

40,000+ Children*

Quality Has Never Been This Widespread

* The number of children in Ohio currently enrolled in Star Rated, Step Up To Quality programs.



Three-Star Quality Rating System

Progress Report

July 2007 - June 2008

- Ohio Reaches for the Stars
- 64% Increase in Star Rated Programs in 12 Months
- Getting Ready for a 21st Century Education



“The first years of a child’s life are a time of incredible growth and development. Frankly there may not be another issue in which a modest investment can have such a tremendous and lasting effect as the early care and education of our youngest children.”

Ted Strickland, Governor



Step Up To Quality Goals

- Improve the quality of early care and education programs in order to support children’s optimal development and learning
- Provide parents with an easy-to-use tool for selecting quality early care and education programs for their children

40,000+ Children in Ohio



Now Enrolled in Step Up To Quality Star Rated Programs

Step Up To Quality Achieves Governor's Goal

455 early childhood programs rated among Ohio's best! A record number of Ohio children benefiting from quality programs.

In 2007, Governor Ted Strickland set a goal for Ohio – improve the quality of early care and education for our children by substantially increasing the number of programs that are Step Up To Quality Star Rated. One year later, the Governor's goal of 450 programs by June 30, 2008 is a reality. More children than ever before are being cared for in programs rated among Ohio's best. These programs have not only achieved the standards set forth by Step Up To Quality, 22% of them are also nationally accredited.

Step Up To Quality is a voluntary, three-star quality rating system for early care and education programs that are licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. It supports programs in achieving higher levels of quality and helps parents make informed choices about where to enroll their children.

Ready for Prime Time –

Step Up To Quality Goes Statewide in 2007

After a year long pilot in 2006, Step Up To Quality is emerging as the number one program of excellence for Ohio's licensed centers and Type A family homes, and an important sign of quality for parents.

Low-income children remain a strong focus. Today, 29% (10,639) of children enrolled in Star Rated programs live in families that receive a child care subsidy. This means they live in homes that earn less than 185% of the federal poverty level or \$28,000 a year for a family of three.



Preparing Children for a 21st Century Education

Improving early care and education is one of the key cornerstones of Turnaround Ohio, an economic development program launched by Governor Ted Strickland. To move Ohio forward, a skilled workforce is essential. That effort begins in the early years of a child's life when 90% of brain development takes place. By improving early foundational experiences, children are more likely to find success in school and in life, an important benchmark by any standard.

Children Enrolled in Star Rated Programs Reaches 40,000+



TOTAL: 40,115

The Economics of Quality Care and Education

An analysis of Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment – Literacy (KRAL) data shows that last year 40,000 five-year-olds started school in need of literacy intervention.

By incorporating Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards and Ohio's Infant and Toddler Guidelines into Step Up To Quality's benchmarks, Ohio is giving early childhood professionals the tools they need to help children succeed in school from day one. The big news here is that less resources needed for remediation means more resources for other facets of education.

Quality Early Care & Education Lasts Far Beyond Childhood

Experts agree that the return on investment from programs like Step Up To Quality is extraordinary.

Research authored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland that focused exclusively on high-quality pre-kindergarten for at risk children found that for every dollar invested, \$1.62 was returned to the state through lower need for grade retention and special education instruction, reduced crime and higher overall lifetime earnings.

Parents Want It. Programs Count On It! Stakeholders Believe In It!

Parents

Parents find Step Up To Quality programs a noteworthy sign of quality. It's a way for them to enroll their children in programs that provide strong educational experiences. Step Up To Quality gives a tangible, objective measure for quality.

Programs

Programs stand out in the marketplace because of their emphasis on nurturing and learning with colorful signs, posters and information to parents. Step Up To Quality provides resources to support program improvements and scholarships for teachers.

Policymakers and Lawmakers

Making an investment in Ohio's best programs pays the dividends of increased school readiness, less kindergarten remediation and more peace of mind for Ohio's families.



Step Up To Quality Saves Money

In 2006, nearly 8,000 kindergartners through third graders repeated a grade, costing Ohio \$43 million in basic aid funds. Ohio's education system could save money if more children came to school prepared to succeed in the classroom.

