

THE CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM (QRS) ASSESSMENT



Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System

QRS Profile

April 2010



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Policy Research, Inc.



Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System

QRS Profile

Prepared for:**Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation**

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Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) Assessment Study

PROFILE

Site:	Iowa
Program Name:	Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System
Respondents:	Jody Caswell, QRS Program Manager
Information Reviewed and Finalized:	March 18, 2010

Funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Conducted by Mathematica Policy Research with a subcontract to Child Trends (contract #HHSP233200800394G).

Iowa – Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System

Program Information

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

Site name:	State of Iowa
Program name:	Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System
Service area:	Statewide
Pilot:	No
Date full program launched:	2006
Voluntary:	Yes
Website:	http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/
Eligible programs:	Center-based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, pre-kindergarten / comprehensive early childhood programs, licensed family child care (Note: family child care is “registered” in Iowa, not licensed), school-aged programs, school-based and operated programs
Source of funds for eligible public program:	State
Total numbers of programs participating:	1261
Number of participating child care centers:	469
Number of participating family child care programs:	792
Number of other programs participating:	N/A
Percent of total programs enrolled in QRS:	18%
Percent of programs at each rating level:	Level 1 – 17% Level 2 – 43% Level 3 – 22% Level 4 – 12% Level 5 – 6%
Goals:	To raise the quality of child care in Iowa, to increase the number of children in high-quality child care settings, to educate parents about quality in child care.
Language from statute:	Goals are not addressed in Code. http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/CoolICE/default.asp?category=billinfo&service=iowaCode&ga=83#237A.30

Rating Details

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

Rating structure:	Combination
Number of levels:	5
Length of time rating is valid:	2 years
Rating process:	Applications are sent to the regional QRS Specialist for review. Following, the QRS Specialist sends them to the Department of Human Services Central Office. The Department of Human Services determines the rating and issues a certificate.
Method of combining points:	<p>A provider who achieves Level 1 has met Iowa’s registration or licensing standards. A provider who achieves Level 2 has received additional training and fulfilled some additional requirements. Providers at Levels 3-5 have fulfilled Level 2 requirements and earned additional points for meeting quality indicators.</p> <p>For Homes:</p> <p>Level 3: Minimum of 7 Points required</p> <p>Level 4: Minimum of 12 points required</p> <p>Level 5: Minimum of 16 points required</p> <p>For Centers:</p> <p>Level 3: Minimum of 10 Points required</p> <p>Level 4: Minimum of 18 points required</p> <p>Level 5: Minimum of 26 points required</p>
Method used to assess programs for infants/toddlers:	Yes. The method used to address infants and toddlers is the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale-Revised.
Method used to assess programs for school-aged children:	Yes. The method used to address school-aged children is the School Aged Care Environment Rating Scale.
Different process used to assess family child care:	Yes. Family child care programs have a separate set of indicators.
Different process used to assess Head Start/Early Head Start:	No
Different process used to assess accredited programs:	No
Events that trigger re-rating:	Change location

Description of re-rating trigger:	In Iowa, a change in location requires programs to apply for a new license. Re-rating will occur if a license is revoked.
Appeal process:	Yes
Availability of technical assistance for rating process:	Yes
Description of technical assistance for rating process:	QRS specialists are available in each of the five Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to assist programs.
Availability of technical assistance for preparatory process:	Yes
Description of technical assistance for preparatory process:	QRS specialists are available in each of the five Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to assist programs in understanding the system, and determining which criteria they will pursue.

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.

Number of site-specific indicator categories:	5
Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:	Professional Development Health and Safety Environment Family and Community Partnerships Leadership/Administration

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>.

Licensing compliance included:	Yes
Licensing required for enrollment:	Yes
Licensing equivalent to the first level:	Yes
Licensing compliance referred to within:	Quality levels 1 & 2
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted

Comments:	<p>For Level 1, programs must have full license; or a provisional license with no action to revoke or deny; or the program must be operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.</p> <p>For Level 2, programs must have full licensing only, with no action to revoke or deny; or the program must be operating under authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.</p>
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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>.

