

# Parent Aware Rating Tool Indicators of Quality

## Child Care Centers

Designed by child care providers, early learning professionals and parents, Minnesota's voluntary Parent Aware Rating Tool supports our state's children by creating a rating system that identifies, recognizes and celebrates quality in early education.

In order to be rated, a program must:

- Commit to participate (sign a contract).
- Complete orientation.
- Be licensed.
- Submit a program philosophy.
- Submit a health and safety checklist.

### Child safety

Programs cannot receive more than 1 star if they have received a maltreatment determination in the past year or have had a negative licensing action, operated under a conditional license or received a fine in the past 6 months.

### Quality rating

Points are awarded based on how well programs have incorporated best practices into their programs.

- Programs receive ratings of 1 star, 2 stars, 3 stars or 4 stars.
- Accredited programs completing appropriate documentation receive 4 stars.
- Ratings are awarded based on the number of points programs receive in the four quality indicator categories: family partnerships, tracking learning, teaching materials and strategies, and teacher training and education.

### Family partnerships

- Have a formal process to collect and use feedback from parents.
- Communicate regularly with parents, as well as at in-take and for screening.
- Communicate with parents regarding children's transition to kindergarten and between classrooms.
- Use individual plans for children's transition to kindergarten and between classrooms.

### Teaching materials and strategies

- Use research-based curriculum (must use an approved research-based curriculum to receive a rating of 3 or 4 stars).
- Promote an effective learning environment and child-adult interactions (involves Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale and Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale onsite assessments).
- In preschool classrooms, teacher-child relationships and emotional engagement through instruction and in-classroom organization is assessed by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Programs must score at least in the mid-range (3, 4 or 5) on each category in the CLASS (emotional, instruction and organization) to receive a rating of 4 stars.

### Tracking learning

- Use research-based child assessment tool to monitor child progress.
- Provide families with child assessment results.
- Use child assessment information to guide instruction and design goals for individual children.

### Teacher training and education

- Education coordinator holds a BA in ECE (the center director may be the education coordinator).
- All lead teachers have recorded and documented their training and education in the Minnesota Center for Professional Development Registry (<http://www.mncpd.org/registry.html>).
- Lead teachers have earned degrees, credentials or are pursuing training to reach a higher step in the Minnesota Career Lattice ([http://www.mncpd.org/career\\_lattice.html](http://www.mncpd.org/career_lattice.html)). (Points are awarded based on the steps lead teachers have achieved.)
- All lead teachers have completed professional development plans.

