

# Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: New Evidence and New Questions for the Future

---

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION POLICY  
RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

FEBRUARY 7, 2018



# Presenters

---

Kathryn Tout, facilitator

- Child Trends

Shannon Lipscomb

- Oregon State University | QRIS Validation in Oregon

Zach Gold, Aura Mishra, and Sarah Lane

- Purdue University | QRIS Evaluation in Indiana

Sarah Daily

- Child Trends | QRIS Evaluation in New Mexico

# Overview of the Session

---

1. Brief update on the 10 state QRIS validation synthesis
2. State presentations
3. Time for questions and discussion between each presentation and at the end of the session

# QRIS Validation Synthesis

---

KATHRYN TOUT

# Validation Studies

Synthesis of results funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families.

Reviews findings from 10 state reports:

- Arizona\*, California, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin

Nine state reports conducted to fulfill requirements of the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant

OPRE Report 2017-92  
December 2017

Validation of the Quality Ratings Used in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS): A Synthesis of State Studies



# Early Learning Challenge Grant

---

Requires state grantees to address two validation questions:

1. Do the ratings meaningfully differentiate higher-quality programs from lower-quality programs?
2. Are gains in children's development and learning greater in higher-rated programs compared to children who attend lower-rated programs?

## 20 ELC states

- Round 1 (2011): **CA, DE, MD, MA, MN**, NC, OH, **RI, WA**
- Round 2 (2012): CO, IL, NM, **OR, WI**
- Round 3 (2013): GA, KY, MI, NJ, PA, VT

*Blue=report released; Underlined=study complete but no report yet*

# Context of Validation Studies

---

QRIS were early in their implementation and had small numbers of programs at certain levels. These levels were combined into high and low quality levels.

- For example, 1 & 2 stars (low) vs. 3, 4 & 5 stars (high)

Studies had some challenges in recruiting providers.

Not all studies included:

- Family child care homes
- Child development measures for toddlers

# Key Findings: Quality

---

Most states reviewed in the synthesis found evidence that the ratings distinguished low- and high-quality center-based programs, using an external measure of observed quality. Differences between levels were small.

- CLASS
- ECERS-R, ECERS-E, ECERS-3
- PQA

Fewer studies included family child care, and results were mixed.



**ES Table 2.** Summary of Associations between QRIS Ratings and Observed Quality, by State and Observational Measure

	CLASS Pre-K			CLASS Toddler		ERS			Other Quality Measures	
State	Instructional Support	Emotional Support	Classroom Org.	Emotional and Behavior Support	Engaged Support for Learning	ECERS-R	ITERS-R	FCCERS-R	PQA*	CIS
Arizona	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		
California	✓	ns	ns						✓	
Delaware	✓	ns	ns	ns	ns				✓	ns
Maryland	ns	ns	ns			✓		✓		
Massachusetts						✓	✓			✓
Minnesota	ns	ns	ns			✓		ns		
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	ns	✓					
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Wisconsin						✓		1		

Source: Individual state validation reports

\*PQA total score for DE, Adult-Child Interaction for CA. <sup>1</sup>The FCCERS-R was collected in Wisconsin but analyzed jointly with the ECERS-R.

Note: A check mark indicates at least one statistically significant association was found demonstrating higher observed quality at higher rating levels. "Ns" indicates that no statistically significant associations were found. A gray, blank cell indicates that the measure was not collected.

# Key Findings: Children's Development

---

Some significant findings were noted across the states that examined children's development. Limited evidence was noted for:

- Receptive language (two of seven states)
- Executive function (three of six states)
- Social-emotional development (four of six states)

**ES Table 3.** Summary of Associations between QRIS Ratings and Child Development, by State and Developmental Domain

	Executive Function	Language/ Literacy	General Cognition	Physical Development	Social/ Emotional	Math
State	Peg tapping/ HTKS	PPVT/ TOPEL/ IDGI/WJ/ Story and Print/Mullen	Bracken/ Mullen	BMI/ Mullen fine/ gross motor	SCBE-30/ PLBS/ DECA/ CBCL	TEAM/ WJ
California	✓	<i>ns</i>				<i>ns</i>
Delaware	✓ <sup>1</sup>	<i>ns</i>			<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>
Massachusetts		✓			✓	
Minnesota	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>	✓	<i>ns</i>
Rhode Island	<i>ns</i>	— <sup>3</sup>			✓ <sup>4</sup>	✓ <sup>5</sup>
Washington	<i>ns</i>	✓	<i>ns</i>	✓	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>
Wisconsin	✓ <sup>2</sup>	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>		✓	<i>ns</i>

Source: Individual state validation reports

Note: A check mark indicates a statistically significant positive association was found between rating level and children's development. A negative sign indicates a statistically significant negative association was found between rating level and children's development. "Ns" indicates that no statistically significant associations were found. A gray, blank cell indicates that the measure was not collected.

<sup>1</sup> The analysis in Delaware found a significant difference between level 5 and level 2 only; in addition, a significant association was noted with executive function and the sum of points on the six essential standards. <sup>2</sup> The analysis in Wisconsin found a significant association with total rating points, not rating level. <sup>3</sup> The analysis in Rhode Island found a significant negative association between rating and expressive vocabulary. <sup>4</sup> The analysis in Rhode Island found significant associations between social competence and multiple rating components (but not overall rating). <sup>5</sup> The analysis in Rhode Island found significant associations between math and multiple rating components (but not overall rating).

# Summary

---

*Within* each state, validation studies inform specific decisions about revisions to the QRIS.

The synthesis allows us to look *across* states and identify consistent patterns of findings.

Overall, the synthesis findings indicate that ratings differentiate higher-quality programs from lower-quality programs.

The research evidence is limited for associations between ratings and patterns of children's development.

# What's needed for the next phase of QRIS research?

---

Continued focus on developing and refining measures to capture dimensions of quality that are most important for children.

Exploration of quality for infants and toddlers.

Examination of equity issues.

Longitudinal studies to understand experiences of providers, families and children over time.

# Paths to QUALITY Evaluation

---

ZACH GOLD, AURA MISHRA, AND SARAH LANE

# Oregon Validation Study

---

SHANNON LIPSCOMB

# New Mexico QRIS Evaluation

---

SARAH DAILY



# Discussion

---

1. How have your findings been used in your state to inform QRIS implementation? What questions did QRIS stakeholders have for you?
2. What are the next steps for QRIS research that you would like to take based on your findings? Where will you go from here?
3. At least one of the studies incorporated a focus on toddlers. Was your study able to address infants and toddlers and in what way? What more do we need to learn that is relevant for this important subgroup?
4. What did you learn about the quality measures you included in your study? Would you recommend the tools you used to other research teams?
5. Did any issues related to equity emerge from your study? This could be findings that were differentiated by program type (homes vs centers) or children's characteristics (income, race/ethnicity, language).

# Thank you!

SLIDES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CCEEPRC WEBSITE



---

The planning for this Presentation was funded through the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (AF) and managed through a contract with Child Trends.

The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.