Ratio and group size indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Beyond licensing standards, programs can earn a point for meeting National Association for the Education of Young Children standards for ratio and group size</p> <p>For 0-2 years:</p> <p>Maximum Group Size: 6-8 Maximum Adult: Child Ratio: 1:3-1:4 For 2-3 years: Maximum Group Size: 8-12 Maximum Adult: Child Ratio: 1:4-1:5</p> <p>For 3 years:</p> <p>Maximum Group Size: 14-18 Maximum Adult: Child Ratio: 1:7 – 1:10</p> <p>For 4-5 years:</p> <p>Maximum Group Size: 16-20 Maximum Adult: Child Ratio: 1:8 – 1:10</p>
Ratio and group size referred to within:	Environment
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted

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.

Health and safety indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Programs at Levels 3-5 can receive up to 8 points for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of an injury prevention checklist with child care nurse consultant. <p>Programs may receive 1 point for starting the process of making recommended corrections and 2 points for all corrections completed (3 points possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of child record review with child care nurse consultant. <p>Programs may receive 1 point for completing a visit regarding the child record review with the child care nurse consultant.</p> <p>Programs may receive 2 points for development of a plan of action to secure health services for children (2 points possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of health and safety assessment with child care nurse consultant <p>Programs may receive 1 point for plan of action to correct deficiencies and 2 points for all corrections completed. (3 points possible).</p>
Health and safety referred to within:	Health and Safety
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted, observation

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>.

Curriculum indicators included:	No
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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
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Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:	Yes
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Range of recognized ERS scores:	3.0-5.0 (with no subscale below 2)
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Description:

The Environment Rating Scale is recognized at Levels 3-5. There is a maximum of 11 points available for this indicator.

1 point is awarded for each of the following:

- Center director or asst. director completes approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care.

- After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility director or assistant director completes a self-assessment of at least one third of the facility's classrooms, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility.

- After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility director or assistant director completes a child care center improvement plan.

- After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility receives an average score of 3 (with no sub-scale scores below 2) on ECERS,

ITERS, or SACERS completed by outside evaluator

-Completes training on Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS).

-Completes IQPPS self-assessment and develops quality improvement plan.

-Meets NAEYC or NAA standards for group/class size appropriate to setting.

2 points:

-Programs may score an average of 4.0 with no subscales below 2, as assessed by an outside expert.

3 points:

Programs may score an average of 5.0 with no subscales below 2, as assessed by an outside expert.

-Accreditation by NAEYC or NAA OR compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards

Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g., activities, interactions, specific features)

None

Environment referred to within:

Environment

Environment source of evidence:

Documentation submitted.

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>.

Child assessment indicators included:

No

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>.

Staff qualification indicators included:

Yes

Indicators for teachers include:

Education, training, years of experience.

Indicators for directors include:	Education, training, years of experience.
Directors qualifications related to administration and management	Yes
Administrative and management qualifications included in the indicators:	National Administrator Credential (or be a licensed school principal)
Bachelors degree indicator for director:	Yes (points are earned for staff members who have Bachelors degrees)
Bachelors degree indicator for teacher:	Yes (points are earned for staff members who have Bachelors degrees)
Bachelors degree indicator for assistant teacher:	Yes (points are earned for staff members who have Bachelors degrees)
Description:	<p>For Level 2, each room must have at all times at least one staff member present who has completed mandatory reporting of child abuse, universal precautions and infectious disease control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and first aid.</p> <p>Nothing is required for education, but the majority of staff qualification-related indicators fall under the category of Professional Development. There are optional ways for programs to earn up to 12 points at levels 3-5.</p> <p>1 point is awarded for each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At least one staff member at the center has at least a bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care -At least 50% of staff in each classroom have 15 hours annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements in the last 12 months -All staff have completed professional development plans with the center's overall skill needs in mind (embedded in Leadership/Administration) -Program or director is a member of a professional organization specific to age group for whom care is provided (embedded in Family and Community Partnerships) <p>2 points are awarded for each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Center director has a current National Administrator credential OR is a school principal licensed by the Board of Educational Examiners -At least 50% of staff in each classroom have 6

credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care **OR** Iowa Board of Educational Examiners paraeducator certificate
 -At least 50% of staff in each classroom have 30 hours annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements and at least 5 years of experience

