



Quality Improvement in QRIS: Evaluation of Success By 6[®] in Greater Philadelphia

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Today's Presentation

- Background on quality improvement in Philadelphia area
- Review findings from evaluation of Success By 6[®] program
- Discuss implications for the field



Keystone STARS



- 4 level block system
- Performance standards in four areas
 - Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
 - Learning Program
 - Partnerships with Family and Community
 - Leadership and Management
- Supports for Quality Improvement include:
 - STARS technical assistance
 - TA in other specialized areas (infant and toddlers, children's mental health)
 - Merit and Education & Retention Awards

Success By 6[®] in Greater Philadelphia

- Quality improvement program designed to move centers from STAR 2 to STAR 3 in Keystone STARS
- SB6 provides services to centers in Philadelphia and three suburban counties
- Improvement Supports
 - Quality assessment using the Environment Rating Scales (ERS)
 - Intensive technical assistance
 - Program Improvement Funds
 - Director Leadership Circles
- Maintenance Supports
 - Quality Awards
 - Peer Leadership Circles
 - Access to Institute for Family Professionals coursework

Study Questions

SB6 Design

- How does SB6 align with effective practices in early care and education quality improvement?

SB6 Implementation

- Are SB6 activities delivered with fidelity and consistency?
- What are the experiences of center directors, teachers and technical assistance consultants?

SB6 Outcomes for Participating Centers

- What can we learn about the SB6 success rate?
- How does “move-up” in STARS for SB6 centers compare to non-participating centers?

Methods

- Conducted a synthesis of QI literature
- Collected and compiled data from multiple sources:
 - Interviews
 - Surveys of current and previous SB6 participants
 - SB6 administrative data and policy documents
 - Census data on neighborhood location of SB6 centers
 - Keystone STARS data from the PA's Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)
- Conducted rigorous statistical analysis to understand the SB6 success rate

SB6 Design



A Blueprint for Early Care and Education Quality Improvement Initiatives

- Foundational Elements
- Implementation Efforts
- Quality Improvement Activities

Available at www.childtrends.org



SB6 Design – Highlights

- SB6 incorporates many Blueprint practices in its design and implementation.
- The SB6 management team provides strong, collaborative leadership for the initiative. They offer a forum for reviewing feedback and the flexibility to make changes as needed.
- Program Improvement Funds and Quality Awards are a critical component of SB6.
- Establishing the Readiness Group was a useful adaptation of the SB6 model.

