

# THE CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM (QRS) ASSESSMENT



## Minnesota Parent Aware

**QRS Profile**

**April 2010**



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# Minnesota Parent Aware

## QRS Profile

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**Prepared for:**

**Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation**

Administration for Children and Families  
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## Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) Assessment Study

### PROFILE

<b>Site:</b>	<b>State of Minnesota</b>
<b>Program Name:</b>	<b>Parent Aware</b>
<b>Respondents:</b>	<b>Deb Swenson-Klatt and Lisa Cariveau, Minnesota Department of Human Services</b>
<b>Information Reviewed and Finalized:</b>	<b>March 22, 2010</b>

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## Minnesota – Parent Aware

### Program Information

This section provides general information about the QRS including the location, numbers and types of programs participating in the QRS, and goals.

<b>Site name:</b>	State of Minnesota
<b>Program name:</b>	Parent Aware
<b>Service area:</b>	Other geographic area
<b>Details about other geographic area:</b>	Area includes the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the Wayzata school district, 7-county metro area (for accredited programs), Blue Earth and Nicollet counties
<b>Pilot:</b>	Yes
<b>Pilot time frame:</b>	August 2007 - June 30, 2011
<b>Date full program launched:</b>	N/A
<b>Voluntary:</b>	Yes
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.parentawareratings.org">www.parentawareratings.org</a>
<b>Eligible programs:</b>	Center-based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, publically funded pre-kindergarten/comprehensive early childhood program, licensed family child care programs
<b>Source of funds for eligible public program:</b>	State-funded
<b>Total numbers of programs participating:</b>	318
<b>Number of participating child care centers:</b>	188
<b>Number of participating family child care programs:</b>	55
<b>Number of other programs participating:</b>	75 "Other" programs include Head Start and Early Head Start programs
<b>Percent of total programs enrolled in QRS:</b>	11
<b>Percent of programs at each rating level:</b>	1 star: 2% 2 stars: 8% 3 stars: 9% 4 stars: 81% Provisionally rated: 1%
<b>Additional details about programs in the QRS:</b>	Additional programs are in the process of being rated.
<b>Goals:</b>	"The Parent Aware Rating Tool is intended to support [our] state's children by creating a rating system which identifies, recognizes, and celebrates quality in

**Language from statute:**

early education." ([www.parentawareratings.org](http://www.parentawareratings.org))

Additions to Minnesota Statute 124D in 2009 create a framework for a standards-based voluntary quality rating and improvement system to ensure that Minnesota's children have access to high-quality early learning and care programs in a range of settings so that they are fully ready for kindergarten by 2020. This system will include quality opportunities to improve education outcomes so that children are ready for school, a tool to increase the number of publically funded and regulated early learning and care services, and methods for tracking progress towards increasing statewide access to high-quality early learning and care programs; increasing access for low-income children to high quality programs; and increasing the number children who are fully prepared to enter kindergarten. The state will use evaluation results from the existing pilot to make recommendations for planning the statewide quality rating and improvement system framework, to include a common set of child outcome and program standards, a process for linking future funding to the framework, and ideas for realignment existing state and federal administrative resources to implement the framework. The Voluntary Quality Rating System pilot was appropriated funds from the federal child care development ARRA funds targeted for quality expansion and infant/toddler. The FY2010 (\$184,000) appropriation will go towards completing and promoting the current pilot program through June 30, 2010, and FY2011 funds (\$1.2 million) will continue the pilot through June 30, 2011 in St. Paul, Minneapolis, the Wayzata School District and Blue Earth and Nicollet counties. Funds from FY2010 and FY2011 will also be used to provide supports, coaching, and training for providers who are preparing to participate in the rating system. (Chap 173, Art 2, Sec 4, Subd 4(e)).

#### School Readiness Connections

Legislative changes to Minnesota Statutes 119B.231, subdivision 2, continues School Readiness Service Agreements (SRSA) with priority given to current providers. Adds requirement that providers participate in Parent Aware and allows on-going family eligibility for parents who meet CCAP eligibility requirements. SRSA's, known as School Readiness Connections (SRC), began as a pilot project in 2007. This continuation allows current SRC providers to continue to serve eligible families if they agree to participate in Parent Aware over the next two years. If funds are available for additional child care providers to be added to SRC, a rating of 3 or 4 stars through Parent Aware must be obtained prior to application. Previously, providers were chosen using an application process. Families receiving care through a SRC provider may continue to be authorized for weekly child care as long as general CCAP eligibility requirements are met. Previously, a family's eligibility was reviewed after 12 months and the family needed to be in an authorized activity for 35 hours per week to continue on SRC. This change allows for hours of authorized activity to fluctuate without impacting continuity of care for the child approved at an SRC provider.

The project is being evaluated; a final report outlining the project and related outcomes through June 30, 2009 will be published by January, 2010.

## Rating Details

This section provides details about how the rating component is structured and the process that is used to rate programs.

<b>Rating structure:</b>	Points
<b>Number of levels:</b>	4 (plus a provisional rating that serves as a 3 star)
<b>Length of time rating is valid:</b>	1 year
<b>Rating process:</b>	<p>There are three different tracks for achieving a Parent Aware rating: Full rating, automatic rating and provisional rating.</p> <p><b>Full Rating:</b> Licensed child care centers, preschools and family child care programs that are not accredited can apply for a full rating in Parent Aware. Upon enrollment, fully-rated programs attend an orientation and are assigned a Provider Resource Specialist who helps initiate the quality improvement process. After meeting with the Resource Specialist, programs have up to a year to complete the documentation required for each of the Parent Aware quality standards, have an on-site observation conducted, and have curriculum and assessment tools approved by the Department of Human Services. A rating of 1 to 4 stars is possible in the full rating track.</p> <p><b>Automatic Rating:</b> Programs (child care centers, preschools and family child care programs) accredited by an approved accrediting body, Head Start/Early Head Start programs that are in compliance with the Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring (PRISM), and school-based pre-K programs can apply for an automatic 4-star rating in Parent Aware (as of July 1, 2009). Accredited programs complete a short application, submit proof of their accreditation status and demonstrate their compliance with the licensing requirements described above.</p> <p><b>Provisional Rating:</b> In the initial two years of the pilot, programs that were not accredited and did not have a full Parent Aware rating could apply for</p>