The Path to Quality Is Paved with Good Incentives

Step Up To Quality has grown dramatically over the last year through the wise use of State incentives. These include technical assistance, financial support and recognition. Incentives are a powerful lure for programs that must complete a rigorous process to earn a one-, two- or three-Star Rating. Because programs are rated annually, they must re-apply every year.

Valuable Support Helps Programs Reach for the Stars

- **234** T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholars at 18 universities across the state are working toward associate degrees in early childhood. T.E.A.C.H. helps with the cost of tuition, books and substitutes so teachers can attend classes.
- **\$3,894,000** in Quality Achievement Awards were earned by programs over the past 12 months to fund enhancements from lighting and furniture, educational materials, and playground equipment, to staff salaries and benefits.
- **26,230** early childhood professionals took part in specialized training to strengthen the skills necessary to support 21st century learners.
- **7,116** hours of on-site technical assistance were provided to Emerging Stars to improve classroom quality and success in earning a Star Rating.

Step Up To Quality Positively Influences Safety & Health

Health and Safety are top concerns for parents and the focus of Ohio's licensing requirements. Step Up To Quality builds on the foundation of state licensing by requiring full compliance with key licensing standards before a program is considered for a Star Rating.

In fact, Star Rated programs score twice as high on health and safety measures as unrated programs.

Step Up To Quality Research Underway

The Ohio State University is currently compiling findings from 3,839 surveys returned by 287 program administrators, 376 teachers and 3,176 parents from all over Ohio. Survey response rates were extremely high and the results will be shared in the next Step Up To Quality report.

\$1.95 Billion
57,000 Employees

The size of the child care industry in Ohio.



Trailblazers for Ohio's Children

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) works in tandem with the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) and local child care resource and referral agencies to bring Step Up To Quality programs to children across the state. OCCRRA and its member agencies are the important link from the state to local communities. They provide consistent program implementation statewide.

Professional Growth Elevates the Field

Step Up To Quality is helping create a profession of highly skilled and educated early care teachers by requiring ongoing specialized trainings. Whether managing programs or teaching in the classroom, the child care providers of yesterday are giving way to the early childhood professionals of today thanks in part to Step Up To Quality requirements and the funding to implement them.

14,000 Enrolled in the Online Professional Registry

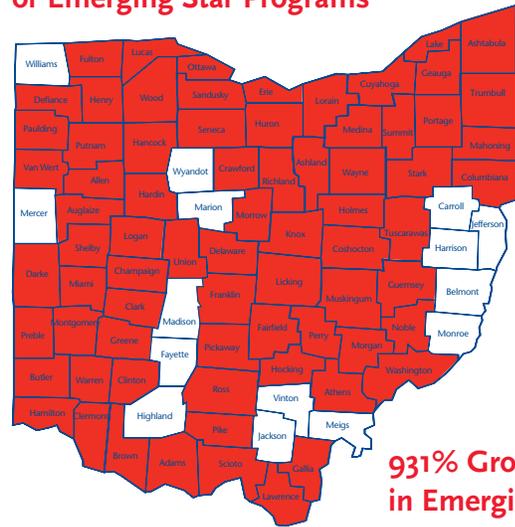
The Registry tracks the professional development of teachers and administrators who work in Step Up To Quality centers and homes. It allows early childhood professionals to track their career paths online in a central location and access specific training courses statewide.



The Importance of Emerging Stars

One of the most notable aspects of Step Up To Quality is its focus on helping programs that have been unable to earn or keep a Star Rating. These programs, called Emerging Stars, receive intensive support including a 12-month program improvement plan to achieve a Star Rating. How successful has this effort been? Twenty-six programs became Star Rated in less than the stipulated time frame.

73 Counties Have Either Star Rated or Emerging Star Programs



931% Growth in Emerging Stars

22
227

● July 2007
● June 2008

www.stepuptoquality.com





**step up
to quality**

Three-Star Quality Rating System

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Ted Strickland, **Governor**
State of Ohio
Helen Jones-Kelley, **Director**
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Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider

