ZERO TO THREE®
National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

Supporting Babies Through QRIS

ZERO TO THREE Webinar
November 18, 2014

Supporting Babies Through QRIS: A Self-Assessment Tool for US States and Other Jurisdictions

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ZERO TO THREE, Washington DC

Agenda

- Session Goals
- *Supporting Babies Through QRIS* Series
- *QRIS Self-Assessment Tool*: An Overview
- Utah's QRIS: Overview & Context
- Miami's QRIS: Overview & Context
- Responses from the Field
  - E1: Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners
  - E2: Support for Continuous Quality Improvement
  - E3: Planning, Monitoring, and Accountability
  - E4: Financial Support for Programs, Practitioners, and Families
  - E5: Engagement, Outreach, and Promotion
  - E6: Partnerships and Collaborations
- Discussion and Questions

www.zerotothree.org/policywebinars

Session Goals

- Share ZTT's newly released *QRIS Self-Assessment* tool.
- Identify ways to support infants and toddlers through the QRIS framework and elements.
- Evaluate some examples of QRIS standards and supports that have been included in Utah and Miami and that are specific to infants and toddlers.
- Share experiences in connecting QRIS to other systemic supports and analyze how these can help promote high-quality learning experiences for infants and toddlers.

QRIS: Policy Levers & Systems-Building to Promote Quality

Supporting Babies Through QRIS

ZERO TO THREE Series:

- Implementation Status and Tools in US States and Other Jurisdictions
- Inclusion of Infant and Toddler Quality Standards
- Self-Assessment Tool

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QRIS Implementation Status

By August 2014…

<u>47</u> states and jurisdictions had taken steps to implement a QRIS

Status	Definition	Count
Pilot In Process or Completed	QRIS piloting or field test is in process or has been finalized	5
Planning for a QRIS	QRIS has been included in strategic planning process	8
Regional QRIS Initiative Launched	QRIS has been launched from a regional perspective and might include regionally-driven QRIS standards	2
State-Wide or Jurisdiction-Wide QRIS Initiative Launched	QRIS has been launched from a state-wide perspective and might include state-driven QRIS standards	40
Requires Legislative Action	Legislative action is required in order to implement QRIS	1
		56

Inclusion Infant & Toddler Quality Standards

Typical Categories	Typical Subcategories	Special Considerations for Infants and Toddlers	Examples of Standards Addressing Infants and Toddlers *(The text in parentheses indicates what level the standard affects in QRIS.)* *NOTE: Examples area drawn only from the pool of states that have launched statewide standards and that have implemented their QRIS systems. The list is not meant to be exhaustive.*

Teaching & Learning

- Daily Interactions & Relationships
- Teaching & Learning: Physical Learning Environment
- Developmental Screening & Assessments
- Curriculum
- Children with Special Needs

Family Engagement

Professional Development and Staff Qualifications

Health and Safety

- Environmental Safety & Physical Health
- Nutrition
- Physical Activity

Self-Assessment Tool

New!

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Supporting Babies Through QRIS

A Self-Assessment Tool for
U.S. States and Other Jurisdictions

Purpose & Uses:

- Identify the strengths, opportunities, and gaps in system.
- Identify QRIS components that are already in place to support infants and toddlers.
- Prioritize components that could be added to augment existing supports for infants, toddlers, and families.

Supporting Babies Through QRIS

Self-Assessment Tool

New!

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ELEMENT 1: Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners—*Incorporates child care licensing, Head Start, Pre-K, aligned with Early Learning Standards*						
Vision: Ensure that the state or jurisdiction develops a set of QRIS standards that measure the level of quality and support adherence to best practices that have been promoted by experts in the child development field, in order to foster high-quality, accessible, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically competent early care and learning services for infants, toddlers, and their families.						
	Self-Assessment			**Comments**	**Priority Level**	**Effort**
	No	**Sometimes**	**Yes**			
1. QRIS standards include infant- and toddler-specific indicators in these areas:						
a. learning environment						
b. continuity of care policies and practices						
c. developmental screening						
d. child assessment						
e. family engagement						
f. curriculum						
g. daily interactions/relationships between child and caregiver(s)						
h. dual-language learners						
i. children with special needs						
j. staff qualifications and professional development						
k. environmental safety and physical health						
l. nutrition						
m. physical activity						
n. cultural competency						
2. QRIS incorporates the Early Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS).						

Self-Assessment Tool

New!

