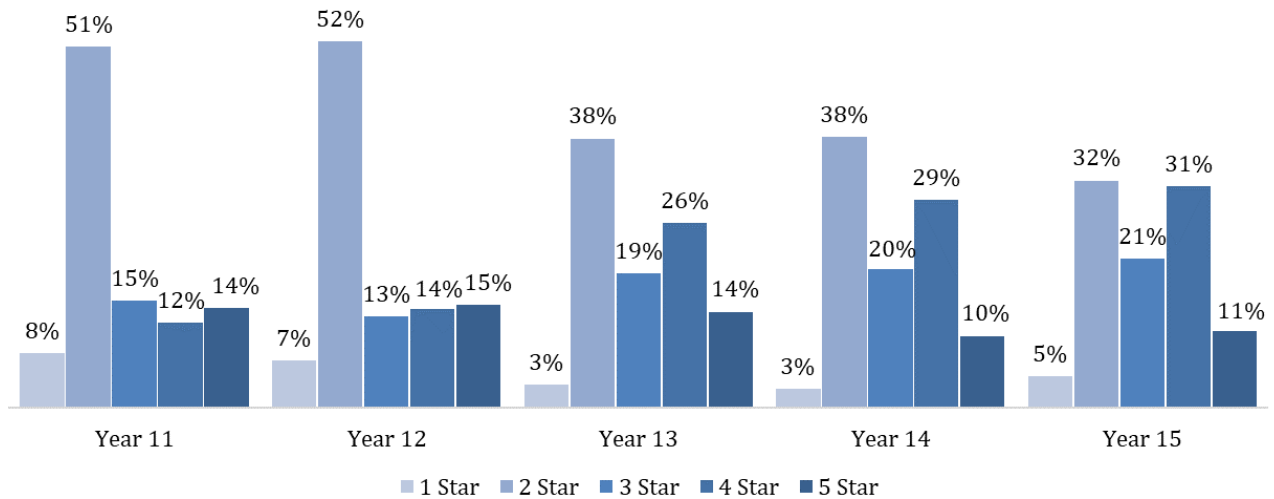
According to the Coaching and Rating Period Dates Report in QSTAR, to date, 322 active programs have been assigned a star rating. Overall, the largest percentage of programs have been assigned 4-star (30.1%) and 2-star (29.2%) ratings. Among centers, the largest percentage of programs have been assigned a 2-star rating (34.4%). Among family child care programs, the largest percentage of programs have been assigned a 4-star rating (60.0%) and among school-based programs, the largest percentage of programs have been assigned a 5-star rating (35.1%). The number and percent of programs assigned to each star rating for the 322 active programs can be seen in Table 3 below. In addition, the number of programs at each rating period is provided within each star rating.

Table 3. Number and percent of active programs at each star rating by program type

Star Rating	Center (n = 230)	Family Child Care (n = 35)	School-Based (n = 57)	Overall (n = 322)
One Star	12 (5.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (5.3%)	15 (4.7%)
Initial Coaching	8	0	0	8
Maintenance 1	2	0	1	3
Maintenance 2	0	0	2	2
Maintenance 3	1	0	0	1
Maintenance 4	1	0	0	1
Two Stars	79 (34.4%)	6 (17.1%)	9 (15.8%)	94 (29.2%)
Initial Coaching	43	6	0	49
Maintenance 1	17	0	4	21
Maintenance 2	10	0	5	15
Maintenance 3	4	0	0	4
Maintenance 4	3	0	0	3
Maintenance 5	2	0	0	2
Three Stars	49 (21.3%)	7 (20.0%)	11 (19.3%)	67 (20.8%)
Initial Coaching	12	7	0	19
Maintenance 1	10	0	2	12
Maintenance 2	8	0	9	17
Maintenance 3	7	0	0	7
Maintenance 4	8	0	0	8
Maintenance 5	3	0	0	3
Maintenance 6	1	0	0	1
Four Stars	62 (27.0%)	21 (60.0%)	14 (24.6%)	97 (30.1%)
Initial Coaching	11	13	0	24
Maintenance 1	15	2	4	21
Maintenance 2	15	5	10	30
Maintenance 3	9	1	0	10
Maintenance 4	4	0	0	4
Maintenance 5	5	0	0	5
Maintenance 6	3	0	0	3
Five Stars	28 (12.2%)	1 (2.9%)	20 (35.1%)	49 (15.2%)
Initial Coaching	2	0	0	2
Maintenance 1	1	0	5	6
Maintenance 2	7	1	15	23
Maintenance 3	5	0	0	5
Maintenance 4	6	0	0	6
Maintenance 5	5	0	0	5
Maintenance 6	2	0	0	2

As seen in Figure 2, the distribution of star ratings has shown more variability in the last three years as compared to previous years. The largest percentage of programs have a 2-star (32%) or 4-star rating (31%) with the smallest percentage of programs having a 1-star rating (5%). It is important to note that school district program information is not included in Figure 2 because it has not been tracked annually and is unable to be determined retroactively to be included.

Figure 2. Percent of active center and family child care programs at each star rating by year



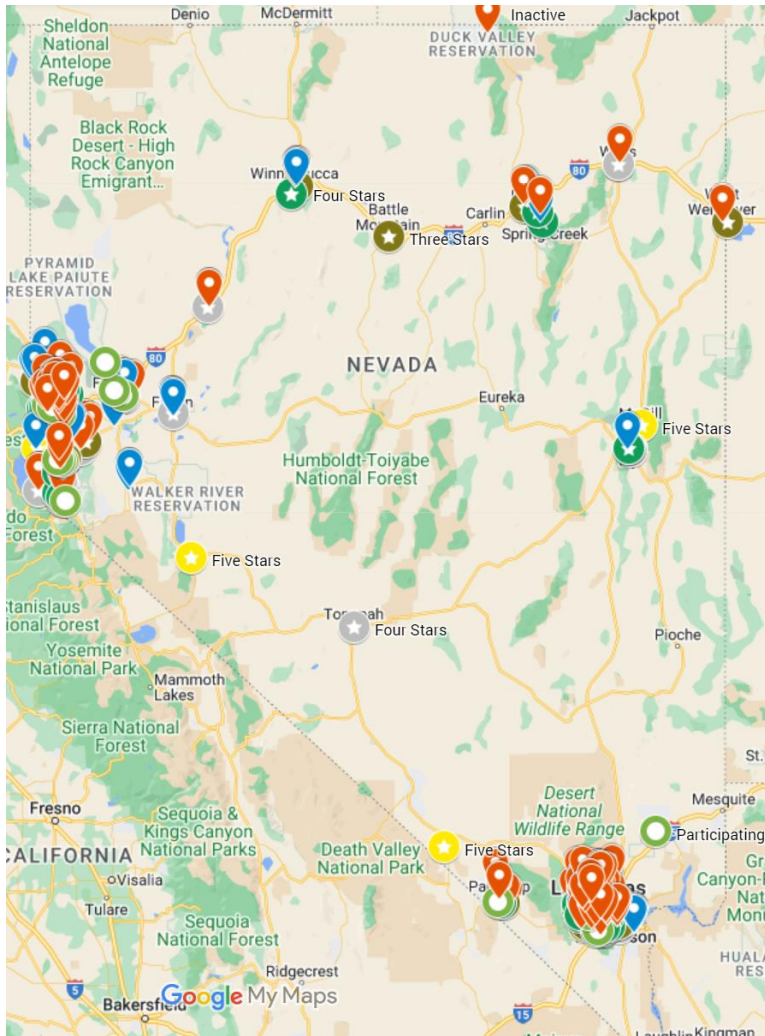
AVAILABILITY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

To obtain a better understanding of the distribution of programs participating in QRIS throughout the state, Google Maps was used to map the location of participating child care, family care, school-based and tribal-based programs in Nevada. Using Google Maps, four maps were created depicting:

1. the state of Nevada,
2. Southern Nevada (Clark and Southern Nye),
3. northwestern Nevada (Carson, Churchill, Douglas, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Washoe, Mineral, Northern Nye, Pershing, Storey and Washoe), and
4. the northeastern region (Elko, Eureka, Lincoln, and White Pine) of Nevada.

Each map identifies the location of:

- Active QRIS Star Rated Programs (programs that were closed, dropped, or inactive were not included),
- Programs currently participating in QRIS but have not yet been rated, which includes those on a waiting list to participate as well as those school-based programs in initial coaching, and
- Programs not currently participating in QRIS which includes licensed sites that are not participating in QRIS and programs that are no longer actively participating in QRIS.