3 points:

-At least 50% of staff in each classroom have: Child Development Associate (CDA) credential **OR** apprenticeship certificate

4 points:

-At least 50% of staff in each classroom have: Associate's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care

5 points:

-At least 50% of staff in each classroom have: Bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care

Staff qualifications referred to within:	Professional Development, Family and Community Partnership, Leadership/Administration
Staff qualifications source of evidence	Self-report, unverified
Comments:	Licensing requires 10 hours of training in the first year, and 6 hours in succeeding years. No additional training is required to be Level 5 in QRS.

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>.

Family partnership indicators included:	Yes
Description:	1 point: -Orientation provided for new parents and annual conferences are held with parents
Family partnership referred to within:	Family and Community Partnerships
Family partnership source of evidence:	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>.

Administration and management indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Requirements for Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs must provide basic orientation to all staff. -An Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Business—Partnership Agreement (an agreement between program and nurse consultant) must be completed. -An Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Center Director/Owner Survey must be completed. -If eligible, participation in federal food program (Child and Adult Care Food Program - CACFP) -Director and staff perform self-assessments of each individual's skills and one of the center overall <p>For Levels 3-5, 1 point is awarded for each of the listed options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All staff receive yearly written evaluation -Development and annual updating of an overall center improvement plan -All staff have completed professional development plans -All staff who have direct contact with children have a full, center-based orientation within 4 months of starting employment
Administration and management referred to within:	Leadership/Administration
Administration and management source of evidence:	Documentation submitted

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.

Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:	No
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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.

Accreditation included:	Yes
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If yes, accreditation is:	A standard for which points are awarded.
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Comments:	3 points are awarded to accredited programs.
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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>.

Community involvement indicators included:	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.

Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:	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.

Number of site-specific indicator categories:	4
Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:	Professional Development Health and Safety Environment Family and Community Partnerships

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>.

Licensing compliance included:	Yes
Licensing required for enrollment:	Yes
Licensing equivalent to first level:	Yes
Licensing compliance referred to within:	N/A
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted.
Comments:	Programs are required to be registered child development homes.

Ratio (family child care)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. A summary of licensing regulations for each state can be found at: <http://www.naralicensing.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=160>

The information in this indicator section only includes quality indicator standards that are part of the QRS that are *beyond* what is required by licensing.

Ratio and group size indicators included:	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 included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Programs at Levels 3-5 can receive up to 8 points for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of an injury prevention checklist with child care nurse consultant. <p>Programs may receive 1 point for starting the process of making recommended corrections and 2 points for all corrections completed (3 points possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of child record review with child care nurse consultant. <p>Programs may receive 1 point for completing a visit regarding the child record review with the child care nurse consultant.</p> <p>Programs may receive 2 points for development of a plan of action to secure health services for children (2 points possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of health and safety assessment with child care nurse consultant <p>Programs may receive 1 point for plan of action to correct deficiencies and 2 points for all corrections completed. (3 points possible).</p>
Health and safety referred to within:	Health and Safety
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted

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>.

Curriculum indicators included:	No
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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>.

Environment requirements included:	Yes
Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:	Yes
Range of recognized ERS scores:	4.0-5.0 (with no subscales below 2)
Description:	<p>The Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale is recognized at Levels 3-5. There is a maximum of 8 points available for this indicator.</p> <p>1 point is awarded for each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs may complete Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale training. -Programs may complete a self-assessment using Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale. -Programs may complete a child development home improvement plan based on the Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale self-assessment. -Programs may score an average of 4 on the Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale with no subscales below 2, as assessed by an outside expert. <p>2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs may score an average of 5 with no subscales below 2, as assessed by an outside expert. <p>3 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A program may be accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care.
Additional indicators related to specific features of the environment :	None
Environment referred to within:	Environment
Environment source of evidence:	Documentation submitted; 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>.