a temporary, provisional rating of 3 stars by submitting documentation on key quality indicators (not the full set). Authority for the provisional ratings was included in legislation passed in 2007 establishing the Pre-Kindergarten Exploratory Allowance project which provided a \$4,000 scholarship that could be used by families meeting income criteria. Parent Aware programs with a 3- or 4-star rating and programs with provisional ratings (3-stars) were eligible to receive the Allowances through June 30, 2009. Child care centers, preschools, and family child care programs could apply for a Parent Aware provisional rating designated by the Department of Human Services. School-based pre-K programs could apply for provisional approval from the Minnesota Department of Education (this option has now ended as School-based pre-K programs are eligible for an automatic 4-star rating).

Beginning July 1, 2009, programs that already have a provisional rating have the option to extend their rating *if* they are pursuing a Parent-Aware approved accreditation. Programs enrolling in Parent Aware after July 1, 2009 have the option to apply for a provisional rating if they are pursuing a Parent-Aware approved accreditation. If the program is not pursuing accreditation, they must be participating in the full rating process in Parent Aware within six months. Programs with a provisional rating status have a 3-star rating on the Parent Aware website which is denoted in green to distinguish it from the full ratings and automatic 4-star ratings in yellow.

**Method of combining points:**

10 points possible for each of 4 categories: Family Partnerships, Teaching Materials and Strategies, Tracking Learning, and Teacher Training and Education.

Points earned for completion of standards are totaled:

0-11.9 points = 1 star

12-23.9 points = 2 stars  
 24-31.9 points = 3 stars (must be using approved curriculum)  
 32-40 points = 4 stars (centers must receive 3 or higher on the CLASS)

A temporary provisional rating (3 stars) is available for programs that submit documentation for review demonstrating use of family partnership strategies, use of a research-based curriculum, and use of a research-based assessment.

**Method used to assess programs for infants/toddlers:**

The Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R) is used in observations of infant/toddler classrooms. Programs may also earn points for having a curriculum and child assessment specific to infant/toddlers.

**Method used to assess programs for school-aged children:**

N/A

**Different process used to assess family child care:**

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is not used in family child care. Specific quality indicators for family child care vary somewhat from child care center indicators. Also, the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS-R) is used for observations in family child care programs.

**Different process used to assess Head Start/Early Head Start:**

Head Start programs that meet Head Start performance standards automatically receive 4 stars.

**Different process used to assess accredited programs:**

Programs with national accreditation automatically receive 4 stars.

**Events that trigger re-rating:**

Programs have an annual re-rating unless triggered by receipt of a negative licensing action, change in the percentage of staff or director, loss of accreditation status, or a re-rating request.

**Appeal process:**

Yes. Programs must contact Parent Aware within 30 days after receiving rating to request recalculation.

**Availability of technical assistance for rating process:**

Yes

**Description of technical assistance for rating process:**

A Provider Resource Specialist is assigned to each program.

**Availability of technical assistance for preparatory process:**

Yes

**Description of technical assistance for preparatory process:**

Assistance is available for completing quality improvement process prior to rating.



## Quality Indicators for Center-Based Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of center-based programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and the category labels used in the profile may differ from the site-specific category names used in a QRS.

<b>Number of site-specific indicator categories:</b>	4 categories
<b>Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:</b>	Family Partnerships Teaching Materials and Strategies Tracking Learning Teacher Training and Education

### Licensing Compliance (centers)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Licensing compliance included:</b>	Yes
<b>Licensing required for enrollment:</b>	No, licensed programs and license-exempt school-based/charter schools can participate. Programs must also operate in a pilot area.
<b>Licensing equivalent to the first level:</b>	No
<b>Licensing compliance referred to within:</b>	N/A
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Self-report, verified
<b>Comments:</b>	Programs must be licensed to be eligible (though license exempt school-based/charter schools programs can participate). Programs cannot receive more than 1 star if they have had a maltreatment determination or any negative action, including fines, in the past year. Programs cannot receive more than a 1 star rating if they have received an Order to Forfeit a Fine due to failure to submit background study in the past 6-months.

## Ratio and Group Size (centers)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Ratio and group size indicators included:</b>	No
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## Health and Safety (centers)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Health and safety indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	Health and safety checklist must be completed.
<b>Health and safety referred to within:</b>	N/A
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Self-report, unverified

## Curriculum (centers)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Curriculum indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	Programs earn points for using an approved research-based curriculum aligned with state early learning guidelines. Use of an approved research-based curriculum is required to receive a rating of 3 or 4 stars.
<b>Curriculum review process:</b>	Yes
<b>Description of curriculum review process:</b>	Curricula must be pre-approved or approved by a Curriculum Review Committee.
<b>Approved curricula identified:</b>	Yes
<b>List of approved curricula:</b>	Parent Aware has a list of approved curricula along with a process for programs to nominate new curricula for approval by the Curriculum Committee.  Creative Curriculum

High/Scope  
 Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC)  
 Opening the World of Learning (OWL)  
 High Reach  
 Core Knowledge  
 Montessori  
 Everyday Mathematics  
 Project Early Kindergarten (PEK) curriculum for family child care  
 Project Early Kindergarten (PEK) bundle of curricula for centers (includes PEK manual, Everyday Mathematics and Doors to Discovery)

**Curriculum referred to within:** Teaching materials and strategies

**Curriculum source of evidence:** Documentation submitted

## Environment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

**Environment indicators included:** Yes

**Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:** Yes

**Range of recognized ERS scores:** An average score of 3.5-5.0, with no classroom scoring less than 3. Up to 4 points possible.

**Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) included:** Yes

**Range of recognized CLASS scores:** CLASS scores (preschool classrooms only)  
 In each of three (3) categories,  
 if score is 1 or 2: 0 points  
 If score is 3, 4 or 5: 0.5 points (required for 4 stars)  
 If score is 6 or 7: 1 point

All preschool classrooms must receive a CLASS score of 3 or higher in each category (Emotional Support, Instructional Support and Classroom Organization) to achieve 4 stars. Up to 3 points possible.

**Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g., interactions, activities, specific features) :** Indicators related to interactions are embedded in the requirements for the Classroom Assessment Scoring System and Environment Rating Scales observation tools.

**Environment referred to within:** Teaching materials and strategies

**Environment source of evidence:** Observation

## Child Assessment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at:

<http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Child assessment indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	Programs earn points by using a research-based child assessment tool, providing families with results, and using results to guide instruction and design goals for individual children.
<b>Child assessment review process:</b>	Yes
<b>Description of child assessment review process:</b>	An Assessment Review Committee reviews the assessments used.
<b>Approved child assessments identified:</b>	Yes
<b>List of approved child assessments:</b>	<p>Parent Aware has a list of approved assessments along with a process for programs to nominate new assessment tools for approval by the Assessment Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers &amp; Twos: Developmental Continuum Assessment Toolkit</li> <li>-Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Developmental Continuum Assessment Tool for Ages 3 - 5</li> <li>-High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for Infants and Toddlers</li> <li>-High/Scope Preschool Child Observation Record (COR), Second Edition</li> <li>-The Ounce Scale (developed for infants and toddlers)</li> <li>-Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 3</li> <li>-Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 4</li> </ul>
<b>Child assessment referred to within:</b>	Tracking learning
<b>Child assessment source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted

## Staff Qualifications (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Staff qualification indicators included:</b>	Yes
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<b>Indicators for teachers include:</b>	Education, training, professional development plan
<b>Indicators for directors include:</b>	Education
<b>Directors qualifications related to administration and management</b>	No
<b>Administrative and management qualifications included in the indicators:</b>	No
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for director:</b>	Yes
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for director at level:</b>	To receive 4 stars in the Training and Education category.
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for teacher:</b>	Yes, a Bachelors degree is recognized in the Minnesota Career Lattice.
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for assistant teacher:</b>	N/A. Only lead teacher qualifications are recognized.
<b>Description:</b>	<p>Points are awarded based on steps achieved by lead teachers on the Minnesota Career Lattice. The Career Lattice has 12 steps. Points are awarded based on step (1 point for step 1, 2 points for step 2 and so on through 10 points for step 10 and higher). Points are averaged across lead teachers in a program.</p> <p>Programs receive up to 10 points depending on the average Career Lattice step achieved by the lead teacher.</p> <p>Additional indicators and requirements for this category include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Education coordinator (director or lead staff) has Bachelors degree in Early Childhood Education (required to achieve 4 stars in Teacher training and education)</li> <li>-Lead teachers must register their training and education in the MN Professional Development Registry.</li> <li>-Lead teachers have earned degrees, credentials or are pursuing training to reach a higher step in the Minnesota Career Lattice.</li> <li>-Lead teachers have professional development plans (required to achieve 3 stars in Teacher training and education)</li> </ul>
<b>Staff qualifications referred to within:</b>	Teacher training and education
<b>Staff qualifications source of evidence</b>	Level on Minnesota Career Lattice in professional development registry
<b>Comments:</b>	For more information on the Minnesota

Professional Development Registry:  
<http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html>

For more information on the Minnesota Career  
 Lattice:  
[http://www.mncpd.org/career\\_lattice.html](http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html)

## Family Partnership (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Family partnership indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	<p><b>1 point each:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Collects feedback from parents</li> <li>-Has a written plan for using parent feedback</li> <li>-Conducts intake interviews</li> <li>-Refers parents to preschool screening</li> <li>-Creates transition plans for children</li> </ul> <p><b>2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Uses family communication strategies</li> </ul> <p>If 2 strategies, 1 point            If 3 strategies, 2 points            If 4 strategies, 3 points</p> <p><b>2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Meets with parents about transitions</li> </ul>
<b>Family partnership referred to within:</b>	Family partnerships
<b>Family partnership source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted, self report, unverified

## Administration and Management (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Administration and management indicators included:</b>	No
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## Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements

for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:</b>	No
<b>Comments:</b>	No specific indicators, but sensitivity to cultural/linguistic diversity is assessed in the review process for curriculum, child assessment and family partnerships.

## Accreditation (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) and the Council on Accreditation (COA) are commonly included accreditation systems used in QRSs for center-based programs.

<b>Accreditation included:</b>	Yes
<b>If yes, accreditation is:</b>	Used as one option to achieve highest rating
<b>Comments:</b>	Accredited programs automatically receive 4 stars. Recognized Accrediting Bodies: -National Association for Family Child Care -National Association for the Education of Young Children -Council on Accreditation -National Early Childhood Program Accreditation -American Montessori Society -Association of Montessori International-USA

## Community Involvement (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Community involvement indicators included:</b>	No
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## Provisions for Children with Special Needs (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:</b>	No
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## Indicators for Family Child Care Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of family child care programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and these category labels may not be used in their QRS.

<b>Number of site-specific indicator categories:</b>	4
<b>Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:</b>	Family Partnerships Teaching Materials and Strategies Tracking Learning Teacher Training and Education

### Licensing Compliance (family child care)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Licensing compliance included:</b>	Yes
<b>Licensing required for enrollment:</b>	Yes, must be licensed to be eligible. Programs must also operate in a pilot area.
<b>Licensing equivalent to the first level:</b>	No
<b>Licensing compliance referred to within:</b>	N/A
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Self-report, verified
<b>Comments:</b>	Programs must be licensed to be eligible. Programs cannot receive more than 1 star if they have had a maltreatment determination or any negative action, including fines, in the past year. Programs cannot receive more than a 1 star rating if they have received an Order to Forfeit a Fine due to failure to submit background study in the past 6-months.