Star-Rated Facilities

- ★ One Star
- ★ Two Stars
- ★ Three Stars
- ★ Four Stars
- ★ Five Stars

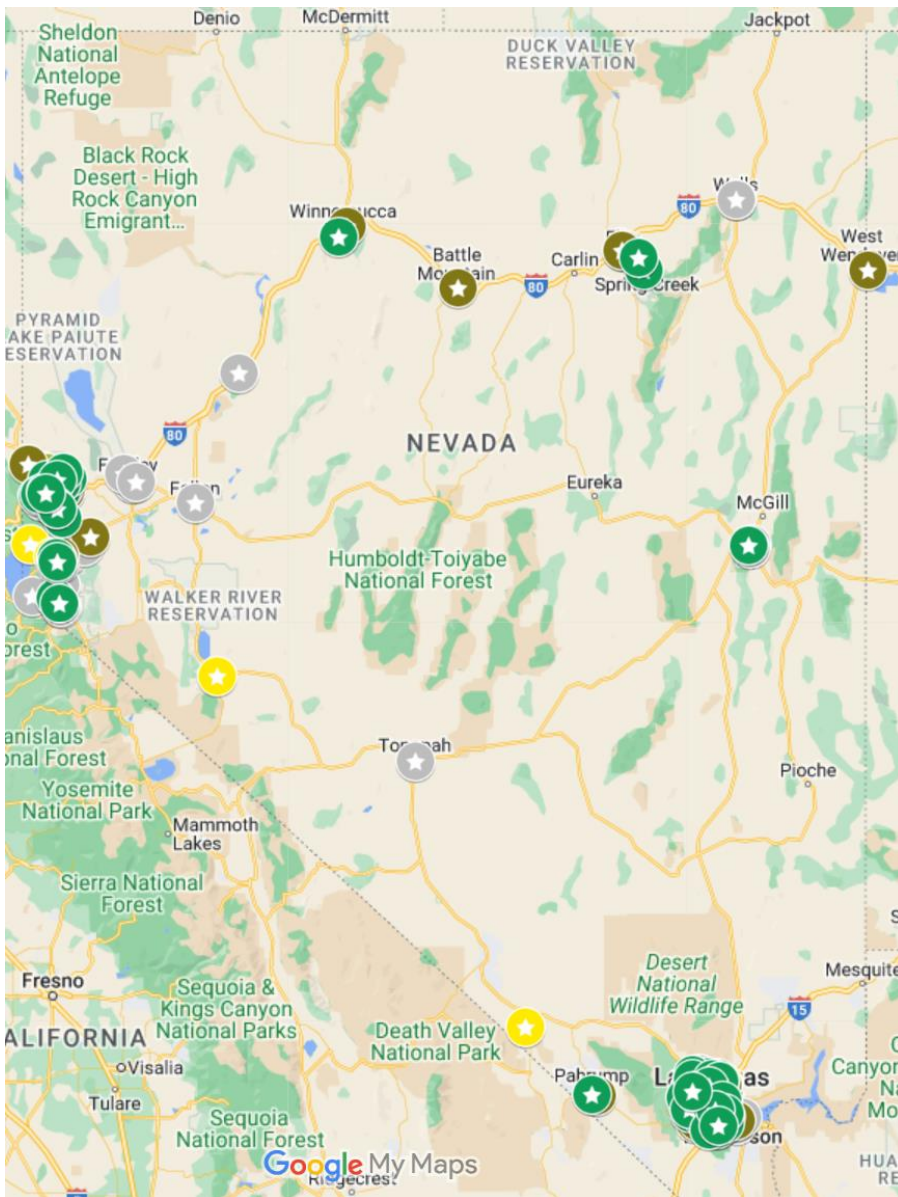
Participating Not Yet Rated

- Participating but Not Rated
- Wait Listed






Not Participating Facilities

- 📍 All items

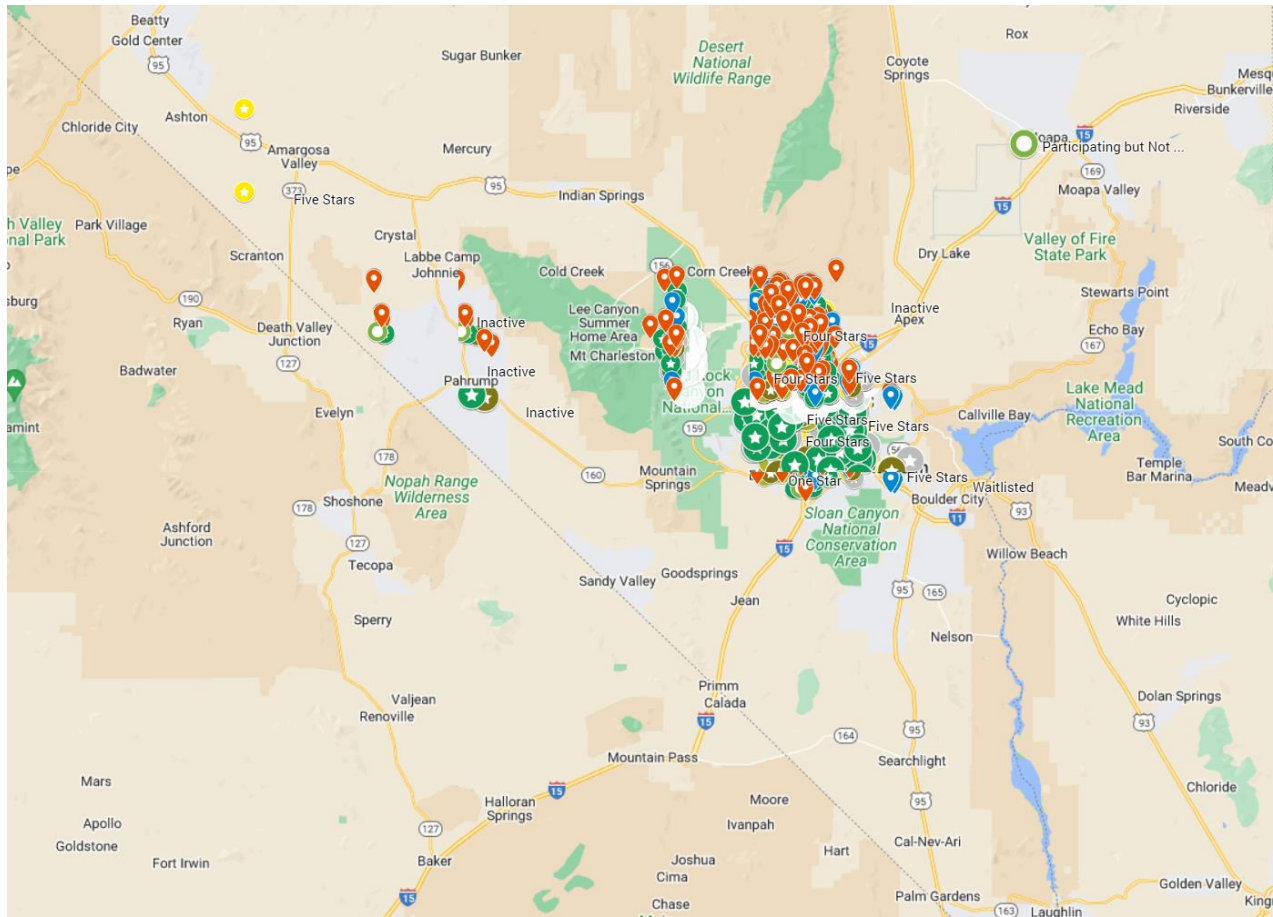
	Nevada (624)
Star Rated Facilities	322
One Star	15
Two Stars	94
Three Stars	67
Four Stars	97
Five Stars	49
Participating Not Yet Rated	111
Participating Not Rated	30
Waitlisted	81
Not Participating Facilities	191



Star-Rated Facilities

-  One Star
-  Two Stars
-  Three Stars
-  Four Stars
-  Five Stars

	Nevada (322)
Star Rated Facilities	322
One Star	15
Two Stars	94
Three Stars	67
Four Stars	97
Five Stars	49



Star-Rated Facilities

- One Star
- Two Stars
- Three Stars
- Four Stars
- Five Stars

Participating Not Yet Rated

- Participating but Not Rated
- Wait Listed

Not Participating Facilities

- All items

Southern Nevada
(n=328)

Star Rated Facilities

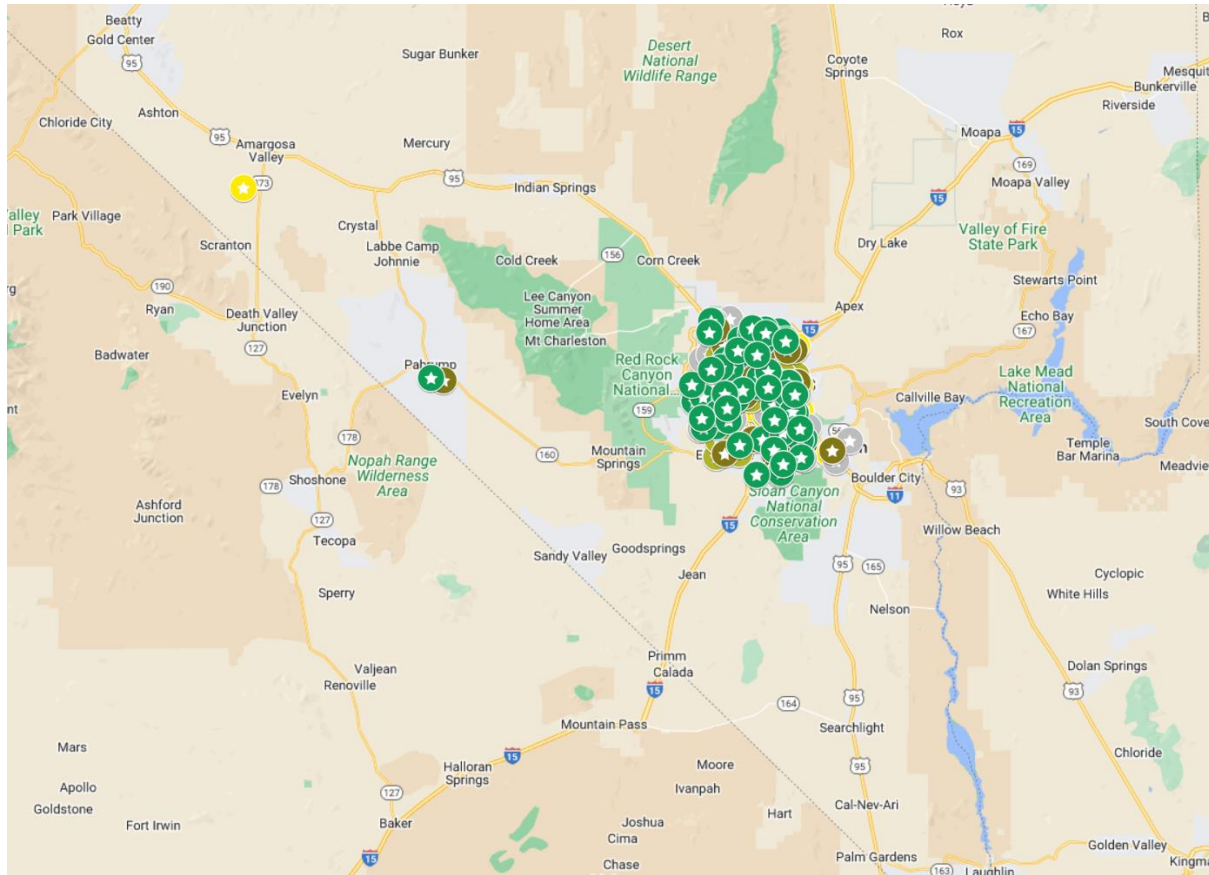
One Star	11
Two Stars	59
Three Stars	35
Four Stars	45
Five Stars	24