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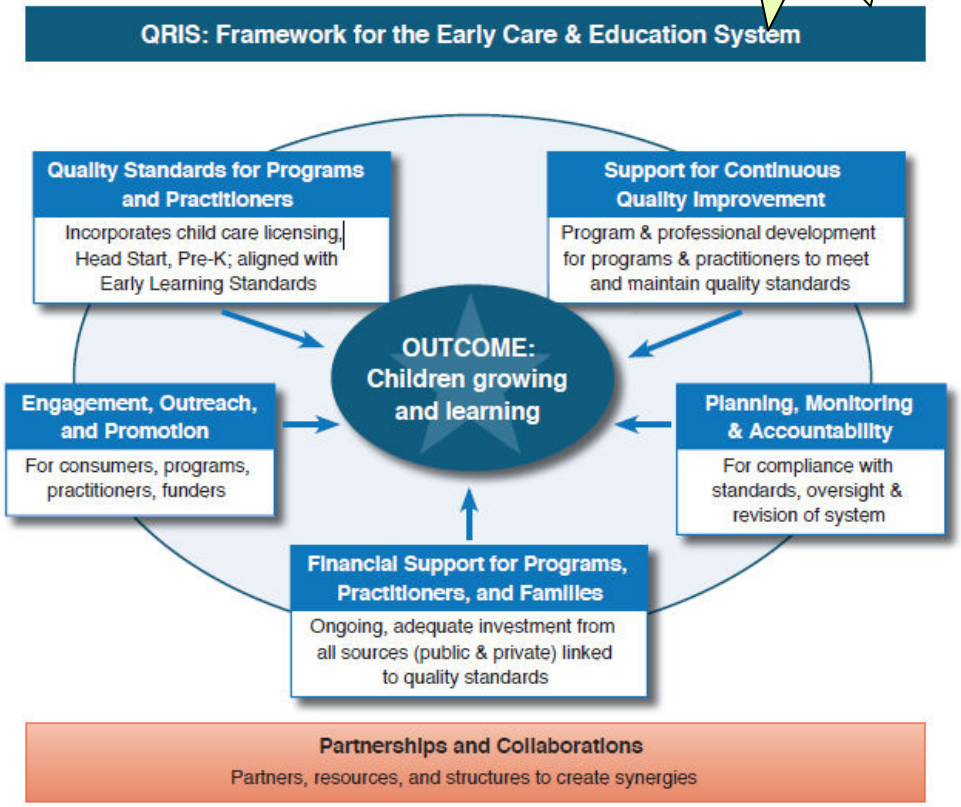
Figure 1:



Note: Adapted with permission from: Mitchell, A., (2009). *Quality rating & improvement systems as the framework for early care and education system reform.* Retrieved from www.earlychildhoodfinance.org/downloads/2009/QRISasSystemReform_2009.pdf

[ii] Mitchell, A., (2009). *Quality Rating & Improvement Systems as the framework for early care and education system reform.* Retrieved from http://www.earlychildhoodfinance.org/downloads/2009/QRISasSystemReform_2009.pdf

Self-Assessment Tool

New!

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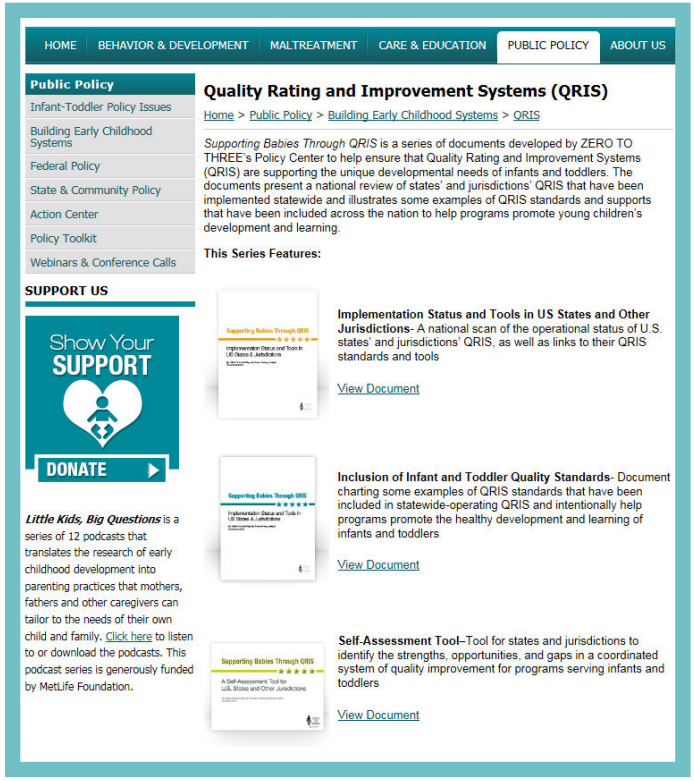