### Ratio (family child care)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Ratio and group size indicators included:</b>	No
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## Health and Safety (family child care)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Health and safety indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	Health and safety checklist must be completed.
<b>Health and safety referred to within:</b>	N/A
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Self-report, unverified

## Curriculum (family child care)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Curriculum indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	<p>Programs earn points for using an approved research-based curriculum aligned with state early learning guidelines. Use of an approved research-based curriculum is required to receive a rating of 3 or 4 stars.</p> <p>Programs can earn up to 2 points for demonstrating that activities are aligned with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (Minnesota's early learning guidelines).</p>
<b>Curriculum review process:</b>	Yes
<b>Description of curriculum review process:</b>	Curricula must be pre-approved or approved by a Curriculum Review Committee.
<b>Approved curricula identified:</b>	Yes
<b>List of approved curricula:</b>	<p>Parent Aware has a list of approved curricula along with a process for programs to nominate new curricula for approval by the Curriculum Committee.</p> <p>Creative Curriculum High/Scope Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) Opening the World of Learning (OWL) High Reach</p>

Core Knowledge  
 Montessori  
 Everyday Mathematics  
 Project Early Kindergarten (PEK) curriculum for family child care  
 Project Early Kindergarten (PEK) bundle of curricula for centers (includes PEK manual, Everyday Mathematics and Doors to Discovery)

**Curriculum referred to within:** Teaching materials and strategies

## Environment (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Environment indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:</b>	Yes
<b>Range of recognized ERS scores:</b>	An average score of 3.5-5.0. Programs can receive 2- 5 points.
<b>Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g., activities, interactions, specific features):</b>	None
<b>Environment referred to within:</b>	Teaching materials and strategies
<b>Environment source of evidence:</b>	Observation

## Child Assessment (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Child assessment indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	Programs earn points by using a research-based child assessment tool, providing families with results, and using results to guide instruction and design goals for individual children.
<b>Child assessment review process:</b>	Yes
<b>Description of child assessment review process:</b>	An Assessment Review Committee reviews the assessments used.
<b>Approved child assessments identified:</b>	Yes
<b>List of approved child assessments:</b>	Parent Aware has a list of approved assessments along with a process for programs to nominate new assessment tools for approval by the Assessment Committee.

- Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos: Developmental Continuum Assessment Toolkit
- Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Developmental Continuum Assessment Tool for Ages 3 – 5
- High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for Infants and Toddlers
- High/Scope Preschool Child Observation Record (COR), Second Edition
- The Ounce Scale (developed for infants and toddlers)
- Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 3
- Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 4

**Child assessment referred to within:** Tracking learning

**Child assessment source of evidence:** Documentation submitted

### Staff qualifications (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

**Staff qualification indicators included:** Yes

**Indicators for family child care providers include:** Education, training, professional development plan

**Family child care qualifications related to administration and management** No

**Bachelors degree indicator for family child care provider:** Yes, a Bachelors degree is recognized in the Minnesota Career Lattice.

**Description:** Points are awarded based on steps achieved by provider on the Minnesota Career Lattice. The Career Lattice has 12 steps. Points are awarded based on step (1 point for step 1, 2 points for step 2 and so on through 10 points for step 10 and higher).  
Up to 2 additional points are available for providers earning 1-8 points if the provider has completed a professional development plan detailing how they will move to the next step in the Career Lattice.

**Staff qualifications referred to within:** Teacher training and education

<b>Staff qualifications source of evidence:</b>	Level on career lattice in professional development registry
<b>Comments:</b>	For more information on the Minnesota Professional Development Registry: <a href="http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html">http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html</a>  For more information on the Minnesota Career Lattice: <a href="http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html">http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html</a>

## Family Partnership (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Family partnership indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	<p><b>1 point each:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Collects feedback from parents</li> <li>-Has a written plan for using parent feedback</li> <li>-Conducts intake interviews</li> <li>-Refers parents to preschool screening</li> <li>-Creates transition plans for children</li> </ul> <p><b>2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Uses family communication strategies</li> <li>If 2 strategies, 1 point</li> <li>If 3 strategies, 2 points</li> <li>If 4 strategies, 3 points</li> </ul> <p><b>2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Meets with parents about transitions</li> </ul>
<b>Family partnership referred to within:</b>	Family partnerships
<b>Family partnership source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted, self report, unverified

## Administration and Management (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Administration and management indicators included:</b>	No
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## Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:</b>	No
<b>Comments:</b>	No specific indicators, but sensitivity to cultural/linguistic diversity is assessed in the review process for curriculum, child assessment and family partnerships.

## Accreditation (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. Accreditation by the National Association of Family Child Care is a commonly included accreditation used in QRSs for family child care programs.

<b>Accreditation included:</b>	Yes
<b>If yes, accreditation is:</b>	Used as one option to achieve highest rating
<b>Comments:</b>	Accredited programs automatically receive 4 stars. Recognized Accrediting Bodies: -National Association for Family Child Care -National Association for the Education of Young Children -Council on Accreditation -National Early Childhood Program Accreditation -American Montessori Society -Association of Montessori International-USA

## Community Involvement (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Community involvement indicators included:</b>	No
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## Provisions for Children with Special Needs (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:</b>	No
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## Application Process

Information in this section describes specific features of the application process in the QRS.