Child assessment indicators included:	No
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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, years of experience.
Family child care qualifications related to administration and management	No
Bachelors degree indicator for family child care provider:	Yes – points are earned for providers with Bachelor’s degree.

Description:	<p>Requirements for Level 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs must complete and maintain ChildNet certification -Complete a self-assessment of own professional development -Write a professional development plan <p>For levels 3-5, the majority of staff qualifications indicators fall under the category of Professional Development. There is a maximum of 6 points available for this indicator.</p> <p>1 point is awarded for each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At least 2 years of child care experience and 10 hours additional approved training per year beyond regulatory requirements -Membership in a professional organization specific to age group for whom care is provided (embedded in Family and Community Partnership) <p>2 points are awarded for each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At least five years of child care experience and 20 hours additional approved training per year beyond regulatory requirements -Has completed one or more of the following:
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Apprenticeship certificate, Child Development Associate (CDA), or at least 9 college credit hours in education specific to age group for whom care is provided.

3 points:

-An associate’s degree in education specific to age group for whom care is provided.

4 points:

-A bachelor’s degree or above in education specific to age group for whom care is provided.

Staff qualifications referred to within: Professional Development, Family and Community Partnership

Staff qualifications source of evidence Documentation submitted

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>.

Family partnership indicators included: Yes

Description

1 point:

-Orientation may be provided for new parents and annual conferences are held with parents

Family partnership referred to within: Family and Community Partnerships

Family partnership source of evidence: 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>.

Administration and management indicators included: Yes

Description

Requirements for Level 2:

- Participates in federal food program (CACFP)
- Completes IDPH Child Care Business Partnership Agreement.
- Completes IDPH Home Child Care Center Director/Owner Survey.

Administration and management referred to within:	Level 2
Administration and management source of evidence:	Documentation submitted
Comments:	There are no administration and management indicators for level 3-5.

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.

Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:	No
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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.

Accreditation included:	Yes
If yes, accreditation is:	A standard for which points are awarded
Comments:	Accreditation is worth 3 points.

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>.

Community involvement indicators included:	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.

Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:	No
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Application Process

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

Requires self-assessment tool:	Yes
Describe self-assessment tool:	At Level 2 for child care centers, director and staff perform self-assessments of each individual's skills and one of the center overall. Note: Once a provider gets to level 3-5, there is nothing specific required. Completing the self assessment tools is an option for receiving points.
Availability of preparatory process:	Yes
Describe preparatory process:	Regional specialists hold orientations and provide assistance.
Requires orientation:	No
Describe orientation :	Orientations are available but not required.
Time from application to rating:	Less than 3 months
Can apply for particular rating:	No
Describe apply for particular rating:	Programs complete the application and include the appropriate documentation. The rating is determined by the Department of Human Services.

Outreach

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

Outreach to parents:	Yes
Method of outreach to parents:	Website, written materials disseminated through partners, written materials are mailed.
Outreach to providers:	Yes
Method of outreach to providers:	Website, written materials disseminated through partners, written materials mailed.
Outreach to public:	Yes
Method of outreach to public:	Information disseminated through partners, print advertising, radio, website
Percent of budget dedicated to marketing:	5%