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Supporting Babies Through QRIS

Supporting Babies Through QRIS: Responses from the Field

Christine R. Hughes, Ph.D.
Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment
Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

JoEllen Robbins
Infant/Toddler Specialist
Office of Child Care
Utah Department of Workforce Services

Utah's QRIS: Overview & Context

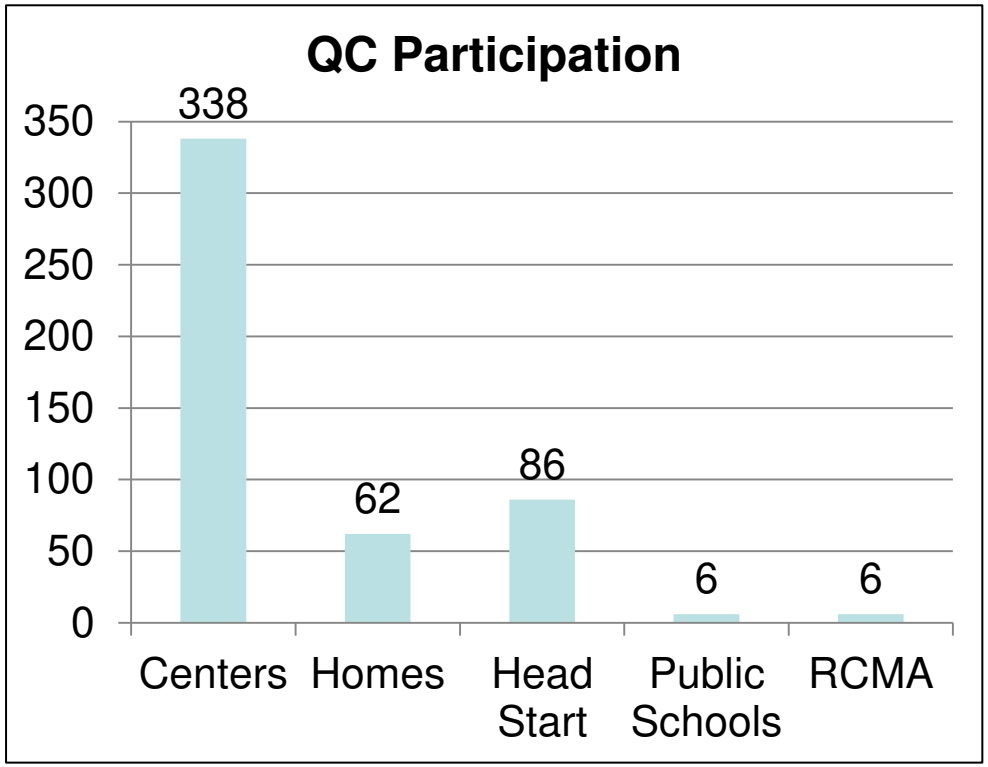
- Voluntary system; still in infancy
- QRIS stands for Quality Recognition Information System; not currently a rating system
- Infant/Toddler network, grant support, and work around best practices for infants and toddlers came well before QRIS
- 7 Quality Indicators exist in Utah's QRIS (Health and Safety, Outdoor Environment, Indoor Environment, Administration, Family Involvement, The Program, and Professional Development)
- Each Quality Indicator Area has multiple criteria that providers can work to achieve
- Many of these criteria apply to children of all ages
- 4 of the Quality Indicators require criteria specific to children under the age of 3 (Outdoor Environment, Indoor Environment, Health and Safety and the Program)

Utah's QRIS: Overview & Context

- Currently, the QRIS system is set up as a self-reporting system. Each program is responsible for reading the specifics regarding what is required to demonstrate they have earned a criteria and upload it to the Care About Child Care Database for approval.
- In our Care About Child Care Agencies (CCR&R's previously) there are individuals trained to verify and approve criteria. If an approval cannot be given, the provider is contacted and some technical assistance is provided.
- Criteria must be verified each year in order to be renewed. All earned criteria is displayed for parents to view when searching the web-site.
- We are now working on our "Second Generation" QRIS in an effort to expand our QRIS to look more at interactions and language than it does currently and provide more coaching for providers in the application of best practice and what they learn in training classes.