<b>Requires self-assessment tool:</b>	No
<b>Describe self-assessment tool:</b>	A “Getting Ready Checklist” is available, but not required. Also, post-rating, child care programs complete a Quality Improvement Plan that provides the basis for determining how Quality Improvement Supports are spent.
<b>Availability of preparatory process:</b>	Yes
<b>Describe preparatory process:</b>	Upon enrollment in Parent Aware, program/providers are assigned a Resource Specialist who meets with them individually to provide assistance with completion of documentation and writing of a quality improvement plan.
<b>Requires orientation:</b>	Yes
<b>Describe orientation :</b>	Orientation is required for programs seeking full rating. It is not required for accredited child care centers, programs seeking provisional rating, or school-based pre-k programs and Head Start programs.
<b>Time from application to rating:</b>	Less than 3 months for accredited programs, 3-6 months for programs going through full rating.
<b>Can apply for particular rating:</b>	Yes
<b>Describe apply for particular rating:</b>	Accredited programs, school-based pre-k programs and Head Start programs apply to be rated at 4 stars. A provisional rating (3 stars) is also available for child care centers and family child care programs.

## Outreach

This section describes the strategies that a QRS uses to disseminate information to parents, providers/programs, and the public.

<b>Outreach to parents:</b>	Yes
<b>Method of outreach to parents:</b>	Assistance provided to non-English speaking parents, information in languages other than English, website, and written materials disseminated through partners.
<b>Outreach to providers:</b>	Yes

<b>Method of outreach to providers:</b>	Information in languages other than English, website, written materials disseminated through partners, and written materials mailed.
<b>Outreach to public:</b>	Yes
<b>Method of outreach to public:</b>	Radio, television, website
<b>Percent of budget dedicated to marketing:</b>	10%

## Use of Observational Tools

The information in this section provides further detail about observational tools used in the QRS.

<b>Observational tools used:</b>	CLASS, ECERS-R, FCCERS-R, ITERS-R
<b>Describe how scores are used in the rating:</b>	<p>Observational assessment scores count for up to 7 out of 40 points for child care centers (includes scores from ITERS-R, ECERS-R and CLASS) and 5 out of 40 points for family child care.</p> <p>Up to 4 points available for child care centers based on average ECERS-R + ITERS-R scores (with no classroom scoring below a 3):</p> <p>3.5=1 point 4.0=2 points 4.5=3 points 5.0=4 points</p> <p>Up to 3 points available for child care centers based on CLASS scores (for preschool classrooms only) in each of 3 categories on the CLASS (Emotional Support, Instructional Support and Classroom Organization):</p> <p>1 or 2 =0 points 3, 4, or 5 = .5 points (required to achieve a 4-star rating) 6 or 7=1 point</p> <p>Up to 5 points available for family child care based on FCCERS-R score:</p> <p>3.5=2 points 4.0=3 points 4.5=4 points 5.0=5 points</p>
<b>Frequency of observational assessment:</b>	Yearly
<b>Method for choosing classrooms to observe:</b>	Random selection
<b>Percent of classrooms observed in child care centers:</b>	33% of classrooms in each age group
<b>Training for observers:</b>	Yes, anchors are trained by the scale authors and

	then observers are trained by anchors. Observations and trainings are conducted by the University of Minnesota, Center for Early Education and Development (CEED).
<b>Initial reliability required:</b>	Yes, observers must reach 85% reliability with anchor for 3 consecutive visits.
<b>Ongoing reliability required:</b>	Yes, observers are checked for reliability after seven visits. Frequency of reliability visits is tracked in the ERS data system by CEED staff.

## Improvement Process

This section provides information about the strategies used to provide or support quality improvement in the QRS.

<b>Professional development required:</b>	No
<b>Training available that is linked to QRS:</b>	Yes
<b>Content of linked training:</b>	Child assessment, language and literacy, specific curriculum
<b>Total duration of training:</b>	Varies
<b>Trainer approval process:</b>	Yes
<b>Target population for training:</b>	All programs/providers
<b>Onsite assistance available that is linked to QRS:</b>	Yes
<b>Content of linked onsite assistance:</b>	Business practices, child assessment, environment assessment, professional development, curriculum, system navigation
<b>Onsite assistance frequency</b>	Varies
<b>Length of onsite sessions</b>	Varies
<b>Total duration of onsite assistance:</b>	Varies
<b>Formal approval for onsite assistance provider:</b>	No
<b>Target population for onsite assistance:</b>	Lower quality levels
<b>Comments about improvement process:</b>	MN is beginning development of a MN Child Care Credential that will be aligned with Parent Aware quality indicators as well as the state's core competencies and the CDA. Expected completion is June, 2010 with rollout to begin the following year statewide. Practitioners working in programs in the pilot areas will be able to access credential training during the final year of the pilot. Frequency, length, and total duration of onsite assistance vary. Levels 1-3 receive assistance; 4-star programs do not receive assistance with the exception of available assistance on CLASS.



## Financial Incentives

A variety of strategies may be used to provide financial incentives to providers to participate in the QRS or to support quality improvement efforts. This section provides information about different financial incentives.

<b>Tiered reimbursement:</b>	No
<b>Quality award/bonus:</b>	No
<b>Startup award:</b>	No
<b>Scholarship (T.E.A.C.H)</b>	Yes (available to all providers)
<b>Wage enhancement</b>	No
<b>Retention bonus:</b>	Yes (available to all providers)
<b>Improvement grants:</b>	Yes. After receiving 1-3 Star rating, centers and family child care programs receive Quality Improvement Dollars for improvements directed by Quality Improvement Plan.
<b>Comments on financial incentives:</b>	Two unique efforts have been/are being tested in MN that result in providing financial incentives for Parent Aware programs. During FY08-09, 3 and 4-star rated programs in the Parent Aware pilot were eligible to serve low-income children who were recipients of a state-funded pre-k allowance of up to \$4,000 per year. Funds could be used for quality improvements, to serve additional children or to expand the duration of services. Funding for this program was not renewed by the 2009 Legislature. An evaluation conducted by SRI and funded by the MELF will be released Fall, 2009. Also, in the City of St. Paul, the MELF is currently testing a similar early childhood scholarship program. Low-income children receiving scholarships of up to \$13,000 per year can receive early childhood services in Parent Aware-rated 3 or 4 star programs. This initiative will end in 2011 with an evaluation by SRI slated for release the end of that year.