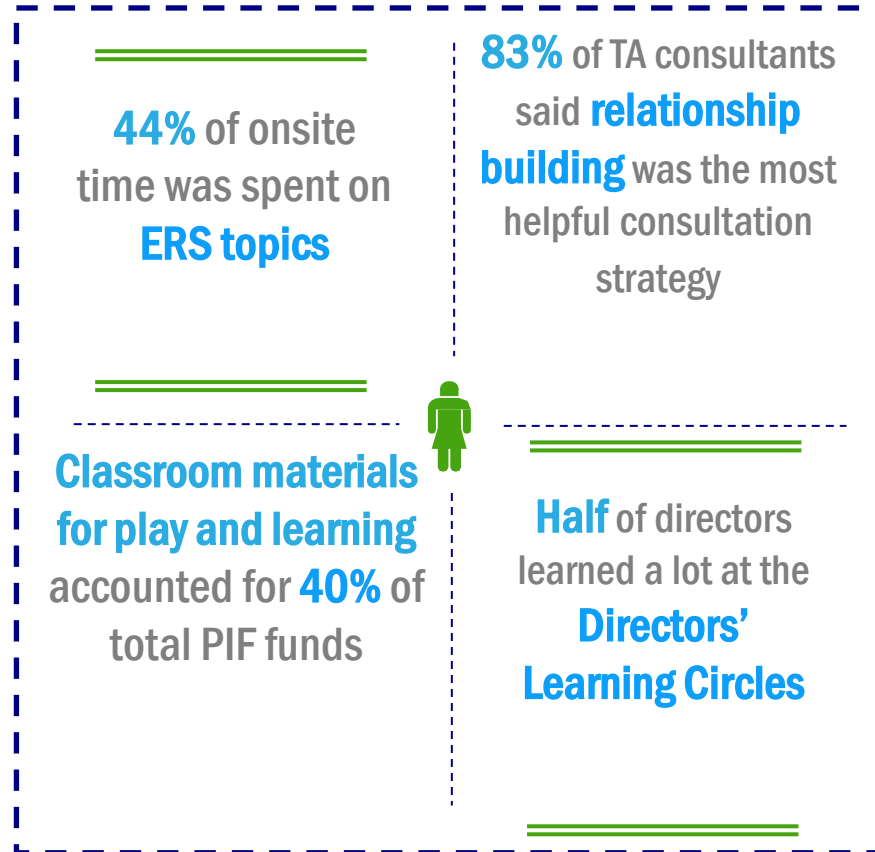
SB6 Design – Select Recommendations

- **Strengthen connections to children’s development by including a stronger focus on intentional teaching and interactions**
- **Provide opportunities for improving workforce qualifications through financial incentives and professional development**
- **Strengthen training and support for TA consultants**
- **Consider how changes in Keystone STARS will be addressed in SB6 design**

SB6 Implementation



SB6 consultation and activities



The learning environment is a primary focus of consultation and improvement funds.

SB6 TA consultation

- TA consultants report that the ERS, the Service Plan and the Program Improvement Funds are the most important tools they use for quality improvement.
- TA consultants are positive about their relationships with centers, but the majority of consultants only somewhat agree that their time with centers is used efficiently.
- 5 of 13 consultants report following half of the guidance in the TA model and modifying the other half.

Director and Teacher Perceptions and Satisfaction

	Director Responses		Teacher Responses	
	Current Participants	Previous Participants	Current Participants	Previous Participants
Percent agree (does not include somewhat agree) (scale = agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, no opinion)				
Working on goals with my SB6 TA consultant is helpful in improving my center.	96%	90%	65%	66%
Time with the on-site SB6 TA consultant is used efficiently.	79%	86%	66%	61%
The on-site SB6 TA consultant's advice is appropriate and helpful.	93%	88%	70%	63%
My SB6 TA consultant explains how to implement her advice within my center specifically.	96%	89%	63%	59%
My SB6 TA consultant responds in a timely manner.	96%	89%	66%	61%
My SB6 TA consultant answers my questions and concerns fully.	96%	85%	70%	66%
I enjoy meeting with other directors in the Directors' Learning Circle.	56%	64%	N/A	N/A
I learn a lot from the other directors in my Directors' Learning Circle.	50%	52%	N/A	N/A

Source: Child Trends' SB6 Current and Previous Participant Surveys

SB6 Implementation Summary and Recommendations

- SB6 has been operating effectively with high levels of satisfaction from participants.
- Nearly all (94%) of directors who have completed SB6 believe their center is of higher quality as a result of participating in SB6
- Recommendations for implementation include:
 - increase efficiency of TA consultation time,
 - increase fidelity to the service model and service documentation
 - revisit the purpose and structure of the learning circles for directors and teachers to improve uptake

SB6 Outcomes



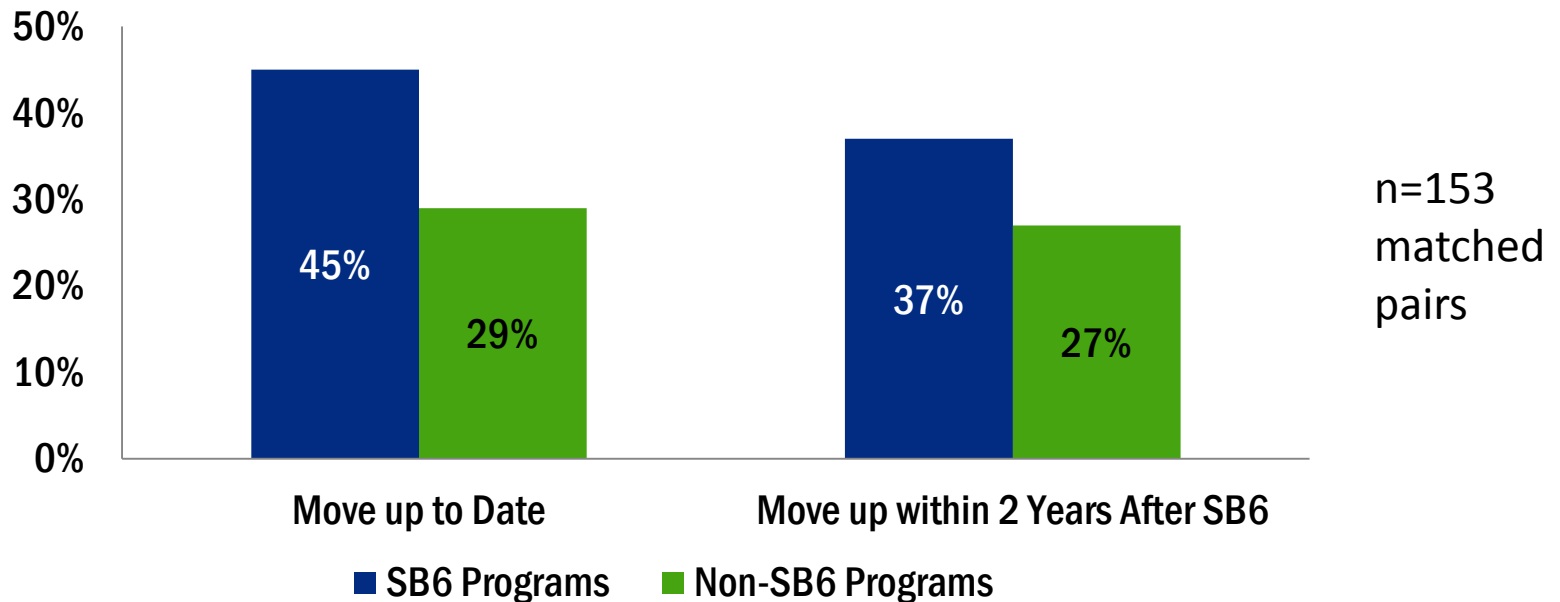
Strategy for Understanding the SB6 Success Rate

