



Delaware Stars for Early Success

What is Delaware Stars for Early Success?

Delaware Stars for Early Success is a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). A QRIS is used to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education and school-age settings. Participation in Delaware Stars is voluntary and demonstrates a program's commitment to continuous quality improvement. Delaware Stars is a five-tiered rating system. Programs begin with "Starting with Stars," and then are rated at a Star Level 2 through 5.

Descriptions of Star levels

Ratings for Delaware Stars are based on successful verification that the program meets high quality standards in four areas: Family and Community Partnerships, Qualifications and Professional Development, Management and Administration, and Learning Environment and Curriculum (this includes a formal assessment of classrooms in each age group using the Environment Rating Scales or ERS. The ERS is an internationally recognized valid and reliable observational tool used in research and evaluation).

- **Star Level 1 "Starting with Stars"** - Programs at this first level of participation are in good standing with the Office of Child Care Licensing and are completing orientation through staff professional development, environment scans and developing an initial quality improvement plan.
- **Star Level 2** - Programs at Star Level 2 have begun their active pursuit of continuous quality improvement.
- **Star Level 3** - To reach a Star Level 3, a program must earn 40-59 quality points by verifying standards of their choice and achieve a minimum score of a 3.4 on each ERS assessment.
- **Star Level 4** - To reach a Star Level 4, a program must earn 60-79 quality points by verifying standards of their choice and essential standards covering the following topics; developmental screenings, formative assessments, curriculum planning and staff training. Classrooms must achieve a minimum score of 4.4 on ERS assessments.
- **Star Level 5** - To reach a Star Level 5, the highest level of achievement, a program must earn 80-100 quality points by verifying standards of their choice and essential standards covering the following topics; developmental screenings, formative assessments, curriculum planning and staff training. Classrooms must achieve a minimum score of 5.4 on ERS assessments.

Alternative Pathways

- Programs accredited by the National Association of Young Children are designated Star Level 5 once accepted into Delaware Stars due to the difficulty of obtaining and maintaining this accreditation.
- Head Start programs and state funded Early Childhood Assistance Programs (ECAP) are designated Star Level 4 once accepted into Delaware Stars due to monitoring of federal and state performance standards. In order to advance to a Star Level 5, these programs must score a minimum of 5.4 on each ERS classroom assessment.

For more information, visit delawarestars.udel.edu.