Miami's QRIS: Overview & Context

- ***Voluntary QRIS (2008)***
- ***Standards include:***
  - Learning Environment
  - Staff Qualifications
  - Curriculum
  - Family Support & Inclusion
- ***Supports include:***
  - Technical assistance
  - Career advising
  - Scholarships, training
  - WAGE$
  - Materials & financial awards



The Children's Trust
QUALITY COUNTS
Striving for Five Star Early Learning
Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

Supporting Babies Through QRIS

Miami's QRIS: Overview & Context

Quality Counts 2.0

- Substantial revision of the "R" and the "I" in 2011-13

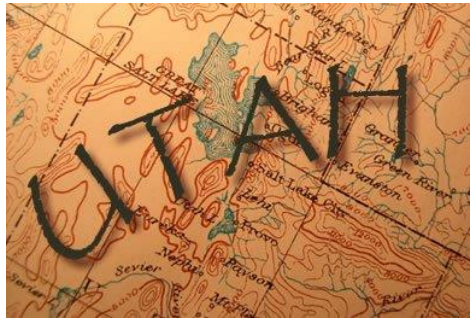
Rating

- CLASS and ERS in Learning Environment
- Several best practices in infant & toddler care in Curriculum
- Specific training requirements in Curriculum

Improvement

- Supports are focused on programs serving children in poverty
- Technical assistance specialization

Let's Learn from Utah and Miami!!!



Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners

Vision:

Ensure that the state or jurisdiction develops a set of QRIS standards that measure the level of quality and support adherence to best practices that have been promoted by experts in the child development field, in order to foster high-quality, accessible, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically competent early care and learning services for infants, toddlers, and their families.

Supporting Babies Through QRIS

Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners

Miami Example

- Curriculum standards:
  - 1 Point
    - 100% teaching staff provide individualized personal care and play experiences for all children
    - Information about feeding, elimination, sleep, and other activities is written and shared with families daily
  - 2 Points
    - 100% of infants and toddlers have a designated primary caregiver
  - 3 Points
    - Program uses a continuity of care model with infants and toddlers

Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners

Utah Example

Health and Safety Quality Indicator

- Program supports breastfeeding
- A covered hands-free receptacle is used to dispose of diapers
- The diapering sink is located within arm's reach of the diapering station
- Street shoes are not worn in infant rooms

Outdoor Environment Quality Indicator

- The Infant & Toddler playground is separated from the older children's play area

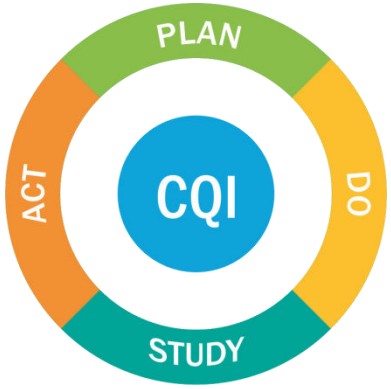
Indoor Environment Quality Indicator

- Infant rooms have food preparation areas with refrigerators and counters
- Infant sleep areas are located in the classroom for supervision purposes

Support for Continuous Quality Improvement

Vision:

Ensure the existence of a knowledgeable and culturally and linguistically competent infant and toddler workforce that has access to ongoing opportunities for professional development and that can contribute to a strong start for infants, toddlers, and families.



Supporting Babies Through QRIS

Support for Continuous Quality Improvement

Utah Example

- Many of the supports available for programs providing Infant/Toddler care were in place well before the QRIS
- A 40 hour Infant/Toddler Endorsement training is offered to providers at a nominal fee and works in tandem with Infant/Toddler Grants
- Directors attend training with staff and commit to time in classrooms between Specialist visits
- Quarterly Director Support Groups are available to assist directors in understanding quality and how to help their staff achieve their goals related to best practice in their Infant/Toddler classrooms
- CDA support in place to provide those caring for infants and toddlers individualized help in obtaining an I/T CDA Credential

Support for Continuous Quality Improvement

Miami Example

- Training requirements built into Curriculum standard
  - 1 Point: 100% teaching staff have at least .5 CEUs in infant/toddler development and care per renewal period
  - 3 Points: 100% teaching staff have at least 1 CEU in infant/toddler development and care per renewal period

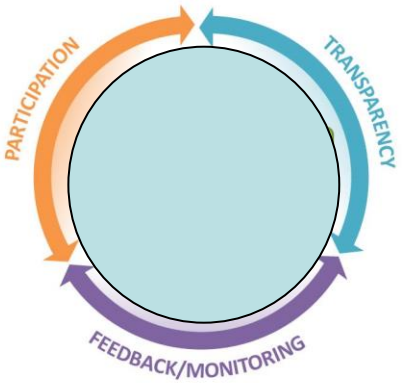
- Increased training opportunities to meet the demand
  - Flexibility around topics (development, care, curriculum framework)

- Plan to enhance TA by developing specialization in infant & toddler development and care

Planning, Monitoring, and Accountability

Vision:

Ensure that QRIS promotes actual continuous quality improvement at the program level and is linked to positive infant, toddler, and family outcomes.



