

Primary Mechanisms in Detail

EQM uses three primary mechanisms to support the staffs' professional growth, education and site improvement of child care programs that have been selected to be part of Nevada County's EQM.

(1) Technical Assistance and Specialized Training

- EQM Staff (coach, mentors and consultants)
 - Conducts regular site visits and work alongside early childhood teachers (as designated by the EQM Coordinator) to support their capacity in meeting goals set in the enhancement plan
 - The role of EQM is to provide a supportive and encouraging environment for joint reflection on current practices, promote continuous self-assessment and learning, and problem-solving challenging situations
 - EQM's ultimate goal for participating programs is sustained performance in which the teachers have the competence and confidence to engage in self reflection, self correction, and generalization of new skills and strategies to other situations as appropriate
- Consultants and Peer Mentors
 - Various consultants and peer mentors are accessible to all participating EQM programs to improve various aspects of the early childhood setting, program administration, teaching practices and quality of care
 - Develop a strategy for engaging the support and enhancing the knowledge of those who will teach, develop curricula for, and provide the organizational structure for the education of young children.
- Specialized Trainings
 - On and off-site trainings are offered to expand on philosophies, curriculum, teaching techniques and other areas deemed necessary and relevant to the care of children
 - Environmental Rating Scales (ERS)
 - Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS)
 - Child Observation and Desired Results Development Profile © for Preschool Children (DRDP-PS)
 - PITC
 - Ages & Stages Questionnaires®: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE)
 - CSEFEL

- CDE Preschool Learning Foundations and Frameworks
- Strengthening Families/Family Engagement
- Language and Literacy
- Nutrition
- Program Administration Scale (PAS) and Business Administration Scale (BAS)

(2) Professional Development and Quality Award Stipends

Incentives and stipends are tied to a site's Quality Improvement Plan and used to improve staff qualifications, provide individual staff or team building opportunities, further develop the business component of the child care sites, purchase developmentally appropriate materials, technology and improve the site's physical environment in order to meet the standards of our assessment tools.

Stipends are awarded to participating sites in the QI-S and QRIS Track and vary from one-time only to multi-year allocation for education incentives, program assessment, planning and implementation of an Enhancement Plan. Stipends are disbursed throughout the fiscal year and dependent upon type/size of the child care site, budget allowances, site funding source, and Tier Level Achieved.

Programs in the QI Track (non-rated) receive:

- Step 1 QI: no cost materials and supplies for program enhancements
- Step 2 QI-S:
 - Up to \$400 for program enhancements and professional development, disbursed at the end of the year (see QI-S section for more detail)

Programs in the QRIS Track, Step 3, volunteer to be rated. Participation in this track qualifies sites and eligible staff three types of stipends:

#1 Quality Improvement (QI) Stipend:

- A grant for site materials, facility improvements, professional development or technology
- QI stipends are typically \$500 for Family Child Care and Centers with 1-2 classrooms. Family Child Care and Centers with more than two classrooms typically receive \$1000 or more depending on size, number of children served, safety indicators based on quality rating assessments, and funding availability. CSPP and Head Start sites are not eligible for QI Stipends.

- To receive this stipend, child care program representatives must attend an Environmental Rating Scales Training (FCCERS for Family Child Care, ECERS for Centers) and submit an approved Quality Improvement Plan

#2 Professional Development (PD) Stipend:

- An annual stipend for each eligible staff employed in an EQM Step 3 site who completes an EQM approved Professional Development Option. See the annual PD Stipend Guide for stipend amounts for each PD Option.

#3 QRIS Quality Award Stipend:

- QRIS Ratings and awards are for a two year term and dependent upon the size, type of program and QRIS Tier Rating: Bronze Award (Tier 3), Silver Award (Tier 4), Gold Award (Tier 5)
- **Family Child Care Programs:**
 - Small/medium (licensed for up to 6 children):
 - Bronze Level (Tier 3): up to \$500;
 - Silver Level (Tier 4): up to \$900;
 - Gold Level (Tier 5): up to \$1300
 - Large site (licensed for up to 14 children):
 - Bronze Level (Tier 3): up to \$750;
 - Silver Level (Tier 4): up to \$1250;
 - Gold Level (Tier 5): up to \$1600
 - **Child Care Centers:**
 - Small/medium (licensed for up to 60 children):
 - Bronze Level (Tier 3): up to \$1000;
 - Silver Level (Tier 4): up to \$1700;
 - Gold Level (Tier 5): up to \$2200
 - Large (licensed for 60+ children):
 - Bronze Level (Tier 3): up to \$1200;
 - Silver Level (Tier 4): up to \$2000;
 - Gold Level (Tier 5): up to \$2500

(3) Quality Care Assessment and Tools

Participating sites receive a free quality care assessment of every eligible classroom, completed by a certified independent observer, including:

- Environmental Rating Scale (ERS), and,
- Classroom Learning Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS™).

These assessments help inform the site's quality improvement efforts.

Assessment and Accountability Measures of the ERS, CLASS™, Desired Results Development Profile © for Preschool Children (DRDP-PS), Ages & Stages Questionnaires®: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE), Preschool Learning Foundations, and the Program Administration Scale (PAS) are also used and applied depending on which level each site is placed.

The following is a description of assessment tools used in QRIS:

- ASQ:SE is a screening tool that identifies infants and young children whose social and emotional development requires further evaluation to determine if referral for intervention services is necessary
- PAS provides a reliable and easy-to-administer tool for measuring the overall quality of administrative practices of early care and education programs. The PAS assesses quality in ten areas: human resources development, personnel cost and allocation, center operations, child assessment, fiscal management, program planning and evaluation, family partnerships, marketing and public relations, technology, and staff qualifications.
- DRDP-PS identifies the measures that demonstrate the achievement of desired results across the development areas for children from birth to age 5 in child care and development programs. DRDP-PS provides a data collection mechanism for evaluation of the quality of individual child development programs to support the continuum of children's developmental progress.
- CLASS™ is an observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on the classroom interactions that boost children's learning. CLASS™-based professional development tools increase teacher effectiveness, and children in classrooms with higher CLASS™ scores achieve at higher levels than their peers in classrooms with lower CLASS™ scores.
- ERS is designed to assess process quality. Process quality consists of the various interactions that go on in a classroom between staff and children, staff, parents, and other adults, among the children themselves, and the interactions children have with the many materials and activities in the environment, as well as those features, such as space, schedule and materials that support these interactions.