Participating Not Yet Rated






Participating Not Yet Rated	17
Waitlisted	38

Not Participating Facilities

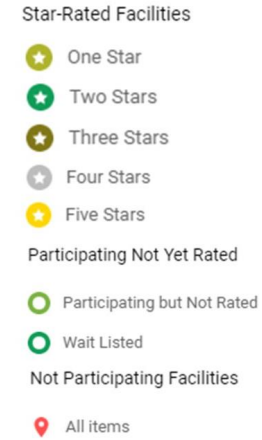
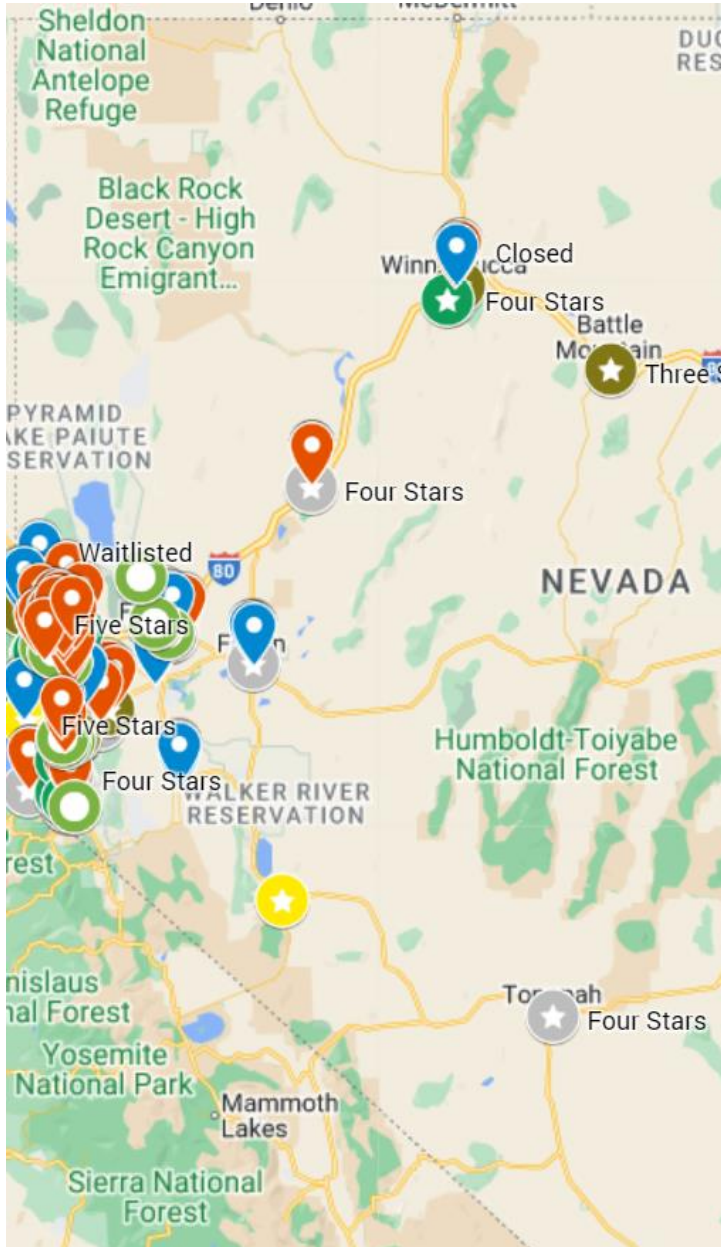
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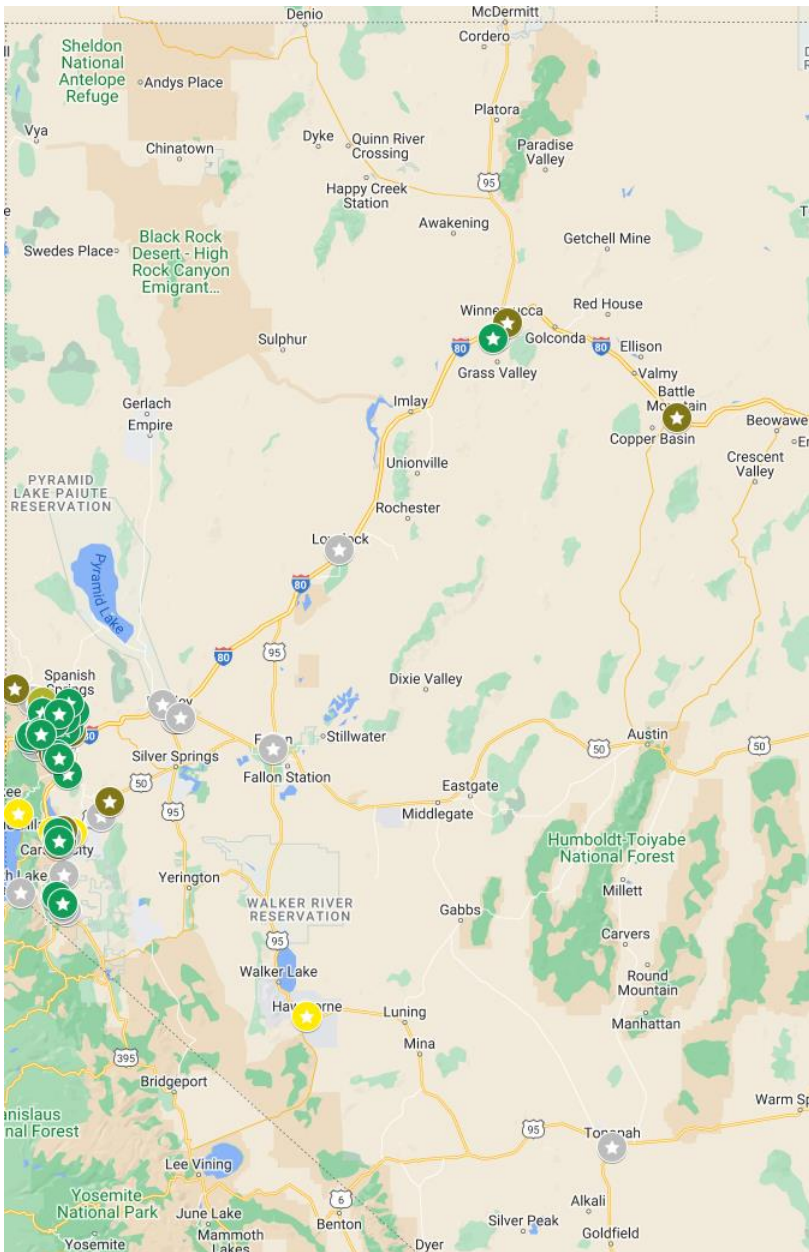
Star-Rated Facilities

-  One Star
-  Two Stars
-  Three Stars
-  Four Stars
-  Five Stars






	Southern Nevada (n=174)
Star Rated Facilities	174
One Star	11
Two Stars	59
Three Stars	35
Four Stars	45
Five Stars	24



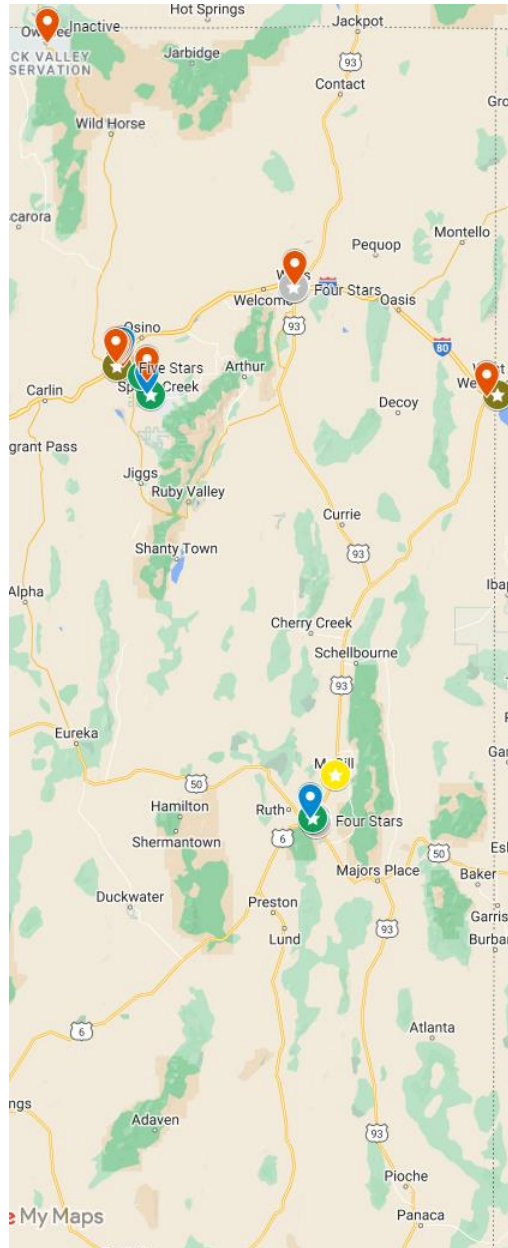
	Northwestern Nevada (n=271)
Star Rated Facilities	135
One Star	4
Two Stars	32
Three Stars	30
Four Stars	46
Five Stars	23
Participating Not Yet Rated	54
Participating Not Yet Rated	14
Waitlisted	40
Facilities Not Participating	82








Star-Rated Facilities

-  One Star
-  Two Stars
-  Three Stars
-  Four Stars
-  Five Stars



Star Rated Facilities	Northwestern Nevada (n=135)
Star Rated Facilities	135
One Star	4
Two Stars	32
Three Stars	30
Four Stars	46
Five Stars	23



Star-Rated Facilities

-  One Star
-  Two Stars
-  Three Stars
-  Four Stars
-  Five Stars

Participating Not Yet Rated

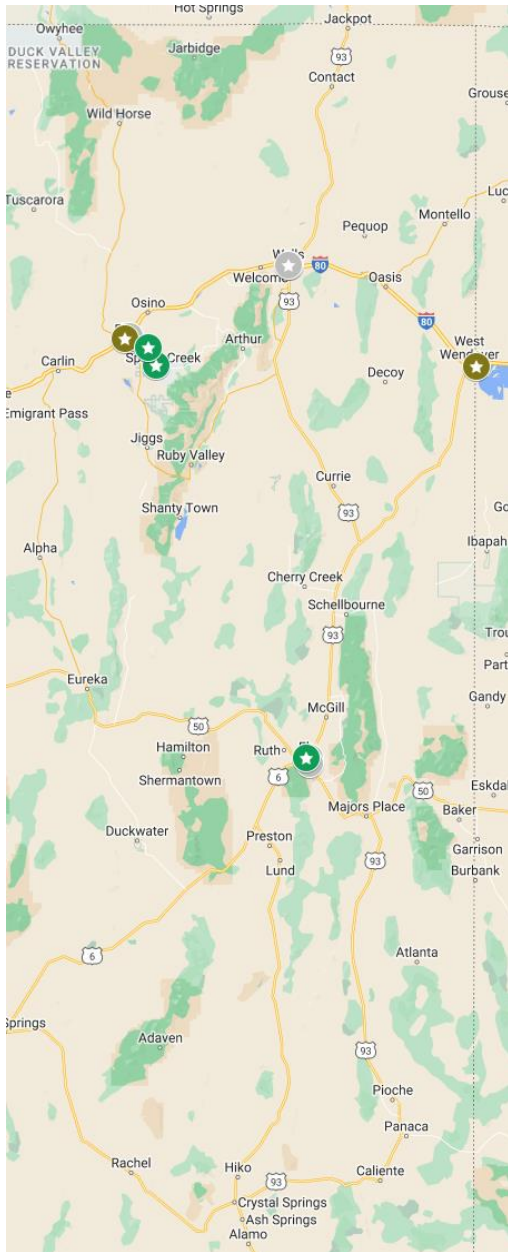
-  Participating but Not Rated
-  Wait Listed

Not Participating Facilities

-  All items

Northeastern Nevada (n=25)

Star Rated Facilities	13
One Star	0
Two Stars	3
Three Stars	2
Four Stars	6
Five Stars	2
Participating Not Yet Rated	3
Participating Not Yet Rated	0
Waitlisted	3
Facilities Not Participating	9



Star-Rated Facilities

- ★ One Star
- ★ Two Stars
- ★ Three Stars
- ★ Four Stars
- ★ Five Stars

Star Rated Facilities	Northeastern Nevada (n=13)
	13
One Star	0
Two Stars	3
Three Stars	2
Four Stars	6
Five Stars	2

COACH FEEDBACK

In April, NICRP sent a list of questions to the 40 QRIS coaches (including the coach coordinators) to learn about their experiences with QRIS. The questions focused on caseloads, coach training, coaching practices, resources, QRIS partners, challenges, suggestions for improvement, and program successes. The coaches were offered two methods by which to answer the questions: 1) type their responses to the questions and send them back to NICRP or 2) set up an individual virtual interview in which NICRP would ask them the questions and record their answers. Thirty-three coaches typed their responses to the questions and sent them back to NICRP and five coaches set up individual interviews. Below is a summary of the responses of the 38 coaches that participated.