- Only a few studies have examined the success rate of a QI initiative – measured by move-up in a QRIS.
 - OCDEL conducted an analysis of STARS TA.
- It is important to identify an appropriate comparison group for SB6 centers to account for factors besides SB6 that are associated with quality improvement.
- Propensity score matching was conducted with Keystone STARS data from OCDEL to create pairs of similar centers – one SB6, one non-SB6 – and to compare their move-up in STARS

Characteristics Used for Matching

- Location in the four county area served by SB6 (Philadelphia, Chester, Montgomery, and Delaware counties)
- Similar enrollment dates into STARS
- Number of children enrolled in the center
- Use (or not) of STARS TA
- Receipt (or not) of financial awards from STARS
- Were serving communities with similar demographic and economic conditions

SB6 Outcome Results



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Keystone STARS administrative data obtained from OCDEL, April 30, 2015.

SB6 is successful in moving centers from a STAR 2 to a STAR 3. It provides a 16 percentage point “move up” boost to centers that participate.

What are the primary barriers to move up in Keystone STARS?

- Educational qualifications
- Staff turnover
- Data collection in QRIS makes barriers hard to identify



Summary and Recommendations



Selected Summary and Recommendations

- TA consultants may benefit from enhanced supervision and mentoring, opportunities to build skills and access to better tools to support their work with centers.
- Teachers have unique experiences in SB6. It is important to learn more about their needs and their role in SB6.
- The ERS are a focal point of SB6 consultation. Adding strategies to strengthen intentional teaching and interactions could promote enhanced child development and learning.
- Centers are improving, but further supports are needed to improve the move up rate. Workforce supports to improve qualifications are particularly important to address.

Lessons for the Field of ECE Quality Improvement

- Effective implementation of QI requires monitoring and flexibility to adjust policies and procedures.
- Management structures that include key partners from the ECE system are important for quality improvement initiatives.
- Supporting the early care and education workforce is a key challenge for quality improvement initiatives.



Next Steps

- **A full report on the validation study will be available in December.**
- **William Penn will host a convening in January 2016 to discuss findings with stakeholders.**

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Questions?

Thank you!

Contact Mallory Warner-Richter or Dale Epstein
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with questions or comments

Staff Qualifications at STAR 2 and STAR 3

STAR 2	STAR 3
<p>50% of teachers meet Level V or above on career lattice; 50% of assistant teachers meet Level II or above, 100% of aides meet Level I or above</p> <p>1 staff member from each classroom must have pediatric first aid certification</p> <p>12 annual clock hours of professional development for each staff member</p> <p>All staff must attend two hours of professional development annually on child observation, inclusive practices and/or ERS</p>	<p>100% of teachers meet Level V on career lattice; 75% of assistant teachers meet Level III or above, 25% of aides meet Level II or above</p> <p>All staff from each classroom must have pediatric first aid certification</p> <p>18 annual clock hours of professional development for each teacher/assistant teacher; 12 annual clock hours of professional development for each aide (same as STAR 2)</p> <p>Teachers and assistant teachers must attend at least two hours of professional development annually on curriculum, program or child assessment, the age-appropriate Learning Standards and/or ERS</p> <p>Annually all staff participate in 1 professional growth activity</p>