



What's In A Qualistar Rating?

When a program decides to achieve a Qualistar rating a MECC Quality Improvement Specialist works with them throughout the process, and continues to provide consultation as they work to improve their rating. It's a long journey and involves strong commitment and determination on the part of the program. When you see that a program has earned a Qualistar rating, you know they are committed to quality. Both family child care homes and child care centers can achieve Qualistar ratings.

A program can earn points in five quality areas; the points are added up for a total rating, which indicates what level (from one to four stars) of quality the program has achieved. The areas are:

Learning Environment: The Quality Improvement Specialist, trained to use special environment rating tools, makes unannounced classroom or home visits, and evaluates the following: learning activities, physical environment, health and safety, and promotion of language development.

Family Partnerships: Questionnaires are sent to families, and program records are reviewed to rate how well the program or home partners with and includes families.

Training and Education: In level of formal education, training and experience for program staff and administrators is evaluated and rated;

Ratios and Group Size: Because we know that a higher ratio (of adults to children) and smaller groups are key components of quality, programs earn points based on this.

Accreditation: If a program has achieved accreditation from a Qualistar-recognized national accrediting agency they are given points.