Coaching Experience and Training – On average, the coaches have been working at The Children’s Cabinet for eighteen months, with a range of employment of less than one month to 6 years. More than half of the coaches (55%) have been working as a coach for at least one year. Of the coaches that answered the question, the majority (80%) had no coaching experience prior to their work at The Children’s Cabinet.

When asked to reflect on and share their thoughts about the QRIS Coach Training, most coaches reported that shadowing and scale book training were the most helpful. Several coaches indicated that the Coaching Basics Training and the ERS training were good resources as well. When asked if they had suggestions on how training could be improved, some reported that they wished for shorter, more condensed training materials and expressed their preference for more hands-on learning and shadowing opportunities.

When asked specifically about the Coaching Basics Training offered by the Assessment Team, the majority of the coaches indicated that they liked everything about it and reported that it was in-depth. Many coaches found the hands-on practice useful as well as learning how to build relationships.

Coaching Practices – Next, coaches were asked which forms of coaching they provide and which form they find most effective in supporting teachers. Approximately one-third of the coaches indicated that they provide all of the following: modeling, one-on-one feedback, goal setting, and conducting strength-based discussions. When analyzing the individual responses, the most common form of coaching provided by the coaches was modeling, followed by one-on-one feedback, and conducting strength-based discussions. One-on-one feedback and modeling were reported as the most effective forms of coaching. One of the coaches said, “I think teachers most appreciate the one-on-one when they don’t have children so they have an opportunity to share and prepare for future goals.” Another coach indicated that it is effective when they can meet teachers wherever they are, depending on their need and guide them accordingly.

When asked how often and from whom they receive feedback regarding their coaching, most said they receive feedback monthly or when needed throughout the year. They mostly get feedback from their coordinators, followed by supervisors. Some also get feedback from programs, directors, managers, and teachers. When asked if they like the current feedback process or prefer a different approach, most are satisfied with the current process. Two coaches mentioned they would appreciate more feedback from their supervisor on coaching. One of them stated, “I like the feedback from sites but wouldn’t mind specific feedback from my supervisor on my coaching practices.”

Next, the coaches were asked if they would prefer to use a more or less structured coaching model than what is currently being used. Many of the coaches indicated that they did not have enough

experience to answer the question. Of those that did provide feedback, the majority (n = 20) stated that the coaching model should be kept as-is. Five coaches would prefer a more structured model and three would like it to be less structured. Those preferring the current model indicated that its best quality is its flexibility which allows them to work with programs based on their needs. Those preferring a more structured model suggested that it would make coaching more cohesive with clear expectations and increase accountability, the quality of practices, and buy-in.

Workload - Of the 24 coaches that reported having a caseload and coaching only one type of program, they averaged 11 programs on their caseload with a range of 5 to 25 programs. Caseloads for center coaches averaged 11 programs, school-based coaches averaged 11 programs, and family/group child care coaches averaged 9 programs.

The majority of coaches indicated that they have enough time to work with each of their programs. Some coaches reported that whether or not they have enough time to work with each of their programs depends on what programs need from them at the time or how many programs are on their caseload. Some school-based coaches reported not having enough time to visit all of the classrooms at their assigned schools.

Next, NICRP asked coaches approximately how much time they spend with programs on non-coaching administrative tasks and how much time they spend providing professional development training. As a follow-up for both questions, coaches were asked if time spent on these tasks interferes with their coaching. With regard to non-coaching administrative tasks, 29 coaches responded with a percent estimate, leading to an average of 31 percent of time spent on administrative tasks. Of the 19 coaches that answered the follow-up question, slightly less than half (47%) indicated that administrative tasks interfere with their coaching. With regard to professional development training, 16 coaches responded with a percent estimate, leading to an average of 13 percent of time spent providing training. Of the six coaches that answered the follow-up question, the majority (83%) indicated that it did not interfere with coaching.

Program Perspectives of QRIS – When asked about program receptiveness to QRIS, coaches indicated that the programs have mixed views. For example, one coach said, “The majority of my sites participating in QRIS have a positive opinion about QRIS. They are open to change and appreciate the quality improvements and knowledge they gain from participating. However, there are a couple that feel QRIS is just there to point out what they are not doing right.” Likewise, another coach said, “So far, I see a big mix in how sites feel about QRIS. Some seem very eager and grateful, while others seem very hesitant and nervous. It seems to depend a lot on their staff turnover, how long they’ve been in the program, and their dedication to improving quality”. In terms of positive attributes, the coaches report that programs see QRIS as a supportive and valuable resource. Programs with negative views of QRIS express that the process is overwhelming, it adds to their workload, and that they are unhappy with the frequent coach turnover. Several coaches suggested that program receptiveness to QRIS depends on a program’s past experience with their coach and coaching, whether positive or negative.

Next, coaches were asked if they feel the directors understand the expectations of participating in QRIS and if they understand the assessment process. The vast majority of coaches stated that directors understand the expectations of participating in QRIS as well as the assessment process. The few coaches that indicated that directors don’t know what is expected of them suggested that it is due to their large workloads which cause them to rely more heavily on the coaches for questions and QRIS activities.

QRIS Partners and Supports – The coaches were asked about their experiences with the Pyramid Team, LearnERS, and OELD. Most of the coaches reported having referred programs to the Pyramid Team. As a result, coaches expressed seeing improvements in behavior management, a reduction in challenging behaviors, and an increase in programs using visual aids and Tucker Turtle. Among coaches with programs using LearnERS, the coaches plan to use LearnERS to improve problem solving and best practices, support remote and rural settings, enhance professional development, and overall empower educators to improve quality. Most of the coaches are content with the current communication with the QRIS Team at OELD. However, some coaches suggested having more timely and frequent updates through meetings, emails, or newsletters would be helpful. A few coaches mentioned feeling more connected with OELD when they attend monthly meetings which fosters collaboration and better communications with the coaching staff. When asked how OELD can best assist them in their capacity as a QRIS coach, the coaches emphasized the desire for appreciation and support of their efforts, dedication, and work as coaches.

Suggestions for Improvement – When asked how QRIS could be improved for the programs, the coaches suggested ways to increase the quality of coaching for programs, ways to increase engagement of programs, and ideas for training. Details of each of these is provided below.

Increase the quality of coaching:

- Decrease coach caseloads to increase the amount of time coaches can spend with each program, especially one on one with teachers without children present
- Decrease coach turnover
- Develop a different process of assigning coaches to programs to maximize coaching for individual classrooms and programs that want coaching

Increase engagement of programs:

- Offer incentives to school-based programs
- Consider goal-based incentives to re-engage programs that have been in maintenance for a long time as they lose interest in participating

Training:

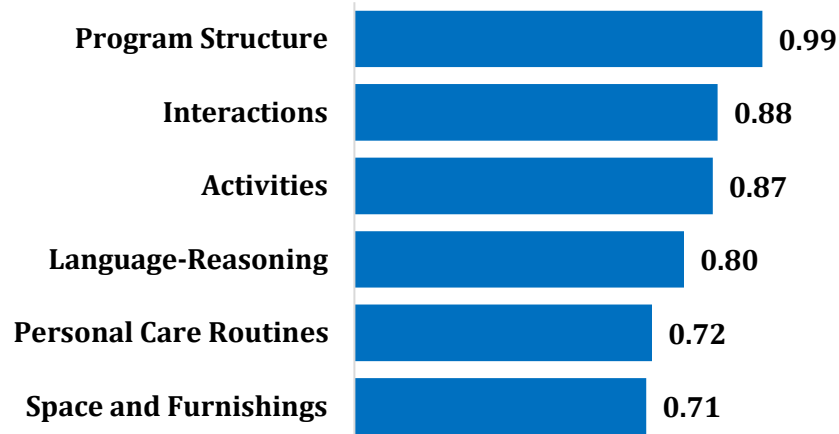
- Educate teachers, administrators, and school principals on QRIS
- Educate programs on the role of QRIS, specifically that QRIS is not the health department or licensing but is a positive supportive resource
- More focus on the average ERS scores and QIPs and less attention to the star rating

Successes – Finally, the coaches were asked to share any successes they had experienced over the past year. Several coaches reported programs increasing or maintaining their star rating or improving quality as a success. Other coaches referenced the relationships they have built with program staff which have led to the successes of buy-in to coaching, program staff speaking to the coach for the first time, their ability to help program staff reach their professional goals, and program staff feeling supported and re-energized. Other successes noted by the coaches included the launch of the Tribal Model, programs leveraging their QRIS participation to gain access to additional resources, being able to provide Pyramid Model resources to programs. Editing the ECERS workbook and creating a support request ticket system were personal professional successes highlighted by two coaches.

PRE- AND POST-COACHING ERS SCORES

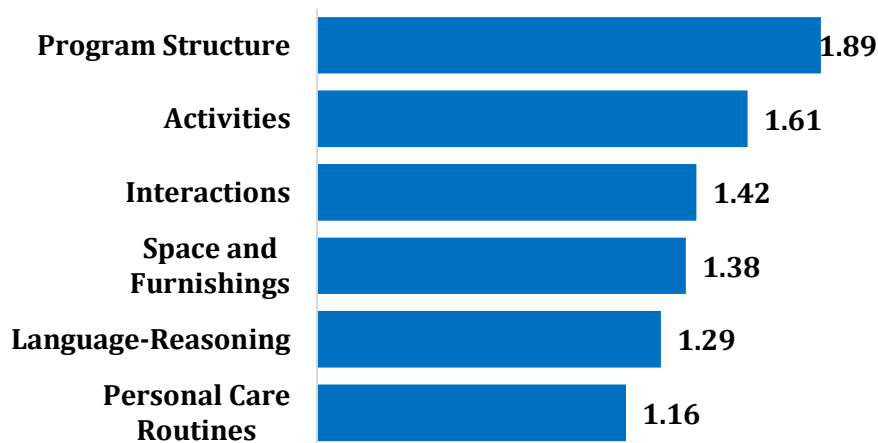
To date, NICRP has received or located in QSTAR pre- and post-coaching ERS assessments for 206 centers. On average, there has been an increase in the ERS subscale scores post-coaching as compared to pre-coaching. As seen in Figure 3, the largest increase in scores was for the Program Structure (.99) and Interactions (.88) subscales. The smallest increase in scores was for the Space and Furnishings (.71) and Personal Care Routines (.72) subscales.