## Administration Details

This section provides details about the QRS administration and funding.

<b>QRS lead :</b>	Minnesota Department of Human Services
<b>QRS lead type:</b>	State agency
<b>Overall funding amount for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$2,734,476
<b>Overall funding sources:</b>	Child Care Development Fund - \$833,924 Foundation – Minnesota Early Learning Foundation, \$1,466,552 (\$906,522 in DHS)

	contract, \$560,000 additional funds) Other – ARRA stimulus funds, \$184,000; \$250,000 federal research grant
<b>Administration funding for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$1,571,942
<b>Administration funding source:</b>	Child Care Development Fund - \$663,290 Foundation – Minnesota Early Learning Foundation, \$908,652 (\$759,652 in DHS contract, \$149,000 additional funds)
<b>Quality improvement funding for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$471,397
<b>Quality improvement funding source:</b>	Child Care Development Fund - \$170,634 Foundation – Minnesota Early Learning Foundation, \$116,763 Other – ARRA stimulus funds, \$184,000
<b>Evaluation funding for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$431,000
<b>Evaluation funding source:</b>	Foundation – Minnesota Early Learning Foundation, \$181,000 Other – \$250,000 federal research grant

## Partners

This section provides information about the roles and responsibilities of partners in the QRS.

<b>Partner 1 type :</b>	State agency
<b>Partner 1 name:</b>	Minnesota Department of Human Services
<b>Partner 1 function:</b>	Manage communication/information dissemination, provide system navigation support (for provisional rating), and provide administrative oversight of the pilot and issue final ratings
<b>Work plan in place:</b>	Yes
<b>Partner 2:</b>	State agency
<b>Partner 2 name:</b>	Minnesota Department of Education
<b>Partner 2 function:</b>	Collect and validate information/documentation to assign rating – for school-based pre-k and Head Start programs
<b>Work plan in place:</b>	N/A
<b>Partner 3 type :</b>	Resource and Referral
<b>Partner 3 name:</b>	Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network
<b>Partner 3 function:</b>	Collect and validate information/documentation

to assign rating, provide technical assistance and quality improvement services (Quality improvement services have moved from the Network to local CCR&R in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of pilot), manage communication/information dissemination, provide system navigation supports, and provide financial incentives (have moved from Network to local CCR&R in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of pilot)

**Work plan in place:**

Yes

**Partner 4 type :**

Resource and Referral

**Partner 4 name:**

Local child care resource and referral agencies

**Partner 4 function:**

Provide technical assistance and quality improvement services (moved to local CCR&R in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of pilot), manage communication/information dissemination, provide financial incentives (moved to local CCR&R in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of pilot), and coordinate training for providers

**Work plan in place:**

Yes

**Partner 5 type :**

University

**Partner 5 name:**

University of Minnesota – Center for Early Education and Development

**Partner 5 function:**

Conduct observational assessments

**Work plan in place:**

Yes

**Partner 6 type :**

University

**Partner 6 name:**

Metropolitan State University

**Partner 6 function:**

Collect and validate information/documentation to assign rating (through PD Registry)

**Work plan in place:**

Yes

## Linkage of QRS with Other Systems

This section provides information about how the QRS is linked with other systems/standards including child care subsidies, professional development, state early learning guidelines, and core knowledge /competencies for providers.

**Child care subsidies :**

Yes

**Description:**

School Readiness Connections, an initiative passed by the 2007 Legislature and administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Care Assistance Program, has been continued

through June, 2011. The goal of School Readiness Connections (SRC) is to provide incentives for selected providers to partner with counties and parents to promote the skills and abilities that children served by the Child Care Assistance Program need to succeed in school. Children ages 0-5 are being served.

-\$1.4 million (one-time) was appropriated over the 2010-2011 biennium for direct services for this pilot project. The funds serve approximately 235 children per month.

-The 14 current SRC providers are given priority to renew provider agreements, if they agree to participate in Parent Aware. If funds are made available for new providers to be added to SRC, they will need a 3 or 4 star rating through Parent Aware to apply to DHS.

Note: See also the description of the Pre-K Allowance and Early Childhood Scholarship programs above. While eligibility for these programs was broader than for child care subsidy, parents receiving subsidy could receive both.

**Professional development:**

**Description**

Yes  
With respect to ratings, teachers/providers register training and education in Minnesota’s PD Registry with a program rating partially based on level in Registry. More broadly, MN is aligning its professional development system with QRIS in a number of ways:  
-Early identification of gaps in training content and training delivery needed to effectively prepare providers for Parent Aware. Provision of training in use of curriculum and assessment and training on specific curricula and assessment tools approved for use in Parent Aware resulted.  
-Development of a MN Child Care Credential described above.  
-Development of statewide PD system supports – Registry, career guidance, grants/scholarships to access training and education – that will be coordinated with possible scaling up of the Parent Aware pilot.

**Incorporation of other standards:**

Yes

<b>Description:</b>	Curriculum must be aligned with Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, MN's early learning guidelines. Head Start programs and school-based prekindergarten programs have identified standards aligned with the Parent Aware categories of quality.
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## Evaluation

