

Steps to Quality

Idaho's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care



Supporting child care to provide a setting where all children thrive



What is Steps to Quality?

Children benefit from high quality early care and education. Steps to Quality is a child care Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), which measures the quality of child care in center and home-based settings.

Steps to Quality provides child care programs with a set of tools to cultivate a high quality setting. We offer a plan for the sustainable growth of your business. We measure the developing quality of your child care program. We publicly recognize your program's success and share it with families throughout Idaho. The goal of Steps to Quality is to help Idaho's child care programs provide a setting where children thrive.

At each step, we'll help you grow the quality of your program in these areas:

- Health and Safety
- Staff Education
- Classrooms and Outdoor Space
- Inclusion of all Children
- Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Professional Business Practices



In Steps to Quality, a program evolves as it moves through steps 1-6. A successful program implements the quality indicators in its current step, while maintaining the quality of the previous steps. Continuous quality improvement has deep roots.

Steps to Quality is a building block system, meaning that each step is verified through documentation and observation before the program moves on to the next step. Verification at any step means the program implements the quality indicators in that step, and all previous steps.

Participation in Steps to Quality is one of the best choices your child care program can make to demonstrate its commitment to quality. Information about Steps to Quality is included in all IdahoSTARS programs. Any engagement with IdahoSTARS is recognized as a commitment to a higher level of quality, which is formally recognized in Steps to Quality.





Step 5

Thriving as a child care business and nurturing all children with quality early care and education experiences.

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms meet NAEYC guidelines for group size and ratio. • A Child Care Health Consultant visits once a year. • Health information from a recognized health organization is available for parents. • Program hosts one health and safety class for children, parents and/or staff annually.
Staffing and Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have a minimum of a current CDA or 12 ECE credits. • Directors complete 15 additional hours of business management training.
Child Growth, Development and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy and numeracy activities are incorporated into daily activity plans. • Weekly documentation of each child's progress in daily routines is on file. • A Child Growth, Development and Learning Action Plan is completed in each classroom annually.
Children with Diverse Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Inclusion Plans are completed with families for children with diverse abilities in each classroom annually.
Strengthening Families and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families have opportunities to participate in program development. • Two parent teacher conferences are offered during the year. • Protective Factors are referenced in strategic planning, program evaluation, and staff/parent engagement.
Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement for Step 5.

Programs verified at Step 5 must meet the indicators in this current step, and all previous steps (1, 2, 3, and 4).