Figure 3. Increase in average center ERS subscale scores pre- and post-coaching (n = 206)



To date, NICRP has received or located in QSTAR pre- and post-coaching ERS assessments for 15 family child care programs. On average, there has been an increase in the ERS subscale scores post-coaching as compared to pre-coaching. As seen in Figure 4, the largest increase in scores was for the Program Structure (1.89) subscale. The smallest increase in scores was for the Personal Care Routines (1.16) and Language-Reasoning subscales (1.29).

Figure 4. Increase in average family child care ERS subscale scores pre- and post-coaching (n = 15)



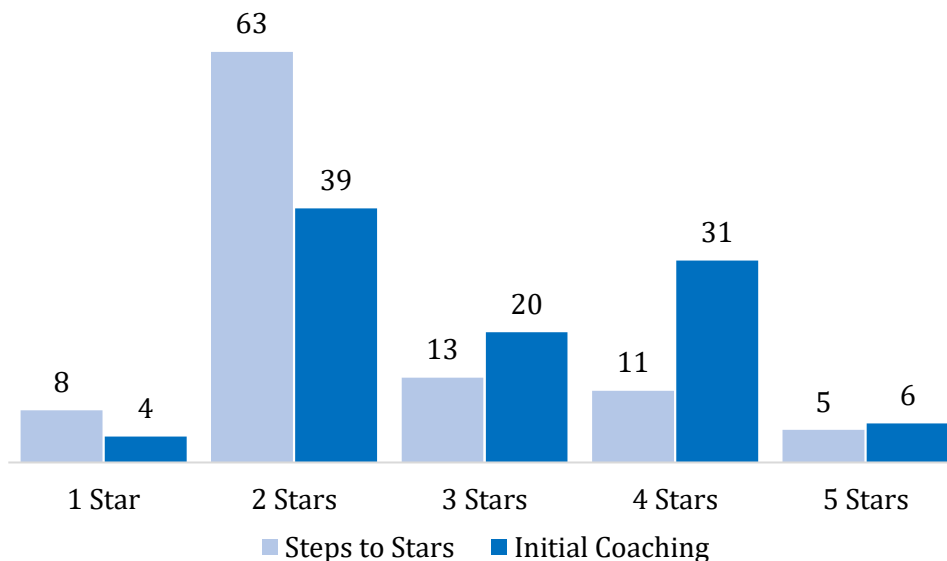
Although the average ERS subscale increases pre- to post-coaching were larger for family child care programs as compared to centers, it is important to remember that this analysis includes only 15 family child care programs. As more data are collected, it is possible that the pre- to post-coaching ERS increases among family child care programs will become more similar to those of centers.

STAR RATINGS AT STEPS TO STARS AND AFTER INITIAL COACHING

This year an analysis was conducted to try determine the effect of Initial Coaching on star ratings. Using the Nevada Policy Institute Ratings History Report in QSTAR, a total of 100 center and family child care programs were identified as having a Steps to Stars star rating and an Initial Coaching star rating. The Steps to Stars star rating is assigned to programs before coaching begins and the Initial Coaching star rating is assigned after a program receives their first phase of coaching.

As seen in Figure 5 below, after Initial Coaching, there were fewer programs assigned 1-star and 2-star ratings and more programs assigned a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating. There were 29 programs that increased by one star after Initial Coaching (29.0%) and 15 programs that increased by two stars (15.0%). There were 52 programs whose star rating remained the same after Initial Coaching (52.0%), three programs whose star rating decreased by one star after Initial Coaching (3.0%), and one program whose star rating decreased by two stars after Initial Coaching (1.0%).

Figure 5. Number of center and child care programs at each star rating at Steps to Stars and after Initial Coaching (n = 100)



ANNUAL NEVADA SILVER STATE STARS QRIS COACHING SURVEY

The purpose of the Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey is to assess the experiences of programs with the coaching process. This report provides the results of the administration of the Fifth Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey.

Participant Selection

On March 29, 2024, NICRP downloaded the Director Email Report from QSTAR. There were 325 programs in the report for which a star rating was listed. There were 334 distinct program email addresses listed in the report for the 325 programs. On April 1, 2024, NICRP sent an email to these 334 distinct email addresses with a link to the Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey. The email also explained the purpose of the survey, requested recipients to forward the email to staff so that they could also complete the survey, explained how to request paper copies of the survey if needed, asked participants to take the survey before the end of the month, and notified the recipients that they could enter to win a prize valued at \$100 after completing the survey. After sending the survey emails, NICRP forwarded a copy of the email to the Statewide QRIS Coaching Manager II at The Children's Cabinet and asked that the coaches be made aware that the email had been sent.

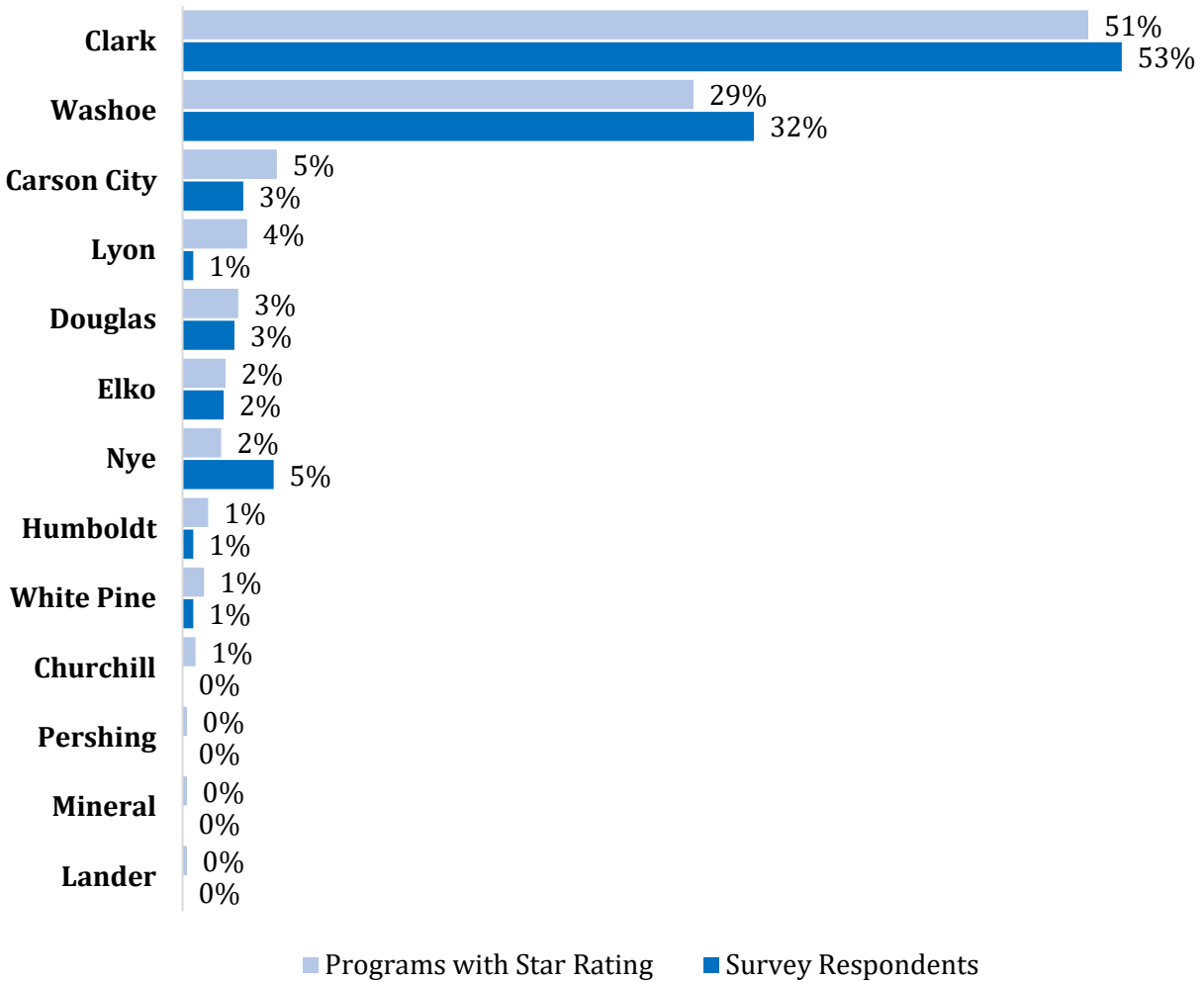
NICRP received email notifications that 17 of the 334 emails failed to send however, the emails to the alternate contacts were successfully sent. This year, NICRP staff conducted courtesy calls to all of the rated programs listed in the QSTAR Director Email Report to ask if they had received the email with the survey link, to remind them to complete it, and to remind them to ask their staff complete it. During the courtesy calls, 82 of the programs requested that the email and survey link be resent to them. NICRP also sent a reminder email to all recipients on April 17, 2024 to encourage survey completion.

Respondents

A total of 175 surveys were completed through the emailed survey link. NICRP did not receive any requests for paper copies of the survey. As seen in Figure 6 below, the majority of survey respondents indicated that their program was in Clark County (53%) or Washoe County (32%). After reviewing previous annual reports, QRIS staff have asked how representative the survey respondents are of the QRIS participants as a whole. Therefore, Figure 6 also includes the percent of programs with a star rating by county, as indicated by the Coaching and Rating Period Dates Report from QSTAR to help provide some context. However, it is important to note that survey link recipients (most commonly program directors) were encouraged to not only complete the survey themselves but to ask their staff to complete the survey. Therefore, the percent of survey respondents can be larger than the percent of programs with a star rating within a county but it does not mean that a representative from each program within that county completed the survey.

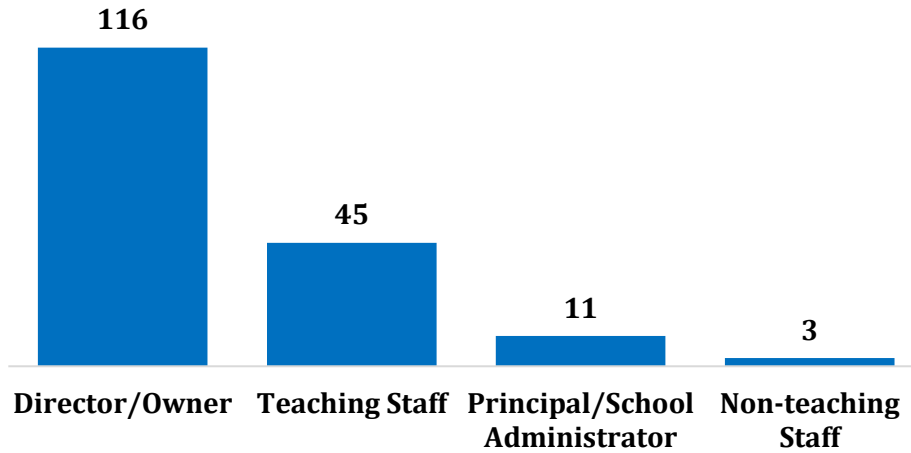
Although there are programs in Churchill (3), Lander (1), Mineral (1), and Pershing (1), there were no survey respondents representing programs in these counties.

