



QRIS State Profile: Montana

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Component	State Details
INTRODUCTION	
<p>The Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Program is a voluntary quality rating improvement system that aligns quality indicators with support and incentives for early childhood programs and early childhood professionals. The program is currently in a field test, with 101 programs participating.</p>	
CONTACTS	
QRIS Name	Star Quality Child Care Rating System/ Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Field Test
Organization	Early Childhood Services Bureau, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services
Web Site	<p>Best Beginnings STARS to Quality http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/bestbeginnings/bestbeginningsstarstoquality.shtml A field test is currently underway.</p>
RATING LEVELS AND ASSESSMENT METHODS	
Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ STAR 1 ■ STAR 2 ■ STAR 3 ■ STAR 4 ■ STAR 5
Rating Assignment Method	<p>Building blocks: Programs must be licensed/registered with the State of MT to participate in the QRIS field test. Programs must meet all criteria to be awarded a level and/or advance levels</p>

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Use of Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and Other Assessments	Programs applying for STAR 3, STAR 4, STAR 5 must have the appropriate ERS assessment as well as either the Business Administration Scale (family and group programs) or Program Administration Scale (centers) assessment. Certain scores must be achieved at each level in order to be awarded that STAR level.
Program Assessments Included in QRIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- Revised (ECERS-R) ■ Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale- Revised (ITERS-R) ■ Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale- Revised (FCCERS-R) ■ Program Administration Scale (PAS) ■ Business Administration Scale (BAS)
QRIS QUALITY STANDARDS	
QRIS Quality Standards: Categories and Web Site	<p>The quality rating improvement system for Montana has several arms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workforce Development 2. Quality Rating Improvement System 3. Infrastructure to administer the programs, provide training, coaching, and technical assistance, and to validate the STARS system <p>The matrix is based on 5 categories of quality with criteria that must be met at each level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Education, Qualifications, and Training ■ High Quality Supportive Environments ■ Staff/Caregiver-to-Child Ratio and Group Size ■ Family/Community Partnerships ■ Leadership and Program Management <p><i>Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Matrix and Criteria- Child Care Centers</i> http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/bestbeginnings/documents/centersbooklet.pdf</p> <p><i>Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Matrix and Criteria- Family/Group Child Care Homes</i> http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/bestbeginnings/documents/familygroupbooklet.pdf</p>

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Programs Eligible to Participate in QRIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child care centers ■ Group child care homes ■ Family child care homes ■ Early Head Start programs ■ Licensed Head Start programs
Use of Accreditation	Accreditation is required to be a STAR 5 provider (i.e., highest level).
Accreditation Organizations Accepted for QRIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Association for the Education of Young Children, Academy of Early Childhood Program Accreditation ■ National Association for Family Child Care
FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
Financial Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tiered subsidy reimbursement specific to each STAR level ■ Incentive awards to programs at STAR 2 through STAR 5, paid quarterly ■ CDA Assessment Fee Scholarships for individual staff ■ Professional Development Incentive Award for individual staff ■ Practitioner Registry Renewal and Achievement AWARDS
Additional Information	Each STAR level has certain trainings that staff must complete in order to apply/be approved for that particular level. New staff have certain time frames in which trainings must be completed in order for the program to maintain that level. Directors and staff must also maintain certain levels on the Montana Career Path Practitioner Registry.