Use of Observational Tools

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

Observational tools used:	ECERS-R, FDCRS, ITERS-R, SACERS
Describe how scores are used in the rating:	<p>One way that programs can earn points is by completing Environment Rating Scale training, self-assessments, improvement plans, and program assessments. Specific scores are used as follows:</p> <p>-1 point is earned for receiving an average score of 3.0 (with no subscale scores below 2.0).</p> <p>-2 points are earned for an average score of 4.0 (with no subscales below 2.0).</p> <p>-3 points are earned for average score of 5.0 (with no subscales below 2.0).</p> <p>Family Child Care providers can earn one point for completing ERS training, for completing a self-assessment, and for completing an improvement plan. Specific scores are used as follows:</p> <p>-1 point is earned for an average score of 4.0 (with no subscales lower than 2.0).</p> <p>-2 points are earned for an average score of 5.0 (with no subscales below 2.0).</p>
Frequency of observational assessment:	Ratings are in effect for 24 months. If a program wishes to receive points for an ERS assessment after 24 months have passed, they would need to have a new assessment completed.
Method for choosing classrooms to observe:	Classrooms are selected through random assignment.
Percent of classrooms observed in child care centers:	33% of all classrooms are observed with at least one from each type of rating scale.
Training for observers:	<p>For each scale, the new assessor is required to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the scale to be used (typically the ECERS-R). The new assessor is instructed to read through the assigned scale and to underline important terms and definitions, followed by a meeting with the Anchor Assessor to answer any questions about terms, definitions, and scoring. 2. Review Public Playground Safety Handbook and CACFP guidelines; meet with the Anchor

	<p>Assessor to answer any questions about scoring the items involving these requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Observe the training video for that particular scale; complete the training worksheets for that video. Review answers with Anchor Assessor; clarify any questions. . 4. Complete a practice observation using this scale in the Child Development Laboratory School with the Anchor Assessor; calculate interrater agreement for the observation. 5. Complete two observations in the field, achieving 85% agreement within one point on the scale before completing an assessment alone in the field
Initial reliability required:	Yes. Assessors are required to meet 85% reliability on each scale.
Ongoing reliability required:	Yes. Assessors are required to meet 85% reliability on each scale every 6-9 months. Assessors who have maintained 85% reliability for at least 3 years are required to renew inter-rater reliability annually.
Observational tool comments:	Iowa uses the Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale.

Improvement Process

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

Training available that is linked to QRS:	Yes
Content of linked training:	Business practices, environmental assessment, language and literacy, social and emotional development, and safety
Total duration of training:	10 - 20 hours
Trainer approval process:	No
Target population for training:	All providers.
Onsite assistance available that is linked to QRS:	Yes
Content of linked onsite assistance:	Infant/toddler development, safety, and support in navigating QRS
Onsite assistance frequency	Varies
Length of onsite sessions	1 - 4 hours
Total duration of onsite assistance:	Varies
Formal approval for onsite assistance provider:	No

Target population for onsite assistance:	All providers
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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.

Tiered reimbursement:	No
Quality award/bonus:	<p>Yes. Achievement bonuses are available for participating programs. Bonus amounts depend on rating level.</p> <p>For Homes: Level 2-\$400 Level3-\$600 Level 4-\$800 Level 5-\$1000</p> <p>For Centers up to 25 children: Level 2-\$400 Level3-\$600 Level 4-\$800 Level 5-\$1000</p> <p>For centers with 26-50 children: Level 2-\$800 Level3-\$1200 Level 4-\$1600 Level 5-\$2000</p> <p>For centers with 51-100 children: Level 2-\$1200 Level3-\$1800 Level 4-\$2400 Level 5-\$3000</p> <p>For centers with more than 100 children: Level 2-\$1600 Level3-\$2400 Level 4-\$3200 Level 5-\$4000</p>
Startup award:	No
Scholarship (T.E.A.C.H)	No
Wage enhancement	No
Retention bonus:	No
Improvement grants:	No

Administration Details

This section provides details about the QRS administration and funding.

QRS lead :	Iowa Department of Human Service
QRS lead type:	State government agency
Overall funding amount for most recent fiscal year:	\$1,680,288
Overall funding sources:	State
Administration funding for most recent fiscal year:	\$70,000
Administration funding source:	N/A
Quality improvement funding for most recent fiscal year:	\$650,000
Comments:	Funding amounts for administration and quality improvement are difficult to produce because the QRS specialists are really a blending of both, and because many quality improvement activities that providers complete for purposes of QRS are funded through other sources.