Figure 6. Percent of programs with a star rating (n = 416) and percent of survey respondents (n = 175) by county



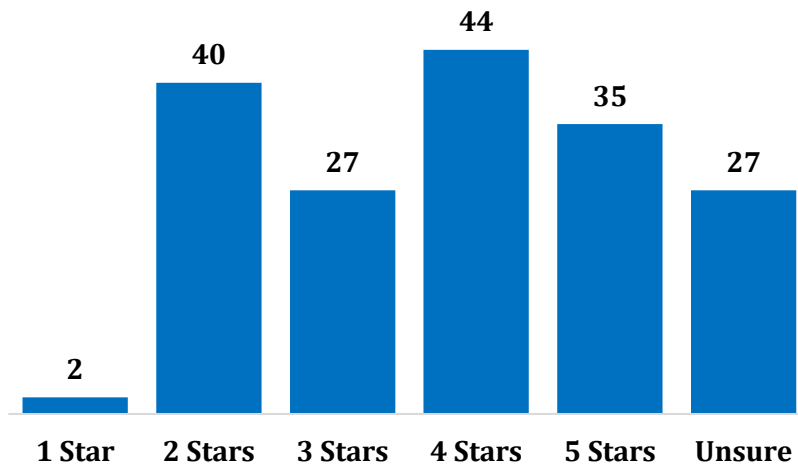
As seen in Figure 7, the largest percentage of survey respondents identified their position as Director/Owner (66%) followed by Teaching Staff (26%).

Figure 7. Number of respondents by position (n = 175)



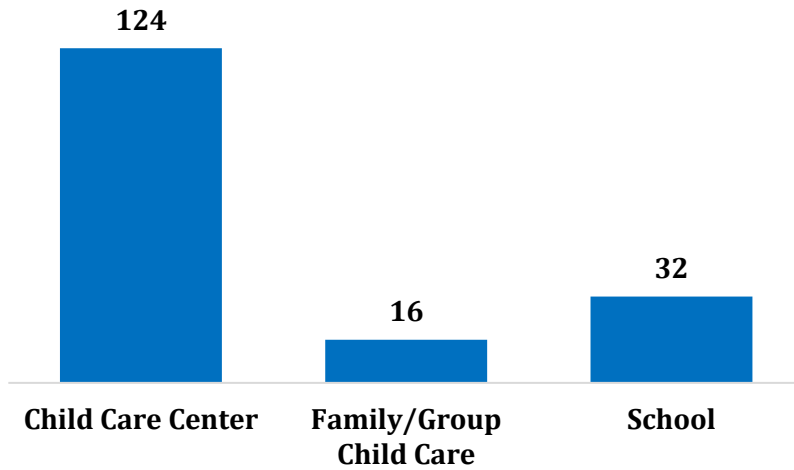
Historically, the largest percentage of annual survey respondents had been those with two-star rated programs. However, this is the second year in a row that the largest percentage of survey respondents indicated that their program has a four-star rating (25%). The number of respondents reporting each star rating can be seen in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Number of respondents by program star rating (as reported by respondent) (n = 175)



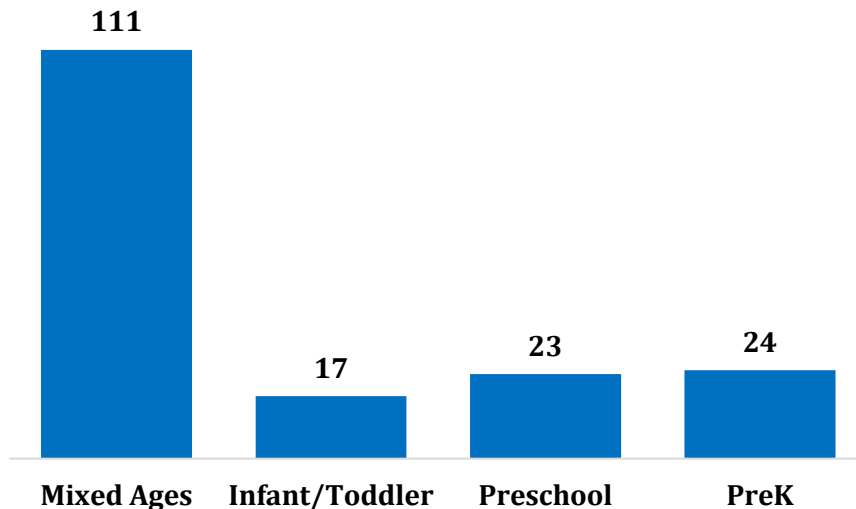
With regard to program type, as seen in Figure 9, the majority of respondents reported that their program was a Child Care Center (72%).

Figure 9. Number of respondents by program type (n = 172)



When asked to indicate what ages of children they serve, more than half of the respondents (63%) selected Mixed Ages, followed by PreK (14%), Preschool (13%), and Infant/Toddler (10%). See Figure 10 below.

Figure 10. Number of respondents by ages served (n = 175)



Results

When asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with statements related to their current coaching experience (from strongly agree to strongly disagree), the majority of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statements, suggesting an overall positive coaching experience.

The statements with which the largest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed were, “I felt respected and valued as a child care professional by the QRIS Coach” (94%), “I feel that I can

help other colleagues in increasing the quality of early learning environments” (93%), and “The QRIS Coach took the time to listen to my concerns” (91%). The two statements with which the smallest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed were, “The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc.” (82%) and “The QRIS Coach facilitated access to community resources and provided information about opportunities beneficial to my program, such as infant/toddler slots, The Children’s Cabinet’s grants, Pyramid Model, special education support, and community health workers” (83%). The percent of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with each statement related to their current coaching experience can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. The percent of respondents that indicated that they agree or strongly agree with the survey statements listed with regard to their current coaching experience.

Statement	n	% Strongly Agree or Agree
I felt respected and valued as a child care professional by the QRIS Coach.	174	94%
I feel that I can help other colleagues in increasing the quality of early learning environments.	174	93%
The QRIS Coach took the time to listen to my concerns.	174	91%
The questions I had were answered in a timely manner.	172	88%
The QRIS Coach offered various methods of support (e.g., email, resources, delivery of materials, site visits, training) to classrooms.	174	88%
Overall, the support provided by The Children's Cabinet program was valuable to me.	173	88%
The QRIS Coach helped me understand how the assessment instruments (e.g., ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS) are used in my setting.	174	87%
Overall, my knowledge of quality early learning environments increased.	174	86%
Overall, the staff's knowledge of quality early learning environments increased.	173	86%
As a result of QRIS coaching, I have gained new methods and strategies that I can use in my teaching and/or classroom.	173	84%
The QRIS Coach facilitated access to community resources and provided information about opportunities beneficial to my program, such as infant/toddler slots, The Children’s Cabinet’s grants, Pyramid Model, special education support, and community health workers.	173	83%
The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc.	172	82%

The percent of respondents that indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the survey items by their program’s county can be seen in Table 5. Due to small sample sizes, the responses of those with programs in Carson City, Douglas, Elko, Humboldt, Lyon, Nye, and White Pine were combined to form the “Rural Counties” category.

Table 5. The percent of respondents that indicated that they agree or strongly agree with the survey statements listed with regard to their current coaching experience by program county.

Statement	% Strongly Agree or Agree					
	Clark County	n	Washoe County	n	Rural Counties*	n
I felt respected and valued as a child care professional by the QRIS Coach.	97%	92	93%	55	85%	27
I feel that I can help other colleagues in increasing the quality of early learning environments.	96%	92	91%	55	89%	27
The QRIS Coach took the time to listen to my concerns.	95%	92	91%	55	82%	27
The questions I had were answered in a timely manner.	94%	92	83%	54	81%	26
The QRIS Coach offered various methods of support (e.g., email, resources, delivery of materials, site visits, training) to classrooms.	92%	92	82%	55	85%	27
Overall, the support provided by The Children’s Cabinet program was valuable to me.	94%	92	82%	54	85%	27
The QRIS Coach helped me understand how the assessment instruments (e.g., ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS) are used in my setting.	92%	92	82%	55	82%	27
Overall, my knowledge of quality early learning environments increased.	91%	92	78%	55	85%	27
Overall, the staff’s knowledge of quality early learning environments increased.	90%	91	76%	55	89%	27
As a result of QRIS coaching, I have gained new methods and strategies that I can use in my teaching and/or classroom.	88%	91	80%	55	78%	27
The QRIS Coach facilitated access to community resources and provided information about opportunities beneficial to my program, such as infant/toddler slots, The Children’s Cabinet’s grants, Pyramid Model, special education support, and community health workers.	89%	91	78%	55	74%	27
The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc.	86%	91	82%	54	70%	27
<i>*Includes respondents with programs in the following counties: Carson City, Douglas, Elko, Humboldt, Lyon, Nye, and White Pine</i>						

As seen in Table 5, for Clark and Washoe County, the largest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I felt respected and valued as a child care professional by the QRIS Coach” (97% and 93% respectively). For the Rural Counties, there were two items with which the largest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed: “I feel that I can help other

colleagues in increasing the quality of early learning environments” and “Overall, the staff's knowledge of quality early learning environments increased” (both at 89%).

For Clark County and the Rural Counties, the smallest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc.” (86% and 70% respectively). For Washoe County, the statement with which the smallest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed was, “Overall, the staff's knowledge of quality early learning environments increased” (76%).

A larger percentage of respondents with programs in Clark County agreed or strongly agreed with all of the statements on the survey as compared to respondents with programs in Washoe County or the Rural Counties. A larger percentage of respondents with programs in Washoe County agreed or strongly agreed with slightly more statements on the survey than respondents in the Rural Counties.

Table 6 below shows the percent of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with the statements based on whether they reported their program had a low rating (1- or 2-Stars) or a high rating (4- or 5-Stars).

Table 6. The percent of respondents that indicated that they agree or strongly agree with the survey statements listed with regard to their current coaching experience by star rating (as reported by the respondent).

