

# Child Care Quality and Child Outcomes in Indiana's Child Care Quality Rating System

**2012 Child Care Policy Research Consortium**

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**Symposium: Challenges and Options for Studying Child Outcomes in the Context of Quality Improvement Initiatives/QRIS**

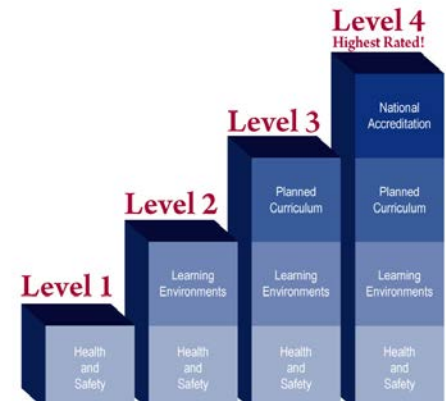
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# Indiana's QRIS: Paths to QUALITY™



- Community-designed model
- Adopted, modified for statewide implementation
- Voluntary participation
- Building block design:
  - 1) Licensed → 4) National Accreditation
- Launched 2008 in 4 regional waves
- Current participation rates:
  - 87% LCC; 59% FCC; 11% RCCM
- Implementation evaluation completed 2008-2011

# Overall Objectives

## PTQ Implementation Evaluation, 2008-2011

### ***Child Care Providers***

- Does attaining higher PTQ levels result in higher quality care? (Is the rating system valid?)
- Are providers of all types enrolling? What are the benefits, challenges?
- Do providers advance to higher PTQ levels?

### ***Children***

- Are children from low income families gaining access to child care at the highest PTQ levels?
- Are children in higher PTQ levels developing more optimally?

### ***Parents***

- Are parents aware of PTQ? Does it affect their child care decisions?

# Assessing Child Outcomes: Issues

- What is purpose of measuring child outcomes at this phase of the QRIS?
  - Are children at-risk gaining access to high quality care?
  - Gather descriptive data about characteristics of children with QRIS child care providers
- Do you have specific, theory-based hypotheses about the impact of QRIS on children's development and learning? (QRIS logic model)
- Is the QRIS ready for an impact evaluation that includes child outcomes, using a rigorous research design?

(Elicker, J. & Thornburg, K. R. (2011). Evaluation of quality rating and improvement systems for early childhood programs and school-age care: Measuring children's development. *Research-to-Policy, Research-to-Practice Brief*, OPRE 2011-11c. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.)

# Indiana PTQ: Specific Questions about Children's Outcomes

- Are children using CCDF vouchers gaining access to highest-rated care?
- What level of quality is the system producing?
- Are measures of children's developmental status associated with:
  - PTQ quality ratings?
  - Other quality measures (ERS; CIS)?

# Indiana Evaluation Research Design

## **Child Care Providers (n=274): interviews/surveys, provider characteristics; attitudes about QRIS; child assessments**

- 95 licensed child care center providers
- 167 family child care providers
- 12 unlicensed registered child care ministry center providers

## **Classrooms/Homes (n=314): quality observations (ERS; CIS)**

- 147 classrooms in licensed child care centers, registered ministries
- 167 family child care homes

## **Children (n=582): brief developmental assessments**

- Two children randomly assessed in each classroom/home

## **Parents (n=1,851): interviews, use of child care; awareness; attitudes**

- 450 interviews with parents whose children were assessed in PTQ programs
- 1,451 interviews with randomly selected parents in the state  
(750 in 2010 ; 701 in 2011)