<b>Status of evaluation :</b>	Ongoing
<b>List research questions for ongoing evaluation:</b>	<p>The Parent Aware Evaluation includes both a process study and an outcomes study. The central evaluation questions of the Parent Aware Evaluation are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the supply of high quality early care and education programs increase in Parent Aware communities during the pilot?</li> <li>2. Do parents in Parent Aware communities pay more attention to quality and change their early care and education choices during the pilot?</li> <li>3. Are the high quality programs identified by Parent Aware promoting improvement in the school readiness of low-income children?</li> <li>4. What changes, if any, should be made to the Parent Aware quality indicators, levels and rating process if the program is implemented statewide?</li> <li>5. What components of program quality are the most critical supports for children's school readiness? What resources are needed to facilitate program improvements in these critical areas?</li> </ol>
<b>Evaluator type:</b>	External
<b>Evaluator name (if external)</b>	Child Trends
<b>If external, was RFP issued:</b>	No
<b>Published reports to date :</b>	<p>Year 1 Evaluation Report, December 2008          Tout, K., Starr, R., &amp; Cleveland, J. (2008).  <i>Evaluation of Parent Aware: Minnesota's Quality Rating System pilot: Year 1 evaluation report.</i>          Child Trends.  <a href="http://www.melf.us/vertical/Sites/%7B3D4B6DDA-94F7-44A4-899D-3267CBEB798B%7D/uploads/%7B61078E31-3393-49B1-B301-D5CBC9A0DAC3%7D.PDF">http://www.melf.us/vertical/Sites/%7B3D4B6DDA-94F7-44A4-899D-3267CBEB798B%7D/uploads/%7B61078E31-3393-49B1-B301-D5CBC9A0DAC3%7D.PDF</a></p>

## Key Contacts

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# Best Practices and Scoring Child Care Centers

## Categories of best practices

Family partnerships	Teaching materials and strategies	Tracking learning	Teacher training and education
Communicate with families so that early education is delivered in a way that is respectful of family norms and traditions, and so that parents are involved, contributing members of the learning community that supports children's growth and development.	Have an educational plan and a setting with appropriate, play-based learning materials, and provide the types of child-adult interaction that research has shown makes a difference in children's school readiness.	Observe children's progress toward achieving the skills and abilities needed to be fully prepared for school success to enable providers and early educators to individualize instruction and use that information to enhance communication with families.	Have early childhood educators with education and training on child development and early childhood education. Highly-qualified director or education coordinator. Staff preparation is recorded and documented through the Minnesota Center for Professional Development Registry. Points are awarded based on the steps achieved by staff in the Career Lattice.
<b>10 points possible</b>	<b>10 points possible</b>	<b>10 points possible</b>	<b>10 points possible</b>

**Total points possible: 40**

Points in all four categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

**1 star = 0 – 11.9 points**

**2 stars = 12 – 23.9 points**

**3 stars = 24 – 31.9 points and is using an approved curriculum in preschool classrooms**

**4 stars = 32 – 40 points and has received a score of 3 or higher for each category of the CLASS in preschool classrooms**

## Scoring details by category

Family partnerships	Points possible
Program collects feedback from parents	1 point
A written plan is developed for using parent feedback	1 point
Program uses family communication strategies	If 2 strategies, 1 point If 3 strategies, 2 points If 4 strategies, 3 points
Program conducts intake interviews	1 point
Program refers parents to preschool screening	1 point
Program creates transition plans for children	1 point
Program meets with parents about transitions	2 points
<b>Total possible</b>	<b>10 points</b>

Form#: BP-02

Teaching materials and strategies	Points possible
<p>Program uses a research based curriculum and staff have been trained in the curriculum (required for preschool classrooms to achieve 3 or 4 stars) or,</p> <p>Program has activities aligned with the “Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress” (ECIPs)</p> <p>(If program is using a curriculum or ECIPs aligned activities with some, but not all, age groups, partial credit is given.)</p>	<p>3 points (required for preschool classrooms to achieve 3 stars or higher)</p> <p>1 point</p>
<p>Environment Rating Scale</p> <p>Average score of at least 3.5, with no classroom scoring less than 3</p> <p>Average score of at least 4.0, with no classroom scoring less than 3</p> <p>Average score of at least 4.5, with no classroom scoring less than 3</p> <p>Average score of at least 5.0, with no classroom scoring less than 3</p>	<p>1 point</p> <p>2 points</p> <p>3 points</p> <p>4 points</p>
<p>CLASS scores (preschool classrooms only)</p> <p>In each of three (3) categories, if score is 1 or 2</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">If score is 3, 4 or 5</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">If score is 6 or 7</p> <p>All preschool classrooms must receive a CLASS score of 3 or higher in each category (Emotional Support, Instructional Support and Classroom Organization) to achieve 4 stars.</p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>.5 points (required for 4 stars)</p> <p>1 point</p> <p>Up to 3 points possible</p>
<p><b>Total possible</b></p>	<p><b>10 points</b></p>

Tracking learning	Points possible
<p>Program uses an approved, research-based instructional child assessment tool, and staff have training on its use, or</p>	<p>4 points</p>
<p>Program uses a child assessment tool that has not been approved. (If program is using a tool with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p>	<p>2 points</p>
<p>Provide families with child assessment results. (If program is using a tool with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p> <p>If program is using an approved tool, or</p> <p>If program is using an assessment tool that is not approved.</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>1 point</p>
<p>Use child assessment information to guide instruction and design goals for individual children. (If program is using a tool with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p> <p>If program is using an approved assessment tool, or</p> <p>If program is using an assessment tool that is not approved.</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>1 point</p>
<p><b>Total possible</b></p>	<p><b>10 points</b></p>