Statement	% Strongly Agree or Agree			
	1 & 2 Stars	n	4 & 5 Stars	n
I felt respected and valued as a child care professional by the QRIS Coach.	98%	42	94%	79
I feel that I can help other colleagues in increasing the quality of early learning environments.	93%	42	94%	79
The QRIS Coach took the time to listen to my concerns.	93%	42	91%	79
The questions I had were answered in a timely manner.	90%	40	90%	79
The QRIS Coach offered various methods of support (e.g., email, resources, delivery of materials, site visits, training) to classrooms.	79%	42	92%	79
Overall, the support provided by The Children's Cabinet program was valuable to me.	85%	41	92%	79
The QRIS Coach helped me understand how the assessment instruments (e.g., ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS) are used in my setting.	81%	42	91%	79
Overall, my knowledge of quality early learning environments increased.	79%	42	87%	78
Overall, the staff's knowledge of quality early learning environments increased.	76%	41	90%	79
As a result of QRIS coaching, I have gained new methods and strategies that I can use in my teaching and/or classroom.	81%	41	87%	79
The QRIS Coach facilitated access to community resources and provided information about opportunities beneficial to my program, such as infant/toddler slots, The Children's Cabinet's grants, Pyramid Model, special education support, and community health workers.	86%	42	87%	78
The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc.	76%	42	87%	77

When examining the responses to the statements listed in Table 6, a smaller percentage of respondents from 1- and 2-Star programs agreed or strongly agreed with 9 of the 12 statements as compared to 4- and 5-Star programs. The items with the largest percent differences in agreement between the high and low rated programs include the following:

- Overall, the staff's knowledge of quality early learning environments increased. (Low = 76%, High = 90%)
- The QRIS Coach offered various methods of support (e.g., email, resources, delivery of materials, site visits, training) to classrooms. (Low = 79%, High = 92%)
- The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc. (Low = 76%, High = 87%)

- The QRIS Coach helped me understand how the assessment instruments (e.g., ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS) are used in my setting. (Low = 81%, High = 91%)
- Overall, my knowledge of quality early learning environments increased. (Low = 79%, High = 87%)

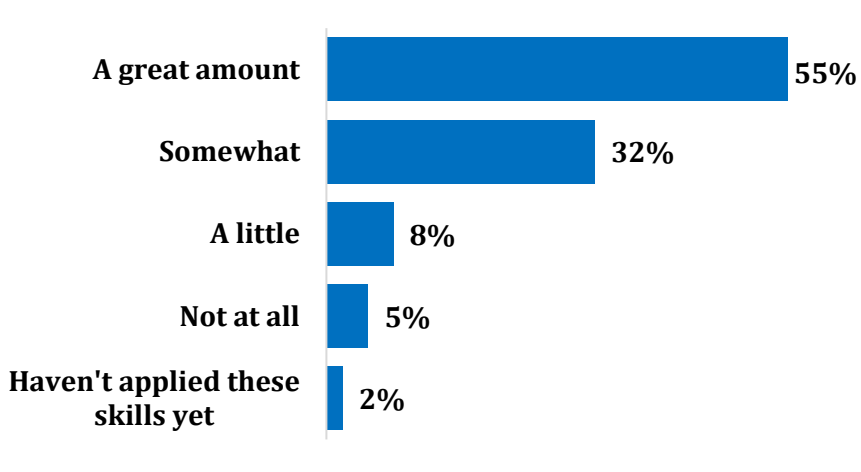
The next two items on the survey asked participants to rate their knowledge of quality learning environments. The first item asked them to rate their knowledge before coaching assistance and the second item asked them to rate their knowledge after coaching assistance. Response options to both items included very good, good, poor, and very poor. A total of 165 respondents answered both items. Based on their responses to the two items, 46% of respondents indicated that their knowledge did not change after coaching assistance, 52% indicated that their knowledge increased, and 2% indicated that their knowledge decreased.

The next two items on the survey asked participants about communication with the families they serve about the program’s efforts toward improving quality. The majority of respondents (80%) indicated that their program lets families know that they participate in QRIS and 90 percent of them communicate with the families about their efforts to maintain the quality of their program.

The next several questions asked about participation in training, including Pyramid and Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) training. Of the 28 respondents who indicated that their program joined QRIS after 2021, 61% indicated that they attended the Pyramid Model Introduction Training when they first joined QRIS. Among all of the respondents, 52% indicated that they took the ePyramid Module Series and 75% completed the series. As seen in Figure 11, more than half of those that completed the series indicated that the series increased their ability to support children’s social emotional development a great amount.

According to 87% of respondents, the ePyramid Module training series increased their ability to support children’s social emotional development somewhat or a great amount.

Figure 11. Percent of respondents selecting each response when asked, “Did the ePyramid Module training series increase your ability to support children’s social emotional development including those presenting challenging behaviors?” (of those that indicated they completed the series) (n = 66)



The majority of respondents (58%) indicated that they had not participated in any ERS Trainings since July 2023. More than a quarter of respondents (26%) indicated taking ERS Introduction for New Directors. The next most common ERS training taken by respondents was Maintaining Quality for Directors (15%), followed by Training for Center Based Teachers (6%), and Introduction for New Teachers (3%). Overall, the majority of respondents indicated that the ERS training supported their understanding of ERS and quality supports for children a great deal (73%) or somewhat (23%). All of the respondents (100%) that took Introduction for New Teachers and Training for Center Based Teachers indicated that it supported their understanding a great deal.

The next few questions on the survey asked about ERS (Environmental Rating Scale) assessments, the assessment team, and the reports. Approximately one third of respondents (34%) indicated that, since July 2023, they had received actual and practice assessments, while smaller percentages reported receiving only actual (23%) or only practice (15%) assessments. Almost one third of respondents were not sure what type of assessments they had received (17%) or indicated their program did not receive any assessments (12%).

Table 7. Percent of respondents that indicated that they agree or strongly agree with the survey statements listed with regard to the ERS assessors and the ERS reports.

Statement	n	% Strongly Agree or Agree
The ERS assessors arrived on time for the assessment	129	95%
The ERS assessors were pleasant	128	93%
The ERS assessors were professional	130	95%
The ERS reports were clear	129	91%
The ERS reports were useful	128	92%

When asked to share feedback about the ERS assessment process, 55 respondents replied. The most common theme included complaints about the assessor, the assessment process, the tool, and/or the report. The next common theme included compliments about the process, followed by descriptions of the process as being helpful. A few respondents noted that the assessment process is stressful and a few other respondents provided suggestions for improving the assessment process.

The next items on the survey were open-ended questions, which asked, “What challenges have you encountered with staffing and how have they impacted the quality of your program?”, “What part of the coaching process did you find most helpful?” and “What would you change about the coaching process?” Responses to these questions are examined below.

What challenges have you encountered with staffing and how have they impacted the quality of your program? Overall, 75 respondents provided an answer to this question. Among the responses, the most common themes regarding the challenges included the following (in order of most to least common):

- Retention/Turnover
- Hiring qualified staff
- Uncommitted staff (don’t show up/not willing to learn/don’t seem to care)
- Inability to compete with wages/benefits offered elsewhere
- Working with less experienced staff

These challenges were reported to impact the ability of programs to improve or maintain quality, require them to retrain new staff, and affect staff morale.

What part of the coaching process did you find most helpful? – Overall, 90 respondents provided an answer to this question. Among the responses, the most common themes included the following (in order of most to least common):

- Support of the coach
- Observations and feedback
- Resources provided
- Hands-on classroom instruction

What would you change about the coaching process? – Overall, 50 respondents provided an answer to this question. Among the responses, the four most common themes included (in order of most to least common):

- More face to face, in-person coaching
- Having a consistent coach or more consistency in coaching across coaches
- More/better communication from the coach

COACHING EVALUATION

The purpose of the coaching evaluation is to determine if coaching on ERS subscales leads to higher ERS subscale scores. To carry out this evaluation, NICRP reviewed the ERS assessment data it had received or located in QSTAR for centers to identify programs with two completed ERS assessments: one ERS assessment completed in 2023 and the previous one completed in 2021. Based on this review, NICRP identified 80 programs to include in the evaluation. For these 80 programs, NICRP recorded the following data:

- The ERS subscale scores for both assessments,
- Which ERS subscale scores were an area of focus on their Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)(Site Plan in QSTAR) with a target date in 2023, and
- The number of coaching minutes spent on each ERS subscale from January 2023 to December 2023 (based on the QSTAR TA Effort Report).

When examining the QIPs for these 80 programs, only 24 programs included focus on at least one of the ERS subscales. Due to this low number, no analyses were conducted. However, Table 8 displays the number of programs with each subscale score on a QIP and the number and percent of those programs receiving coaching on that subscale. Personal Care Routines and Activities were the subscales most commonly listed on these programs' QIPs. However, only 41.2% of programs with Personal Care Routines on a QIP received coaching on Personal Care Routines. Of the programs with Activities on a QIP, 68.8% received coaching on Activities. The least common subscale included on the QIPs was Space and Furnishings, however three-fourths of these programs received coaching on Space and Furnishings.

Table 8. Number of programs with each subscale score on a QIP and the number and percent of those programs receiving coaching on that subscale

	Space and Furnishings	Personal Care Routines	Language-Reasoning	Activities	Interactions	Program Structure
Number of programs with subscale on QIP	8	17	13	16	9	9
Number of programs with subscale on QIP that received coaching on the subscale	6	7	9	11	5	5
Percent of programs with subscale on QIP that received coaching on the subscale	75.0%	41.2%	69.2%	68.8%	55.6%	55.6%

Table 9 displays the percent of programs with an increase, decrease, and no change on each ERS subscale score (from the 2021 assessment to the 2023 assessment) for those programs that had the subscale on a QIP and received coaching on the subscale.

Table 9. Percent of programs with an increase, decrease, and no change on each ERS subscale score for programs that had the subscale on a QIP and received coaching on the subscale

	Space and Furnishings	Personal Care Routines	Language-Reasoning	Activities	Interactions	Program Structure
	(n = 6)	(n = 7)	(n = 9)	(n = 11)	(n = 5)	(n = 5)
Increase on subscale score	50.0%	28.6%	11.1%	54.5%	60.0%	60.0%
No change on subscale score	0.0%	14.3%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Decrease on subscale score	50.0%	57.1%	77.8%	45.5%	40.0%	40.0%

As seen in Table 9, for programs with Activities, Interactions, and Program Structure on their QIP who received coaching in those areas, a larger percentage showed an increase on those subscale scores than showed a decrease on those subscale scores. In contrast, among programs with Personal Care Routines and Language-Reasoning on their QIPs who received coaching in those areas, a larger percentage showed a decrease on those subscale scores than showed an increase on those subscale scores. However, it is important to note that the number of programs contributing to these data are very small therefore, no conclusions should be drawn based on these findings.

LEARNERS PARTICIPANT ACTIVITY

This year QRIS began offering LearnERS to select programs as part of a pilot project which launched in March 2024. LearnERS was developed by the Branagh Information Group in partnership with the developers of the Environmental Rating Scale (ERS). LearnERS is an online Continuous Quality

Improvement (CQI) tool designed to support early childhood educators and program administrators in understanding best practices. As of May 16, 2024, there were 28 QRIS programs with LearnERS licenses. This includes 19 centers, five family-based programs, and four school-based programs. Although there were 28 programs with licenses, only 20 of these programs have completed any modules. All of the enrolled family-based programs have completed modules. However, only 13 of the 19 centers and two of the four school-based programs have completed any modules. Table 10 includes a general overview of the activity of the LearnERS enrolled programs. These data will continue to be monitored as well as any trends as more data become available.