# Child Development Measures

## ***Infants/Toddlers (n= 249)***

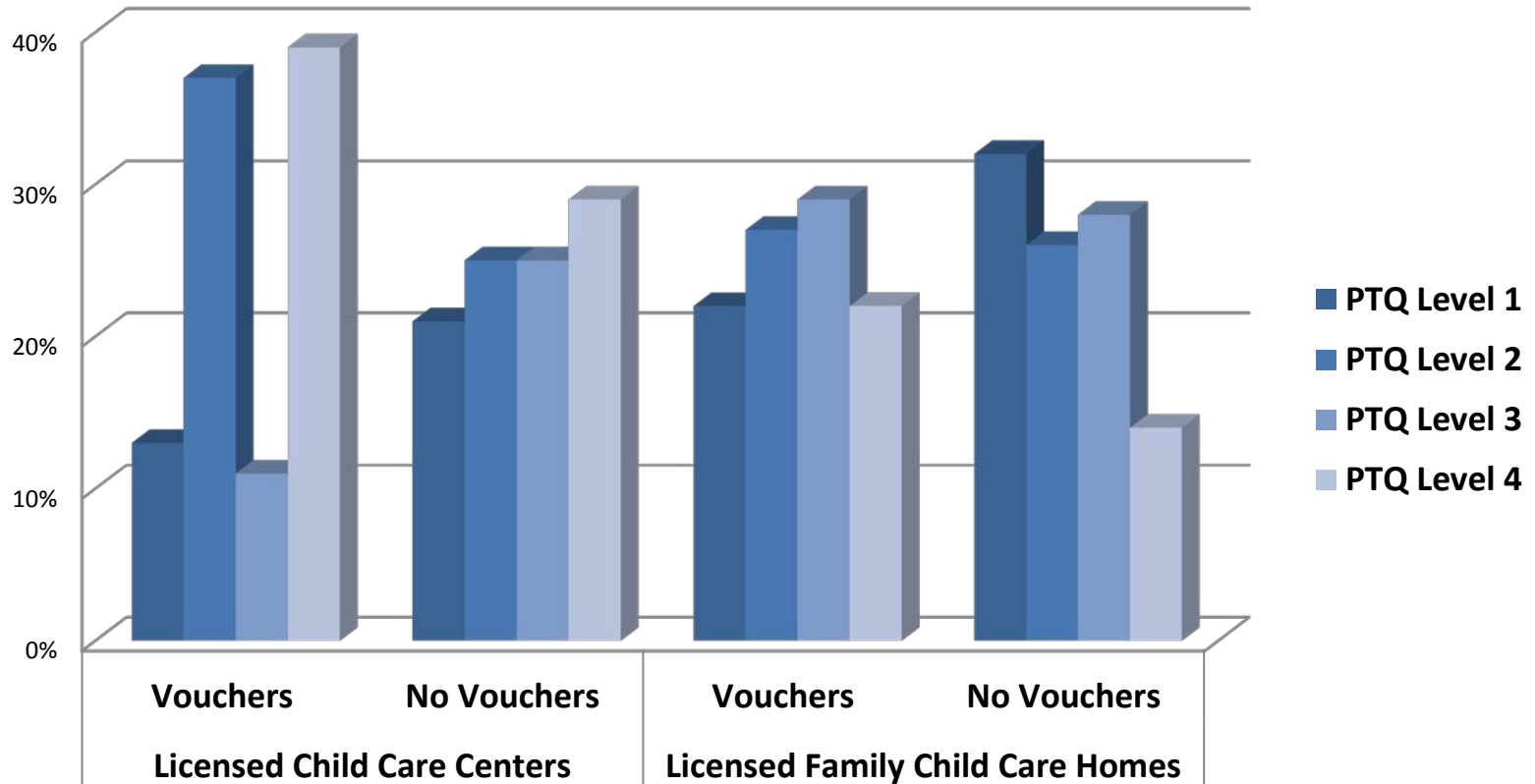
- Brief Infant Toddler Social Emotional Assessment (BITSEA)
- Mullen Scales: Early Learning Composite Score

## ***Preschoolers (n= 308)***

- Social Competence and Behavioral Evaluation (SCBE)
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-IV;
- Woodcock Johnson (Letter Word Identification; Applied Problems)

