

Why is Early Achievers important?

- ▶ High-quality child care helps children succeed in kindergarten and beyond. Yet child care quality varies considerably around Washington.
- ▶ An independent evaluation of the pilot found that when child care providers get one-on-one coaching and training, the quality of the care they give children quickly increases.

What does high quality look like?

Quality child care and early learning programs help children enter school ready to succeed. These programs have:

- ▶ Nurturing and supportive relationships between adults and children.
- ▶ Care and education that meets each student's individual needs.
- ▶ Facilities that are safe, well-organized and have age-appropriate resources.
- ▶ Programs that support the development of the whole child.
- ▶ Open communications and genuine engagement with families.
- ▶ Meaningful efforts to embrace diversity.

How do I participate?

Contact the Department of Early Learning or Child Care Aware Washington to learn more about how you can get involved with Early Achievers.

- ▶ Email qris@del.wa.gov



"We are now providing a higher-quality learning environment for our children."

Clark County QRIS Participant

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Early Achievers, Washington's Quality Rating and Improvement System



*A guide for child care providers
and early educators*

What is Early Achievers?

Early Achievers is a voluntary program that empowers providers and educators with coaching and resources to support each child's learning and development so they can develop the skills they need to be successful in school and life!

There is no cost to participate. Early Achievers gives providers access to coaching and professional development opportunities, as well as a tangible way to demonstrate their commitment to providing quality care and education for young children.

Along with Washington's preschool program (ECEAP) and the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS), Early Achievers is part of a system to improve the quality of early learning and prepare all children for success.

Early Achievers offers support, and resources to help early learning professionals—including centers and family home providers—improve the quality of their programs. Washington Early Achievers is funded by the Department of Early Learning, through the federal Child Care and Development Fund and the federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. There is no additional cost for families.

How does Early Achievers work?

- ▶ Beginning July 1, 2012, all licensed and certified programs will have the opportunity to enroll in Early Achievers.
- ▶ Participants will have access to a variety of supports and resources to help them improve their quality of care and achieve higher Early Achievers ratings.
- ▶ A higher rating means the provider has demonstrated a solid track record for providing high-quality child care.
- ▶ Simply by participating in Early Achievers, child care and early learning providers demonstrate a commitment to improving quality.
- ▶ Beginning in 2012, ratings for providers who participate in Early Achievers will be available on DEL's website.

What are the Early Achievers quality levels and what do they mean?

- ▶ **LEVEL 1: Licensing or certification**
Includes all licensed child care centers and family child care, military, tribal, Head Start and ECEAP, and other state-funded programs.
- ▶ **Level 2: Professional Growth and Facility Management**
Facility leadership will complete a series of activities including the Professional Training Series and self-assessment.
- ▶ **Levels 3 through 5** ratings are assigned points based on:
 - ▶ Child outcomes
 - ▶ Curriculum, learning, environments and interactions
 - ▶ Professional development and training
 - ▶ Family engagement and partnership

How long has Early Achievers been in Washington?

- ▶ 2009 to 2011: DEL and Thrive by Five Washington worked with 90 providers in five communities to develop the program.
- ▶ 2011 to 2012: DEL, Thrive and the University of Washington identified 64 early adopters to participate in the program.
- ▶ July 2012: Statewide Early Achievers roll-out begins.

