

What is QRIS?

QRIS is Hawai'i's voluntary quality rating and improvement system for center-based and home-based (family child care) early childhood care and education programs licensed by the Department of Human Services (DHS).

The goals of QRIS are:

- improved quality of early childhood programs
- increased consumer awareness of the quality of early childhood programs
- continuous quality improvement

QRIS:

- provides a comprehensive system for assessing the level of quality in programs, using valid and reliable assessment instruments, a standardized assessment process, and assessors trained to reliability on selected assessment instruments
- assesses and provides programs with a Quality Assessment Report that includes a Rating Level to help identify their strengths (what is working well), and areas for improvement (what could be strengthened) in their efforts toward continuous quality improvement
 - Rating Level (1-5) is based on a program's performance on specified assessment measures: assessment scores, staff qualifications, and required supporting evidence
- supports programs with resources to help with their continuous quality improvement efforts. These resources include:
 - coaching —provided by highly skilled and knowledgeable early childhood professionals to help programs identify and implement quality improvement goals and concrete actions to bring about desired changes
 - financial supports—provided by public and private funders to allow programs to move toward achieving their quality improvement goals. There are two forms of financial supports:
 - Quality Award—an award made based on a program's Rating Level, size of program and number of children receiving subsidies for child care, to be used to support quality improvement efforts
 - Quality Improvement Grant—supplemental funds for which a program can apply to support quality improvement efforts

Why QRIS?

By increasing the quality of early care and education programs, we:

- increase program staff competencies and their on-going commitments to professional development, family engagement, and community knowledge regarding what defines a quality program
- increase families' access to quality programs
- ultimately improve the learning opportunities and experiences for children who attend these programs

The QRIS Pilot

The Pilot:

- is a small-scale implementation of the QRIS to test the conceptual design prior to a full-scale implementation; it will help to determine what works well and where modifications can be implemented to improve the effectiveness of the system
- includes nine center-based programs (6 on Oah'u and 3 in Maui County) and ten Family Child Care programs (5 on Oah'u, 1 on Kaua'i, 4 on the Big Island) that were selected by a DHS Committee, using criteria to obtain a representation of various types of programs across the state
- will run through June 2013, with the possibility of a 6-12 month extension, depending on availability of funding

The QRIS Process: An Overview

The QRIS will work with programs to examine quality in five standard areas, which are:

- Early Childhood Care and Education
- Family Partnerships
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Staff Qualifications
- Program Design and Management

The following measures will be used at different stages to determine a program's Rating Level:

- Environment Rating Scale (ERS)
 - ITERS: Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale
 - ECERS: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
 - FCCERS: Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale
- Program Administration Scale (PAS) (centers) **or** Business Administration Scale (BAS) (FCCs)
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- Staff Qualifications: QRIS Pilot Framework for Early Care & Education Practitioners, a modification of the CANOES Registry Framework
- Supporting Evidence

Process

- Preparation for assessment: Programs will work with their coach to prepare necessary documentation prior to an assessment visit.
- First assessments: For most, this will involve a base-line ERS assessment. If a program is NAEYC or NAFCC accredited this will include the CLASS and PAS or BAS assessments. If a non-accredited program meets all of the criteria for Rating Level 3, it will also undergo the CLASS and PAS or BAS assessments.
- Quality Assessment Report: A Quality Assessment Report (QAR) that identifies a program's Rating Level and summarizes its assessment results is provided to the program.
- Quality Improvement Planning: Using the information from the QAR, and with coach support, programs create their Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- Implementation of Quality Improvement Plan. Once the QIP has been approved, programs receive the first installment of their Quality Award. They implement their QIP, with coach support, and submit quarterly progress and expenditure reports. Payment of subsequent installments of the Quality Award is dependent on submission of progress and expenditure reports. Programs may apply for a Quality Improvement Grant to support their efforts.
- Between six and 12 months after the first assessments are completed, programs will decide on Level Advancement or Renewal. Depending on the decision, a second round of assessment will be conducted (level advancement) or programs will submit additional documentation (level renewal).

QRIS Planning Group

DHS has contracted the University of Hawai‘i Center on the Family (COF) as the lead organization to administer the QRIS. COF is working in partnership with Honolulu Community College, the Hawai‘i Association for the Education of Young Children, and PATCH—collectively known as the Quality Care Partners—to design, develop, and implement the QRIS. Additionally, the QRIS Planning Group includes representation from DHS, the Early Learning Council, the Head Start Collaboration Office, and the P-20/P-3 Initiative.

QRIS Contact:

For more information on the QRIS, please contact:

QRIS Administration
UH Center on the Family
2515 Campus Rd., Miller 103
Honolulu, HI 96822
Ph: 808 956-4133
Fax: 808 956-4147
E-mail: qualitycare@ctahr.hawaii.edu

QRIS Documents

The following QRIS documents are posted on the DHS Child Care Connection website at <http://hawaii.gov/dhs/dhs/self-sufficiency/childcare>

- QRIS Design Plan
- QRIS Policies and Procedures Manual
- QRIS Policies and Procedures Manual: Appendices