QRS Evaluations:
Challenges and Opportunities

Annual Meeting of the
Child Care Policy Research
Consortium
July 31, 2008
Quality Rating Systems

- A rapidly increasing number of States are implementing quality rating systems (QRS) to
  - assess the quality of care delivered by individual child care providers
  - communicate this information to the consumers of care
  - improve the quality of care and education for children
- Programs vary meaningfully across States in their designs
  - emphases and target populations
  - goals and objectives
- States are in need of information regarding the various approaches
  - Implementation (program design and goals)
  - Evaluation
Meeting on the Evaluation of State Quality Rating Systems

- **Goal**
  - To provide a common framework for identifying evaluation goals and approaches to State quality rating systems

- **Participants**
  - Teams of State Administrators and evaluators from 9 States, invited researchers, and Federal partners

- **Theme of discussions**
  - Theory of change, with particular focus on **logic models** as foundation for evaluation
Highlights Regarding Current Status of QRS Evaluation

- States differ in the extent to which a logic model is \textit{implicit} or \textit{explicit} in their QRS evaluation.
- Most States focus on \textbf{outputs} although some, even some new QRS, focus on \textbf{outcomes}.
- States have used output data to \textbf{modify program design}; some have relied on pilot data for this purpose.
- Many questions and methodologies are \textit{similar} across \textit{States}.
Issues to be Addressed and Discussed in Breakout Session

- Evaluation design and measurement options
- Measuring child outcomes in QRS evaluations
- Evaluating QRS as a market/system-level intervention vs. a program evaluation