Table 10. LearnERS pilot project participation by program type

	Centers	Family-Based	School-Based	Total
Number of programs enrolled	19	5	4	28
Number of active programs enrolled	13	5	2	20
Number of modules completed	243	68	22	333
Number of active participants	67	11	8	86
Average number of modules completed by active programs enrolled	19	14	11	17
Average number of modules completed by active participants	4	6	3	4
Average number of days active programs have been enrolled	76	65	52	71
Note: "Active" programs and participants include those that have completed any LearnERS modules				

ASSESSMENT TEAM TRAINING

Based on data received from the Assessment Team, between August 2023 and May 2024, the Assessment Team conducted 26 virtual trainings and 69 in-person trainings throughout the state. Each training focused on one of the five following core knowledge areas: (1) Environment and Curriculum, (2) Health, Safety, and Nutrition, (3) Leadership and Professional Development, (4) Observation and Assessment, and (5) Positive Interactions and Guidance. As seen in Table 11, Environment and Curriculum and Observation and Assessment were the trainings held most often (36 and 32 trainings respectively) with the Environment and Curriculum training reaching the most participants (n = 850). Health, Safety, and Nutrition was the training held least often (n = 3) however, it had the largest average number of participants per training session (M = 29.0) as compared to the other trainings.

Table 11. Assessment Team training information

Core Knowledge Area	Number of Trainings	Number of Participants	Average Number of Participants per Training
Environment and Curriculum	36	850	23.6
Health, Safety, and Nutrition	3	87	29.0
Leadership and Professional Development	8	70	8.8
Observation and Assessment	32	313	9.8
Positive Interactions and Guidance	16	381	23.8
Total	95	1701	17.9

Overall, as seen in Table 12, the majority of the training participants were center teachers (48.6%) and school-based teachers (34.2%). However, the majority of Leadership and Professional Development training participants were center directors (85.7%).

Table 12. Percent and number of participants of Assessment Team training by core knowledge area (n = 1701)

	Environment and Curriculum	Health, Safety, and Nutrition	Leadership and Professional Development	Observation and Assessment	Positive Interactions and Guidance	Total
School-Based Teacher	35.2% (299)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	31.0% (97)	48.8% (186)	34.2% (582)
School-Based Administrator	0.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.6% (2)	2.1% (8)	0.7% (11)
Family-Based Provider or Assistant	0.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	6.1% (19)	0.0% (0)	1.3% (22)
Center Director	1.4% (12)	3.5% (3)	85.7% (60)	24.5% (86)	4.5% (17)	10.5% (178)
Center Teacher	59.8% (508)	82.8% (72)	5.7% (4)	24.9% (78)	43.0% (164)	48.6% (826)
QRIS Staff	1.5% (13)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.9% (6)	0.5% (2)	1.2% (21)
Other	1.7% (14)	13.8% (12)	8.6% (6)	8.0% (25)	1.1% (4)	3.6% (61)
Total	100% (850)	100% (87)	100% (70)	100% (313)	100% (381)	100% (1701)

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

SUMMARY

The current report reviewed different evaluation components of the eleventh year of full implementation of the Nevada Silver State Stars Quality Rating Improvement System. This project year, NICRP evaluated the QRIS through data tracking with QSTAR, collecting coach feedback, examining ERS scores pre- and post-coaching, assessing star ratings at Steps to Stars and after Initial Coaching, collecting program feedback with the Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey, and reviewing coaching data. The current report also included a review of data from implementation of the LearnERS pilot project and for the first time included a review of Assessment Team training data.

Data tracking system – Based on the information received by QRIS Staff, there were 12 scheduled QRIS Introduction Trainings held this year with 67 programs participating. Additionally, 66 participants attended by-request trainings. Among the center, family child care, and school-based programs, 213 are in Maintenance, 119 are in Initial Coaching, and 322 active programs have been assigned a star rating. Less than one-third of programs have earned a 4-star rating (30.1%) and a slightly smaller percentage have earned a 2-star rating (29.2%). Eleven tribal-based programs have submitted an enrollment form to participate in QRIS.

Availability of early care and education – Maps were developed for this report which identify the location of QRIS rated and participating early care and education programs throughout the state. These maps will continue to be developed regularly to help identify accessibility of quality early care and education across geographic regions of the state.

Overall there is a lack of availability of child care in all communities, however there are several rural areas of the state where unfortunately no regulated care is available for families such as areas of White Pine, Northern Elko, Lincoln and Eureka, and other small towns across the state. However, progress has continued in the quality of rated programs. In the previous year, of the 269 rated programs, 64% were rated as quality programs, **and this year of the 322 programs 66% are rated as quality program.** There are 49 programs that are rated at a 5-star, the highest quality level, and those are spread across 8 counties including at least one in Carson City, Elko, Lyon County, Mineral County, Nye County and White Pine County.

Coach feedback – The coaches reported that the most helpful components of their initial training were shadowing and scale book training. Several coaches also indicated that the Coaching Basics Training and the ERS training were good resources. When asked if they had suggestions on how training could be improved, some reported that they wished for shorter, more condensed training materials and expressed their preference for more hands-on learning and shadowing opportunities.

Most coaches indicated that they did not have enough experience to weigh-in on the current coaching model. However, of those that did provide feedback on the model, most indicated that it should be kept as-is because it allows the flexibility to work with the programs based on their needs. Coaches preferring a more structured model suggested that it would make coaching more cohesive with clear expectations and increase accountability, the quality of practices, and buy-in.

This year, the majority of coaches indicated that they had enough time to work with each of their programs. Among coaches providing percent estimates, on average, the coaches report spending 31

percent of their time on administrative tasks and 13 percent of their time on professional development training. Almost half of the responding coaches indicated that administrative tasks interfere with their coaching whereas the majority of coaches indicated that professional development training does not interfere with their coaching.

Coaches still report mixed receptiveness of programs to QRIS. Some programs view QRIS as a supportive and valuable resource while others find it to be an overwhelming process that adds to their workload. Some coaches also reported that programs are frustrated by the turnover in coaches. Several coaches noted that current receptiveness toward QRIS is dependent upon programs' past experiences with it.

Finally, coaches suggested ways to improve QRIS by increasing the quality of coaching for programs, increasing engagement of programs, suggestions for training. Coaches also highlighted several successes about the program in the past year such as the specific programs improving quality, the effects of relationship building, and the launch of the Tribal model.

Pre- and post-coaching ERS scores – During this reporting period, NICRP received or located in QSTAR pre- and post-coaching ERS assessments for 206 centers and 15 family child care programs. On average, for both centers and family child care programs, there has been an increase in the ERS subscale scores post-coaching as compared to pre-coaching. For centers, the largest increase in scores was for the Program Structure (.99) and Interactions (.88) subscales. For family child care programs, the largest increase in scores was for the Program Structure (1.89) and Activities (1.61) subscales.

Star rating at Steps to Stars and after Initial Coaching – For the second year in a row, an analysis was conducted to try determine the effect of Initial Coaching on star ratings. This year, the analysis included 100 centers and family child care programs that had been assigned a Steps to Stars star rating and an Initial Coaching star rating. After Initial Coaching, there were fewer programs assigned 1-star and 2-star ratings and more programs assigned a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating.

Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey – In March, NICRP administered the Fifth Annual Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS Coaching Survey to assess programs' experiences with the coaching process.

Results indicate that the majority of respondents had an overall positive coaching experience. The three survey items with which the largest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed included: (1) "I felt respected and valued as a child care professional by the QRIS Coach," (2) "I feel that I can help other colleagues in increasing the quality of early learning environments," and (3) "The QRIS Coach took the time to listen to my concerns." The two items with which the smallest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed included: (1) "The QRIS Coach discussed and/or assisted me with child care issues such as licensing, learning standards, policies, etc." and (2) "The QRIS Coach facilitated access to community resources and provided information about opportunities beneficial to my program, such as infant/toddler slots, The Children's Cabinet's grants, Pyramid Model, special education support, and community health workers."

With regard to their knowledge of quality learning environments, slightly more than half of respondents indicated that their knowledge increased following coaching assistance (52%) and less than half of respondents indicated that their knowledge did not change (46%).

When asked, “What challenges have you encountered with staffing and how have they impacted the quality of your program?”, most respondents reported retention/turnover, hiring qualified staff, uncommitted staff, the inability to compete with wages/benefits offered elsewhere, and working with less experienced staff. These challenges have impacted the ability of programs to improve or maintain quality, require them to spend time training new staff, and affect staff morale.

When asked, “What part of the coaching process did you find most helpful?”, the most common themes that emerged included: support of the coach, observations and feedback, resources provided, and hands-on classroom instruction.

Coaching Evaluation – For this evaluation, NICRP plans to examine the number of minutes of coaching programs receive on the ERS subscales and how this impacts their ERS subscale scores. To be included in the evaluation, programs must have a QIP focused on improvement on at least one of the subscales. Unfortunately, there were only 24 programs that met the required criteria to be included in the evaluation. Therefore, no statistical analyses were completed and no conclusions can be drawn.

LearnERS Participant Activity – The LearnERS pilot project launched in March. As of May, less than three-fourths of the programs with LearnERS licenses have completed any modules. The LearnERS data will continue to be monitored and reviewed for any trends. As more programs become enrolled and active, it will be important to assess how their participation in LearnERS impacts their ERS scores.

Assessment Team Training – For the first time, the Assessment Team provided NICRP with data detailing participation in their trainings for inclusion in this report. Between August and May, the Assessment Team held 95 trainings throughout the state with 1701 participants. Environment and Curriculum and Observation and Assessment were the two trainings held most often by the team with the Environment and Curriculum training reaching the most participants. Overall, the majority of training participants were center teachers and school-based teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some recommendations to consider based on the results of the current evaluation:

Review Recommendations Provided by Coaches: The coaches provided a few ideas for improvement that should be discussed at a team meeting but overall feedback has been consistent in the last few years and no major suggestions were made.

Continuous Discussion Regarding Evaluation Questions and Activities: NICRP continues to discuss data collection procedures and evaluation questions with the QRIS team in order to determine if changes are needed to the evaluation process and to determine if new evaluation questions arise. More regular discussions as a team might be beneficial so that all QRIS team members are comfortable with the data that exist and can really consider what programmatic questions should be asked to determine how to improve the QRIS system especially as systems are shifting nationwide.

Assessing Parent Feedback: It has been several years since parent feedback was obtained about the QRIS program. It is recommended that parent surveys be conducted to determine their program needs and their understanding of the QRIS program. Feedback from parents with children that attend QRIS rated programs could guide how information regarding QRIS is communicated to parents and the larger community.

NEXT STEPS

During the next year of QRIS implementation, NICRP recommends that the Office of Early Learning and Development hold a meeting at the beginning of the year to discuss this report and to discuss possible changes to the process and to the evaluation. As tribal interest and enrollment in QRIS increases, it is recommended that they continue to be included in discussions about evaluation to ensure it reflects their culture and is driven by their community. In addition, as QRIS is shifting away from the use of star ratings, it will be vital to discuss how evaluation can continue to best reflect the strengths in our system as well as areas for improvement.