Partners

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

Partner 1 type :	University
Partner 1 name:	Iowa State University
Partner 1 function:	Conduct observational assessments, data collection, provide ERS training
Work plan in place:	Yes
Partner 2:	Resource and Referral
Partner 2 name:	Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral
Partner 2 function:	Collect/validate information to assign the rating, provide technical assistance and quality improvement services, provide system navigation support, and manage communication/information dissemination.
Work plan in place:	Yes
Partner 3 type :	Other Non-Profit Contractors
Partner 3 name:	Art a la Carte
Partner 3 function:	Other functions include marketing and public awareness.
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 :	No
Professional development:	No
Incorporation of other standards	Yes

Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) training and self-assessment are included within the indicators for child care centers.

Evaluation

Status of evaluation :	No evaluation to date.
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Key Contacts

Category :	Overall management
Contact name:	Jody Caswell
Title:	QRS Program Manager
Organization:	Iowa Department of Humans Services
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Phone:	515-281-3186

References

Iowa Department of Human Services (2009). Iowa Child Care Rating System-Child Care Centers. <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/docs/QRS%20final%20chart%20-%20center.doc>.

Iowa Department of Human Services (2009). Iowa Child Care Rating System-Child Development Homes. <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/index.html>.

Iowa Department of Human Services (2009). Environmental rating scales. http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/enviro_rating/index.html

Iowa Department of Human Services (2009). FAQs. <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/faqs/index.html>

Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System Child Care Centers

Quality Levels 1 and 2

Level 1- Licensed Level

- Full licensing OR a provisional licensing with no action to revoke or deny OR operates under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school

Level 2

- Full licensing only with no action to revoke or deny OR the program operates under authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school
- Completes IDPH Child Care Business--Partnership Agreement
- Completes IDPH Child Care Center Director/Owner Survey
- If eligible, participation in federal food program (Child and Adult Care Food Program - CACFP)
- Each room has at all times at least one staff member present who has completed mandatory reporting of child abuse, universal precautions and infectious disease control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and first aid
- Basic orientation for all staff prior to beginning work
- Director and staff perform self-assessments of each individual's skills and one of the center overall

**The following amount of points are required from the menu below to reach Levels 3-5.
At least one point must be earned from each category.**

Level	Minimum points required
3	10
4	18
5	26

**Child Care Quality Rating System
Child Care Centers
Levels 3-5**

Professional Development Maximum points = 12		Health and Safety Maximum points = 8		Environment Maximum points = 11		Family and Community Partnerships Maximum points = 2		Leadership/ Administration Maximum points = 4	
	Points		Points		Points		Points		Points
Center director has a current National Administrator credential OR is a school principal licensed by the Board of Educational Examiners	2	Completes injury prevention checklist with child care nurse consultant	Visit completed – 1 point Starting process of making recommended corrections –2 points All corrections completed –3 points	Center director or asst. director completes approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care.	1	Program or director is a member of a professional organization specific to age group for whom care is provided	1	All staff receive yearly written evaluation	1
At least one staff member at the center has at least a bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care	1	Completes child record review with child care nurse consultant	Visit completed – 1 point Development of a plan of action to secure health services for children –2 points	After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility director or assistant director completes a self-assessment of at least one third of the facility's classrooms, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility.	1	Orientation provided for new parents and annual conferences are held with parents	1	Development and annual updating of an overall center improvement plan	1

Professional Development		Health and Safety		Environment		Family and Community Partnerships		Leadership/ Administration	
	Points		Points		Points		Points		Points
At least 50% of staff in each classroom have: Bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care	5	Completes health and safety assessment with child care nurse consultant	Visit completed – 1 point Development of a plan of action to correct deficiencies – 2 points All corrections completed – 3 points	After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility director or assistant director completes a child care center improvement plan.	1			All staff have completed professional development plans with the center's overall skill needs in mind	1
At least 50% of staff in each classroom have: Associate's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care	4			After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility receives an average score of 3 (with no sub-scale scores below 2) on ECERS, ITERS, or SACERS completed by outside evaluator	1			All staff who have direct contact with children have a full, center-based orientation within four months of starting employment.	1

