

## WHY NY NEEDS QUALITYstarsNY:

QUALITYstarsNY establishes benchmarks of excellence and keeps programs, providers and funders accountable to the use of public dollars and to the goal of providing all children with transformative early learning experiences.



## Background

Interest in early childhood education is at an all-time high. New York State’s New Education Reform Commission embraced early childhood education with its “cradle to career” focus and first recommendation to expand prekindergarten. Governor Cuomo has likewise made statewide expansion of pre-kindergarten programs a top priority. And, the United States Congress has joined President Obama to make historic proposals to expand access to quality early childhood services for all children from birth through age 5.

QUALITYstarsNY was developed by successive groups of New York early childhood education experts convened by the Early Care and Learning Council and then the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The initiative is administered and currently being implemented by the ECAC. The City University of New York’s Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI) serves to coordinate the implementation of QUALITYstarsNY statewide.



## Problem

The reality is that too many of New York State’s young children attend sub-par early care and education programs. The problem, bluntly put, is that New York State has not acted upon its commitment to “high quality” as stated in its previous and current early education expansion plans. And the state’s failure to do so has already exacted a cost to its expansion efforts as federal funding opportunities have been lost.

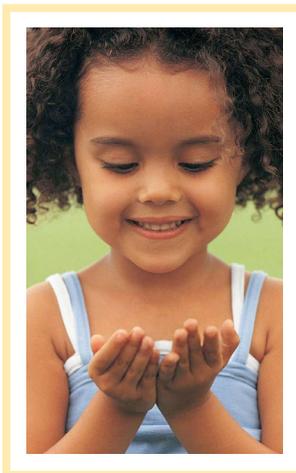
## Solution

QUALITYstarsNY – the state’s quality improvement system (QIS), provides a framework to evaluate and improve the early childhood programs for young children from birth through entry into kindergarten. Similar programs exist in every state in the country, and federal grant competitions (like Race to the Top) look to a state’s QIS commitment as a key indicator of success or failure.

Focusing on child care centers, family child care homes, universal prekindergarten programs and Head Start sites, QUALITYstarsNY uses established quality program standards to assess the level of quality that each early learning program attains. Based on that evaluation, programs receive a star rating and a quality improvement plan. Programs then receive coaching, mentoring, professional development and other resources to work through their improvement plans. All project activity is monitored and evaluated in an on-going process to ensure high accountability for all parties. Information on all programs is made available to parents and funders alike.

## Goal

The goal of providing young children with increased early care and education opportunities is clear. Reaching that goal, however, must be tempered with the realization that more is not necessarily better. The goal needs reshaping: providing young children with more and better early care and education opportunities sets the stage for lifelong success. Early childhood development matters and the quality of early childhood programs matters too.



## Promise

Full implementation of QUALITYstarsNY will help make New York State an attractive and sound investment opportunity for all funding sources. By ensuring that future early childhood program expansion efforts are coupled with the necessary quality enhancements, New York will meet educational challenges, build a quality workforce and spur economic growth.