



## Quality First Overview

### What is Quality First?

- ★ Quality First is Arizona's quality improvement and rating system.
  - It identifies quality standards that include best practices around health and safety, environments, adult child interactions, teacher qualifications, curriculum and child assessment.
  - Supports programs in increasing their quality standards
  - Provides parents access to early care and education programs

### What is the purpose of Quality First?

- ★ Improves school readiness for children
- ★ To help families be informed of what quality looks like and why it is important.
- ★ To inform policy makers and communities on quality early childhood education needs.

### Current enrollment in Quality First

- ★ Around 900 early care and education providers spanning the entire state of Arizona
- ★ Programs can apply for Quality First on the QualityFirstAZ.com website. To apply a program must be regulated by Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS), Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), Tribal Regulation, or Department of Defense (Military).

### Quality First Star Rating

- ★ Programs achieve a 1-5 star (Rising Star through Highest Quality) based on assessment scores in the quality standard areas listed above (health and safety, environments, adult child interactions, teacher qualifications, curriculum and child assessment).

### What Does Quality Child Care Program Look Like?

- ★ A quality program provides a safe and healthy environment;
- ★ A quality program provides staff with ongoing training and support to develop their knowledge and skills to enhance their relationships with children and families;
- ★ A quality program creates a learning environment that provides the space, materials and activities appropriate at all levels of children's interests and abilities;
- ★ A quality program provides low staff to child ratios, allowing each child to develop stable relationships with skilled, nurturing staff;
- ★ A quality program establishes group sizes according to age that are small enough to ensure the children receive the attention they need to learn and develop optimally;
- ★ A quality program is committed to continuous quality improvement

### Quality First Benefits and Resources

- ★ See attached Quality First Components page

For more information on Quality First please visit [www.QualityFirstAZ.com](http://www.QualityFirstAZ.com)

Quality First Components