Professional Development		Health and Safety		Environment		Family and Community Partnerships		Leadership/ Administration	
	Points		Points		Points		Points		Points
At least 50% of staff in each classroom have: Child Development Associate (CDA) credential OR apprenticeship certificate	3			After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility receives an average score of 4 (with no sub-scale scores below 2) on ECERS, ITERS, or SACERS completed by outside evaluator	2				
At least 50% of staff in each classroom have 6 credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care OR Iowa Board of Educational Examiners paraeducator certificate	2			After completing approved Environment Rating Scale training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility receives an average score of 5 (with no sub-scale scores below 2) on ECERS, ITERS, or SACERS completed by outside evaluator	3				

Professional Development		Health and Safety		Environment		Family and Community Partnerships		Leadership/ Administration	
	Points		Points		Points		Points		Points
At least 50% of staff in each classroom have 30 hours annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements and at least 5 years of experience	2			Completes training on Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS)	1				
At least 50% of staff in each classroom have 15 hours annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements in the last 12 months	1			Completes IQPPS self-assessment and develops quality improvement plan.	1				
				Meets NAEYC or NAA standards for group/class size appropriate to setting	1				
				Accreditation by NAEYC or NAA OR compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards	3				

Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System Child Development Homes

Quality Levels 1 and 2
<p>Level 1-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider is registered with the Department of Human Services.
<p>Level 2 (+ Level 1 Requirements)-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes and maintains ChildNet certification • Participates in federal food program (CACFP) • Completes IDPH Child Care Business--Partnership Agreement. • Completes IDPH Home Child Care Center Director/Owner Survey. • Completes a self-assessment of own professional development • Writes professional development plan

The following amount of points from the menu below are required to reach Levels 3-5:
At least one point must be earned from each category.

Level	Minimum points required
3	7
4	12
5	16

**Child Care Quality Rating System
Child Development Homes
Levels 3-5**

Professional Development Maximum points = 6		Health and Safety Maximum points = 8		Environment Maximum points = 8		Family and Community Partnerships Maximum points = 2	
	Points		Points		Points		Points
At least 2 years of child care experience and 10 hours additional approved training per year beyond regulatory requirements	1	Completes injury prevention checklist with child care nurse consultant	Checklist completed – 1 point Starting process of making recommended corrections – 2 points All corrections completed – 3 points	Completes approved training on Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS)	1	Membership in a professional organization specific to age group for whom care is provided	1
At least five years of child care experience and 20 hours additional approved training per year beyond regulatory requirements	2	Completes child record review with child care nurse consultant	Child record review completed – 1 point Development of a plan of action to secure health services for children – 2 points	After completing approved training on how to use the FDCRS, completes self-assessment using FDCRS	1	Orientation provided for new parents and annual conferences are held with parents	1
Has completed one or more of the following: -Apprenticeship certificate -Child Development Associate (CDA) -At least 9 college credit hours in education specific to age group for whom care is provided	2	Completes health and safety assessment with child care nurse consultant	Assessment completed – 1 point Development of a plan of action to correct deficiencies – 2 points All corrections completed - 3 points	After completing approved training on how to use the FDCRS, completes child development home improvement plan based on FDCRS self-assessment	1		

Professional Development		Health and Safety		Environment		Family and Community Partnerships	
	Points		Points		Points		Points
An associate's degree in education specific to age group for whom care is provided	3			After completing approved training on use of FDCRS, scores an average of 4 with no subscale scores lower than 2, assessed by outside expert	1		
A bachelor's degree or above in education specific to age group for whom care is provided	4			After completing approved training on use of FDCRS, scores an average of 5 with no subscale scores lower than 2, assessed by outside expert	2		
				Accreditation by the National Association for Family Child Care	3		