Indicators of Quality
On chart paper identify how you know a hotel and restaurant are of high quality or good service.

Keystone STARS 101
Overview of STARS System and CQI Principles - 1 hr

Welcome to the Keystone STARS Orientation Courses

Keystone STARS Orientation
STARS 102– Elements of Assessing and Building Quality - 2 hrs
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Supporting Interactions with Children and Families

Objectives
- Identify the benefits of Continuous Quality Improvement through Keystone STARS, for children, families, and programs
- Identify what determines STAR designation
- Describe Program Observation Instruments (POI) used for STARS designation
ABOUT KEYSTONE STARS

Keystone STARS - a vision towards quality
• 500,000+ children
• High-quality early learning
• Skills they need to succeed

Keystone STARS - a vision towards quality
• Improve quality since 2002
• New opportunities
• More young children

Keystone STARS - a vision towards quality
Pennsylvania’s Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL).

Keystone STARS Orientation
STARS is an acronym for, improving quality through:
Standards
Training/Professional Development
Assistance
Resources
Support

Keystone STARS
Keystone STARS has four primary goals:
• To improve the quality of ECE
• To support providers in their quality improvement goals
• To recognize programs for CQI & meeting higher quality standards
• To provide families a way to choose a quality program.
Defining Quality

- Structural Quality
- Process Quality

Guiding Principles

Keystone STARS is a responsive system to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania.

Our system is guided by three core guiding principles:

1) A whole child approach to education is essential to meeting the holistic and individual needs of each and every child and family.

2) Knowledgeable and responsive early care and education professionals are essential to the development of children and the support of families.

3) Building and sustaining ongoing positive relationships among children, families, early care and education professionals and community stakeholders is essential for the growth and development of every child.

We believe inclusion, diversity, equity and respect are foundational values embedded in these principles.

Commitment to Providers

- accessible to all providers in Pennsylvania.
- flexibility to
  - plans that are meaningful to them
  - indicators that align with their goals.
Commitment to Providers

Policies and standards should be interpreted in a way that aligns with the type of program a provider owns, operates or works to support.

Reflection Activity

What is your program’s priority?
- Care for children while families work
- To help children be ready for school
- To help children have a sense of self
- To give children a sense of belonging

Benefits of Keystone STARS

For Children and Families

Quality early care and education benefits everyone and serves as an economic development strategy for Pennsylvania.
- Promotes healthy child development
- Better prepared to enter school
- Work focus
- Fewer absences
- More productive

For Providers

- Customized support and assistance
- Financial supports
- Professional development
- Outreach and marketing
- Strengthening the quality
- Lifting up the child care profession
- Increased Child Care Works (CCW) payments

Eligibility
Eligibility Requirements

• Full Certificate of Compliance from the Department of Human Services
• Private academic certificate from Pennsylvania’s Department of Education
• Good standing with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Department of Revenue

Certified and compliant programs STAR 1 designation.
• Programs which are not required to be certified by the Department of Human Services, are eligible to participate

Navigating the STARS Process

Four Levels
The Performance Standards are grouped into four levels:

– STAR 1
– STAR 2
– STAR 3
– STAR 4

Step One – STAR 1

• DHS-certified child care
• Early Head Start and Head Start programs
• Preschool programs

These early care and education providers are awarded a STAR 1 and may increase STAR levels by meeting performance standards.
Step One – Quality Coach
- Identify strengths and opportunities for growth
- Begin by a connection with your most supportive resource – your Quality Coach

Step Two: CQI Profile
Complete the Keystone STARS CQI Program Profile.

Step Three – Structural Quality
- Programs
- Teachers

Step Four – STAR 2 Designation
- Fully meeting all of the STAR 2 standards
- Documents can be uploaded in SMART

Step Five – Moving to Higher Quality Levels
- Encouraged to continue on their pathway to STAR 3 and 4
- Select indicators across the standards
- Choose which indicators best meet their CQI plan
- Use evidence-based program observation tools to measure program quality and plan for CQI activities

Step Six – STARS Designation
Designation is determined by:
- Number of points earned
- Meeting CQI goals
- Minimum threshold score
Program Observation Instruments (POI)

POI can be used to:
- inform decision-making
- support program evaluation efforts

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation can include many methods of data collection such as:
- Child assessment
- Observations of practice
- Measures of the environment
- Surveys or interviews of teachers or families
Quality Matters

**STARS PD**
- Intended to support improved classroom practice
- Provided to achieve movement in STAR levels
- OCDEL funds PD aligned with CQI and the office’s priorities
- Approved PD is available in the PD Registry
- Quality Coaches identify PD that best fulfills CQI needs

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**Coaching or TA?**

**Coaching**
- build capacity for specific skills, and behaviors
- focused on goal-setting and achievement
- should be embedded in broader PD plan

**TA**
- collaborative, problem-solving process
- facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern

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**Professional Development Goals**
- Assist in achievement
- Enhance, but not duplicate, the services
- Support a team approach

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**Professional Development Guiding Principles**
- Comprehensive
- Coordinated
- Relationship-based
- Culturally sensitive
- Strength-based approach
- Individual needs

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**STARS Renewal and Appeals Process**

- Maximizes resources
- Values a collaborative model
- Acknowledges and builds on the diversity and commonalities
- Cross-systems network
- Research and evidence-based practice
- Consistent data collection

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**Quality Matters**

Tom Wolf, Governor
Pedro Rivera, Secretary of Education | Teresa D. Miller, Acting Secretary of Human Services

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Annual Renewal

- STAR 2 or higher designation
- Annual Review Report
- Due 30 days prior to their designation anniversary
- Update their CQI plan
- Do not submit their annual report by their renewal date will result in a loss of their current designation

STARS Appeal Process

If a program believes there has been an error in the process for determining their STAR designation, the program may submit a written appeal that details the indicator(s) and the evidence submitted in question to the Regional Key Director.

Quality Coaches

Support your program through the evidence-gathering process

Support the program in selecting and conducting a self-assessment using an evidence-based tool that best meets your program goals
Quality Coaches
Provide guidance in creating a CQI Plan with goals and activities to support program improvement
Review evidence of meeting program standards

Quality Coaches
Schedule a program observation from an OCDEL-approved assessor and assist in building program observation results into your program’s CQI Plan

Keystone STARS Supports

Child Care Subsidy Daily Add-On
- Programs at STAR 2 level or above
- This “tiered reimbursement,” is applicable to Family Child Care Homes, Group Child Care Homes, and Centers
- Increases with each STAR level.

Grants and Awards
- STARS grants and awards
- Serving children who are vulnerable and at risk
- Strategy implemented by OCDEL to CQI

Tuition Assistance
The Keystone STARS Tuition Assistance: Rising STARS and TEACH
- Supports eligible applicants enrolling in CDA or other college-credit bearing courses
- Supports enrollment in higher education courses and degree programs
ARE YOU READY?

For More Information

• Access the Program Manual, Standards and Other Documents
  www.pakeys.org

• Regional Key Quality Coaches:
  - Northeast Region - 800-528-7222
  - Northwest Region - 800-860-2281
  - Mid-State Region - 800-864-4925
  - Southeast Region - 267-773-4400
  - Southwest Region - 877-349-4850