Teacher training and education	Points possible
<p>Education coordinator holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or related field (the director may be the education coordinator).</p> <p>Definition of "education coordinator":            In many centers the director serves as the education coordinator. However, this could also be another staff person or a lead teacher who also has duties related to helping the program implement the curriculum consistently across classrooms and any other practices related to helping children become ready for school. This is often the staff person who approves the child care program plan as required by Licensing in Rule 3.</p>	<p>Required to achieve 4 stars in this category.</p>
<p>All lead teachers must have professional development plans.</p>	<p>Required to achieve 3 or more stars in this category.</p>
<p>Staff training and education is recorded and documented through the Minnesota Center for Professional Development Registry (<a href="http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html">http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html</a>).</p> <p>Definition of "lead teacher":            A lead teacher is the highest qualified teacher in each classroom. Individuals who split their time between teaching and administrative duties can be considered lead teachers if they work in this capacity at least half time (see rule below).</p> <p>Points are awarded based on the steps achieved in the Career Lattice (<a href="http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html">http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html</a>). For each lead teacher, points will be awarded as follows: 1 point awarded for step 1, 2 points for step 2, and so on through 10 points awarded for step 10 or higher, then averaged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average score is 3 or less</li> <li>Average score is between 3.1 and 4</li> <li>Average score is between 4.1 and 5</li> <li>Average score is between 5.1 and 6</li> <li>Average score is between 6.1 and 7</li> <li>Average score is between 7.1 and 8</li> <li>Average score is between 8.1 and 9</li> <li>Average score is between 9.1 and 10</li> <li>Average score is 10.1 or higher</li> </ul> <p>Teachers must be at least a half time employee (20 hours per week) or for programs operating part-day programs, teachers must work at least 50 percent of the program's operating hours in order to be considered a lead teacher and have their professional development counted toward this score.</p>	<p>0 points            3 points            4 points            5 points            6 points            7 points            8 points            9 points            10 points</p>
<p><b>Total possible</b></p>	<p><b>10 points</b></p>

# Best Practices and Scoring

## Family Child Care

### Categories of best practices

Family partnerships	Teaching materials and strategies	Tracking learning	Training and education
Communicate with families so that early education is delivered in a way that is respectful of family norms and traditions, and so that parents are involved, contributing members of the learning community that supports children's growth and development.	Have an educational plan and a setting with appropriate, play-based learning materials, and provide the types of child-adult interaction that research has shown makes a difference in children's school readiness.	Observe children's progress toward achieving the skills and abilities needed to be fully prepared for school success and to enable providers to individualize instruction and use that information to enhance communication with families.	Have education and training on child development and early childhood education. Preparation of the provider is recorded and documented through the Minnesota Center for Professional Development Registry. Points are awarded based on the step achieved in the Career Lattice.
<b>10 points possible</b>	<b>10 points possible</b>	<b>10 points possible</b>	<b>10 points possible</b>

**Total points possible: 40**

Points in all four categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

**1 star = 0 – 11.9 points**

**2 stars = 12 – 23.9 points**

**3 stars = 24 – 31.9 points (must also be using an approved curriculum to achieve 3 stars)**

**4 stars = 32 – 40 points**

### Scoring details by category

Family partnerships	Points possible
Program collects feedback from parents	1 point
A written plan is developed for using parent feedback	1 point
Program uses family communication strategies	If 2 strategies, 1 point If 3 strategies, 2 points If 4 strategies, 3 points
Program conducts intake interviews	1 point
Program refers parents to preschool screening	1 point
Program creates transition plans for children	1 point
Program meets with parents about transitions	2 points
<b>Total possible</b>	<b>10 points</b>

Form#: BP-01

Teaching materials and strategies	Points possible
<p>Provider uses a research-based curriculum and has been trained in the curriculum (must have this for preschoolers to achieve 3 or 4 stars) or,</p> <p>Provider has activities aligned with the “Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress” (ECIPs)</p> <p>(If a provider is using a curriculum with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p>	<p>5 points (must have approved curriculum for preschoolers to achieve 3 stars or higher)</p> <p>2 points</p>
<p>Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS)</p> <p>Average score is at least 3.5</p> <p>Average score is at least 4.0</p> <p>Average score is at least 4.5</p> <p>Average score is at least 5.0</p>	<p>2 points</p> <p>3 points</p> <p>4 points</p> <p>5 points</p>
<b>Total possible</b>	<b>10 points</b>

Tracking learning	Points possible
<p>Provider uses an approved, research-based instructional assessment tool, and has training on its use, or</p> <p>Provider uses a child assessment tool that has not been approved or an informal method of tracking learning.</p> <p>(If a provider is using a tool with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p>	<p>4 points</p> <p>2 points</p>
<p>Provide families with child assessment results. (If provider is using a tool with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p> <p>If a provider is using an approved assessment tool, or</p> <p>If a provider is using an assessment tool that is not approved or an informal method of tracking learning.</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>1 point</p>
<p>Use child assessment information to guide instruction and design goals for individual children. (If provider is using a tool with some but not all age groups, partial credit is given.)</p> <p>If a provider is using an approved child assessment tool, or</p> <p>If a provider is using an assessment tool that is not approved or an informal method of tracking learning.</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>1 point</p>
<b>Total possible</b>	<b>10 points</b>

Training and education	Points possible
<p>The training and education of licensed family child care providers is recorded and documented through the Minnesota Center for Professional Development Registry (<a href="http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html">http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html</a>). Based on the steps achieved in the Career Lattice (<a href="http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html">http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html</a>), points are awarded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Step 1 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 2 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 3 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 4 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 5 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 6 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 7 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 8 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 9 in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> <li>Step 10 or higher in the Minnesota Career Lattice</li> </ul> <p>If there is more than one name on the license, everyone on the license must submit documentation to the Registry. Their scores will be averaged to determine the overall program score for this category.</p> <p>If the person whose name is on the license does not work with the children at least half time (20 hours), or at least 50 percent of the program's operating hours if it is a part-day program, the professional development of the lead provider at the site should be submitted to the Registry to be used in scoring this category.</p> <p>Definition of "lead provider": The highest qualified person working with the children at least half time (see rule above).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 point</li> <li>2 points</li> <li>3 points</li> <li>4 points</li> <li>5 points</li> <li>6 points</li> <li>7 points</li> <li>8 points</li> <li>9 points</li> <li>10 points</li> </ul>
<p>Family child care providers at steps 1 – 8 are eligible to achieve 2 bonus points if they have professional development plans describing how they will move up to the next step in the Career Lattice. Providers achieving step 9 are eligible for 1 bonus point for having professional development plans. Providers achieving step 10 or higher are not eligible for bonus points for having professional development plans.</p>	<p>Up to 2 points.</p>
<p><b>Total possible</b></p>	<p><b>10 points</b></p>