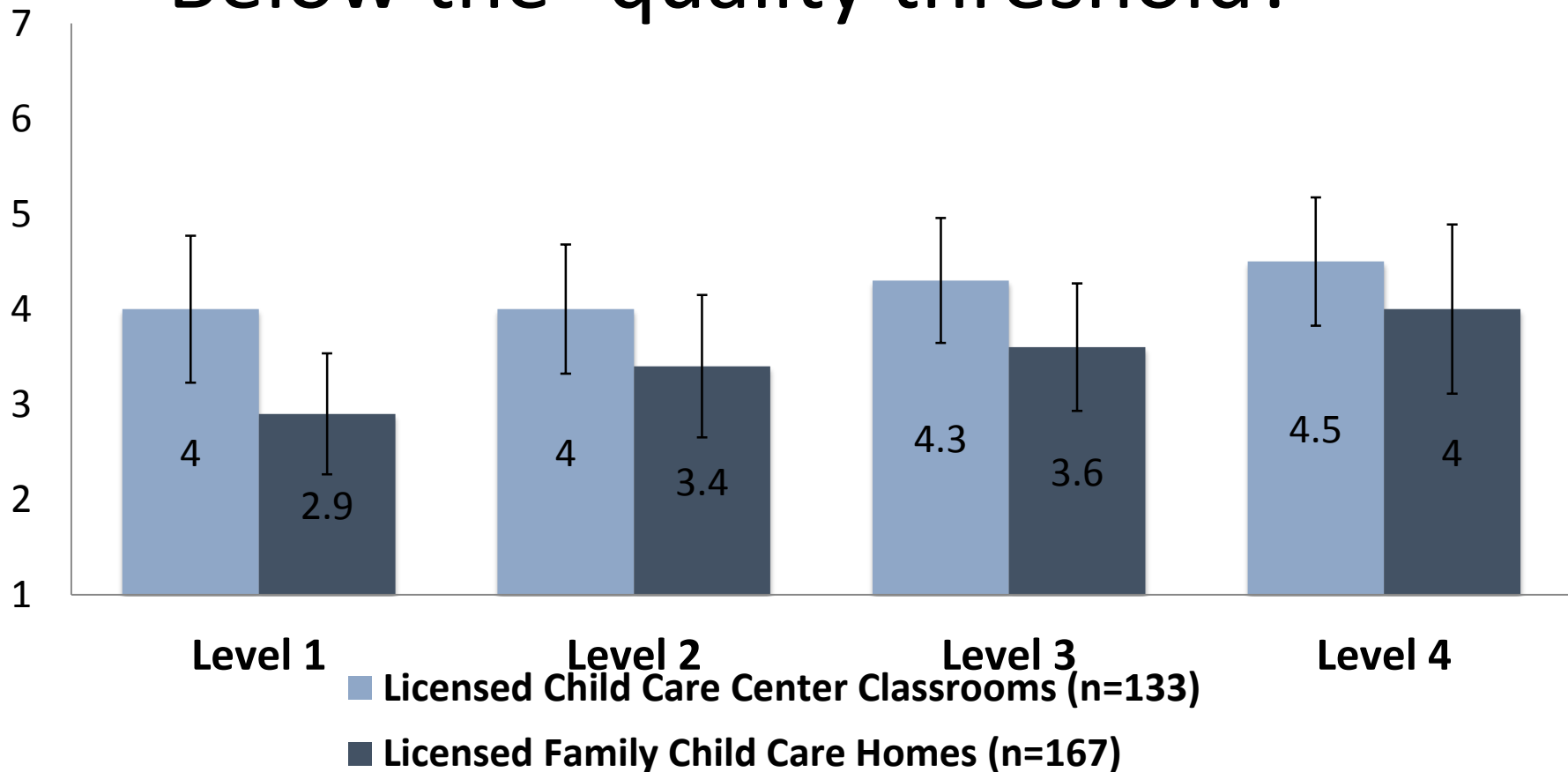
# Children from Low Income Families Are Getting Access to Top-Rated Care

