

Creating a Plan for Action: Building on Quality



This series of two three-hour sessions focuses on how quality is measured and the tools and strategies used such as reflecting on practice and using data from the ERS and Stars standards. These learnings are used to create SMART goals and action plans to guide quality improvement efforts.

Providers and administrators are encouraged to find what it is that inspires them in providing high quality learning environments to the children and families they serve. This motivation along with the support of their Technical Assistant will guide them throughout their journey within DE Stars.

Objectives

Identify the steps in the DE Stars continuous quality improvement process.

Identify the Delaware Stars Standards for professionals, programs, and children.

Use the Delaware Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals as a tool for personal and program-wide improvement planning.

Use the Environmental Rating Scale program evaluation tool as a tool for program improvement.

Construct an Action Plan for improving quality using DE Stars Standards and self-reflection.

**After attending both sessions, participants will have: completed self-assessment of ECE Competencies and online Observation and Assessment training and reviewed instructions section in applicable ERS scale.*

“Continuous quality improvement is a process to ensure that programs are systematically and intentionally improving services and increasing positive outcomes for the children/families they serve. It is an environment that uses collected data to make positive changes – even when things are going well – rather than waiting for something to go wrong and then fixing it.”

***-Linda K. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary
and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood
Development, ACF, U.S.
Department of Health and Human Services***

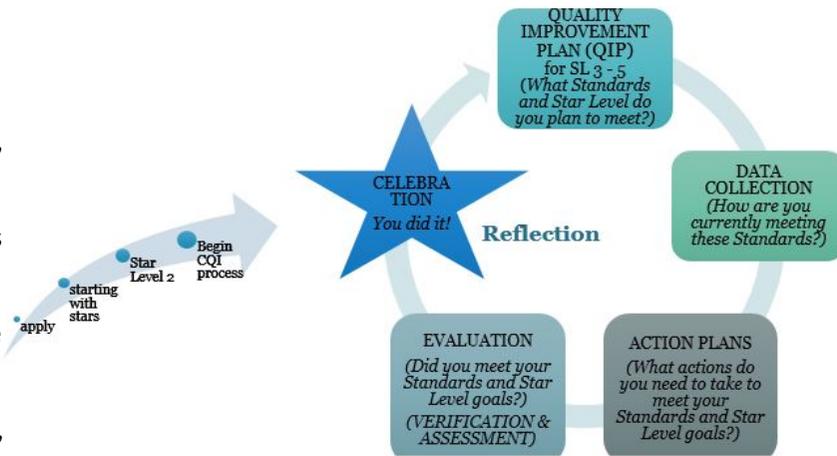
About Delaware Stars

Delaware Stars is Delaware's Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS), a system funded by the Office of Early Learning (OEL) within the Department of Education, and serves as an organized way to assess, improve and communicate the quality of early care and education programs that families consider for their children.

DE Stars builds on OCCL regulations, with 5 Star Levels that include a mixture of required and choices of Stars Standards. These standards are based upon what research tells us children need from us and characteristics of early childhood programs that benefit children and enhance cognitive and social development. The standards are outgrowths from both national and statewide recognized organizations in early childhood development.

Why CQI

- Engaging in CQI is crucial because based upon research, 90% of a child's brain development happens before age 5.
- Measuring, evaluating, and improving quality is important and requires a lot of reflection
- The ERS assessment tool and DE Stars Standards are used to measure and increase program quality
- Reflection is the heart of the CQI process—at each stage, you are “stopping, thinking, and possibly changing” what is happening—you are collecting data on how your program is meeting Delaware Stars Standards, you are developing and implementing a plan for moving forward, and you are evaluating your progress on that plan.

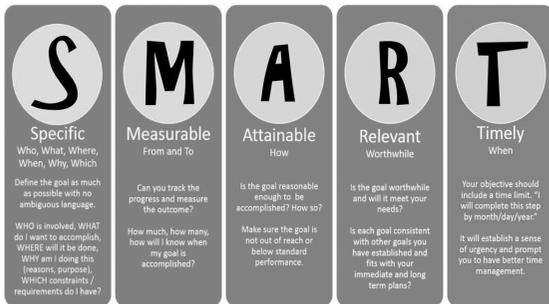


The Continuous Quality Improvement Cycle

How it Works in Practice

CQI is the **system** for quality improvement.

An Action Plan is an important **tool** for ensuring that the process works. The Action Plan serves as your "blueprint", or your guide for ensuring you are progressing towards your goals.



SMART goals are the first step to an Action Plan. Setting SMART goals increases the likelihood that goals will be reached.

Program: _____ Date: _____

GOAL/Objective	STRATEGIES	Who is responsible	Anticipated Timeline		Follow-up
			Planned	Completed	
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ Resources Needed:					
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ Resources Needed:					

Questions for Educators

What is your “Why?” for being in the early childhood educator? Why does your work matter? Does each of your staff members have their own “why”?

Why did you join DE Stars? What do you hope to gain from your experience in a Delaware’s QRIS?

What inspires you? How can you use that inspiration to set goals for yourself and your program?

What are your current strengths? What are you doing well and can build upon? What areas can you benefit from additional supports and practice? What about your staff?

How can you use data from the ERS assessment tool to inform program planning? How can you use self-assessment data from the DE Stars standards to inform program planning?

How can you create a SMART Goal based on what the Environment Rating Scales are telling you?

How often do you yourself take time to pause throughout the day and think about how things are going, what is going well, what is working well, what is not, what is stressing you out or challenging you? Why would it be beneficial to allow yourself and your staff time for reflection?

Why are the Indicators in the Environment Rating Scales important for children and how can you best meet the intent of the indicators within your own program environment?