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Planning, Monitoring and Accountability

Miami Example

- ***Planning***
  - Steering Committee

- ***Monitoring***
  - Internal review process for assessment, verification, rating processes

- ***Accountability***
  - Logic model to track outputs and outcomes
    - Staff
    - Program
    - Child
    - Families/Community

Planning, Monitoring and Accountability

Utah Example

- Planning and implementation of QRIS post CCDF reauthorization includes considering best ways to monitor and hold programs accountable
- Biggest challenge encountered has been funding
- Finding ways to create a mobile/ on the ground workforce and assist them in gaining quality criteria and raising quality in general
- Within the context of grant program for infants and toddlers, Utah is already focusing on monitoring and accountability (e.g. ITERS tool used to establish baseline and then follow- up observation is completed a year later)

Financial Support for Programs, Practitioners, and Families

Vision:

Ensure access to affordable high-quality early care and learning experiences for infants, toddlers, and families by providing funding at a sufficient level to support high-quality infant-toddler programs, including financial supports for programs and practitioners to ensure equity and parity.

Financial Support for Programs, Practitioners, and Families

Utah Example

- Began offering targeted Infant/Toddler Grants to programs beginning in 2003
- These grants are built around researched, best practices in the field
- The ITERS tools is used to help identify areas for improvement in each center/classroom
- Programs receive funds to purchase furniture, equipment and materials, provide staff development opportunities, increase continuity of care and other issues identified as needed to increase quality of care
- Each program works extensively with an Infant/Toddler Specialist who provides coaching, technical assistance, modeling and specialized training to directors and staff

Financial Support for Programs, Practitioners, and Families

Miami Example

- Support Grants = directly related to the program's Quality Improvement Plan
  - Purchasing developmentally appropriate materials and/or equipment
  - Awarding money to support more substantial improvements/purchases

- Scholarships for practitioners

- Training for practitioners

- Addressing ***equity*** in QC 2.0

Engagement, Outreach, and Promotion

Vision:

Ensure that the state or jurisdiction develops and implements a communications strategy to promote quality early learning experiences for infants and toddlers and garner support from providers, families, and policymakers.

Engagement, Outreach, and Promotion

Miami Example

- ***Providers***
  - Outreach has been both formal and informal

- ***Families***
  - Implementation evaluation
  - TV and radio advertisements

- ***Policymakers***
  - Limitations of county-based system
  - Weaving the science of early experience into all our conversations about early learning

Engagement, Outreach, and Promotion

Utah Example

- Focus groups were conducted with parents as well as surveys to help ascertain what they already knew about quality child care and what was important to them to help us in designing our system
- A website was developed to provide opportunities for programs to showcase what they had to offer families as well as educate parents on what to look for in quality child care
- An advertising campaign was designed around our brand "Care About Childcare" to educate the public about the existence of the QRIS and how to access resources to assist in locating quality care and provide information about available child care options
- Small incentive grants were made available to programs to encourage them to participate in the QRIS system

Partnerships and Collaborations

Vision:

Leverage partners to create synergies and promote high-quality, community-driven, and sustainable early learning opportunities for infants and toddlers.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Utah Example

- As Utah created the QRIS Quality Indicators and Criteria, a work group was formed of individuals from a number of agencies and groups with interest in quality for children
- This group included individuals from Child Care Licensing, the Health Department, Private Family Child Care Providers, Child Care Center Directors and Owners, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and others
- With this group, the 7 Quality Indicators were created (over time smaller groups worked to help define Criteria)
- The Office of Child Care has worked collaboratively with our Child Care and Resource Agencies statewide to develop supports and technical assistance to help providers achieve criteria

Partnerships and Collaborations

Miami Example

- The Children's Trust designed Quality Counts to purposefully engage multiple community agencies as partners
  - Directly as service providers
  - Indirectly as partners in planning and implementation

- Future goals:
  - Engage the business community
  - Develop "outside the box" partnerships

Questions & Discussion

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A recording of the webinar and supporting materials will be posted on the ZERO TO THREE website at www.zerotothree.org/policywebinars

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