Distribution of Children Receiving Child Care Vouchers ( $n=99$ )  
By PTQ Quality Level & Type of Care





# Validation of the QRIS Rating System: ERS Global Scores Below the “quality threshold?”



# Further Analysis of ERS Data: Lowest Scoring ERS Items for Level 4

## Infant Toddler Classrooms (# items with $M < 4$ )

- Room Arrangement/Interest Areas (1)
- Personal Care Routines (6)
- Activities (active play; music; blocks; science; 4)

## Preschool Classrooms (# items with $M < 4$ )

- Space for privacy, gross motor play (2)
- Personal Care Routines (4)
- Language and Reasoning (2)
- Activities (nature/science; math/number; 2)

# Quality & Children's Developmental Competence

**No significant correlations between QRIS-rated levels and Infant/Toddler or Preschooler developmental status.**

**Some researcher-observed quality measures were mildly but significantly correlated with child functioning:**

## **Preschoolers:**

- **CIS positive interactions** associated with:  
social competence ( $r = .17^{**}$ )  
receptive language ability ( $r = .17^{**}$ )

## **Infants/toddlers:**

- **ERS Global Quality** associated with:  
toddler social competence ( $r = .15^{**}$ )
- **CIS positive interactions** associated with:  
cognitive/language competence ( $r = .17^{**}$ )

# Quality & Children's Developmental Competence

**No significant correlations between QRIS-rated levels and Infant/Toddler or Preschooler developmental status.**

Some researcher-observed quality measures were mildly but significantly correlated with child functioning:

**Regressions-- controlling for parent education & family income--**

**Preschoolers:**

- **CIS positive interactions** associated with:  
**Receptive language ability ( $b = .12^*$ )**

**Infants/toddlers:**

- **ERS Global Quality**  
**No significant associations**
- **CIS positive interactions** associated with:  
**Cognitive/language competence ( $b = .14^*$ )**

# Implications

- To improve chances QRIS will improve child development outcomes:
  - Raise quality standards for Level 3 and Level 4
  - Focus standards more on adult-child interactions, teaching quality
  - Be sure QRIS is ready for an impact evaluation
- Evaluating impact on children using rigorous designs:
  - Longitudinal/Experimental designs
  - Domain-specific hypotheses
  - Measure quality levels & dosage
  - Control for family factors
  - Include process quality mediators (adult-child interaction)
  - Focus on children with highest risk

# Planned Indiana Phase 2

## Evaluation Questions: 2012-2016

- Is PTQ effective at providing T/TA that helps diverse child care providers advance to higher rated levels?
- Does participation in higher-rated child care improve developmental, early learning, and/or school readiness outcomes for children from CCDF voucher using families?
- Are parents of prekindergarten children in the general public aware of PTQ? Do they use it to inform their child care decisions?

# Indiana Paths to QUALITY Evaluation Documents

Elicker, J., Langill, C., Ruprecht, K.M., Lewsader, J., Anderson, T. & Brizzi, M. (in press). Paths to QUALITY: Collaborative evaluation of a new child care quality rating and improvement system. *Early Education and Development*.

## **Purdue Center for Families Web site:**

[\(<http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/cff/publications/publications.html>\)](http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/cff/publications/publications.html)

- **PTQ Evaluation Briefs (2012):**
  - #1: PTQ: [Key Findings](#)
  - #2: [PTQ, Quality Care and Education for Indiana's Young Children?](#)
  - #3: [PTQ, Benefits for Indiana Child Care Providers?](#)
  - #4: PTQ, Does It Help Indiana Parents Find Quality Child Care?
- **PTQ Technical Reports:**
  - #1: [Paths to QUALITY: Its Scientific Basis \(2007\)](#)
  - #2: [Paths to QUALITY Evaluation: Methods and Measures \(2009\)](#)
  - #3: [Paths to QUALITY Evaluation: Final Report \(2011\)](#)

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