Quality In Early Learning and Child Care
Why does Quality matter?

• Critical importance of the first three years of a child’s life.
• Experiences in the early years significantly affects brain development
• Attachments lay the foundation for establishing successful relationships
• Short, medium and long term effects of high quality early learning program enrolment.
The Council of the European Union on Quality on Early Learning

• In May 2019, the Council releases recommendations on high-quality ECEC systems
• Investing in high-quality early childhood education and care
The Council of the European Union on Quality on Early Learning (Cont’d)

• Recommendations of the Council
  1. Improve Access
  2. Ensure accessibility, affordability, inclusivity
  3. Support professionalism of staff
  4. Enhance development of early years curricula
  5. Promote transparent and coherent monitoring and evaluation
  6. Aim at ensuring adequate funding and a legal framework
OECD – Quality Review

• The OECD Policy Review: Quality Beyond Regulations in ECEC
• Purpose – Enhance Quality and Child Development
• Policy Levers for the review
F-P/T ELCC Quality Indicators

• F-P/T Committee on ELCC Data, Research and Information
• Existing Quality Indicators
• Levels of Quality Related Data
F-P/T ELCC Quality Indicators (cont’d)

• Key Elements of Quality
  1. Governance
  2. Workforce
  3. Curriculum
  4. Space and Physical Environment
  5. Interaction and Relationships
  6. Parent/Community Engagement
  7. Diversity and Inclusion

• Quality Indicators
Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

• Agreement Signed in March 2018

• Saskatchewan’s Action Plan under the Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement focuses on:
  – Improving access to licensed child care
  – Inclusion of children experiencing disability
  – Supporting quality of experiences of children in the child care and early learning
What Is High-Quality?

• Diversity in what constitutes “High-Quality”
• Structural Quality
• Process Quality
Factors Necessary for High-Quality Care

• Factors of critical importance in providing high quality child care:
  ✓ Health, safety and good hygiene
  ✓ Good Nutrition
  ✓ A well maintained environment
  ✓ An adequate number of staff who are sensitive and responsive to children
  ✓ Opportunities for active plan
  ✓ Etcetera
All states have regulations and/or licensing standards

State regulations provide a baseline standard – not broader components of high quality

Key elements of a high-quality Education and Childcare Program:
  – Interpersonal interactions
  – Physical environment
  – Program support structure
Components Necessary to Achieve and maintain high quality

• The six core components necessary for a quality program:
  – Professional and stable teacher workforce
  – Effective leadership
  – Age appropriate curriculum
  – Comprehensive family engagement activities
  – Multilevel continuous quality improvement system
  – Sustainable and sufficient set of funding mechanisms
Measuring Quality in Early Childhood

• Tools used to assess and report quality of early childhood programs:
  – Environment Rating Scales
  – CLASS
  – National Accreditation
  – QRIS
Early Learning and Child Care
An Exploration of High-Quality Systems
Saskatchewan’s Approach to High Quality

• Committee formed to review Saskatchewan’s approach to inclusion
• Premise – a high quality early learning program is a necessary base on which to build an inclusion program
• Current child care system licensing standards focus on minimum standards
• The idea – enhance quality through a continuous improvement framework
Nova Scotia

2016 – New “Quality Matters” Program

• Enhance quality through CQI process
• Direct link – funding eligibility and quality
• Participation required for licensed centres that receive provincial funding

Quality Matters Focuses on:

• Compliance – Reg/policy/standards
• Accountability
• Program Quality Improvement
Nova Scotia (Cont’d)

Improving quality through implementation of quality improvement indicators in key areas:

– Leadership
– Staffing
– Learning environments
– Relationships
Nova Scotia (Cont’d)

Continuous Quality Improvement Process

1. Consider the 3 components of quality Matters and 4 key elements of program Quality

2. Complete self assessment

3. Develop a quality improvement plan

Role of the Early Childhood Development Consultant
Quebec

• Educational Quality Assessment and Improvement – A New Legal Requirement
• Objectives:
  – Ensure appropriate educational quality in all childcare types
  – Ensure overall quality across 4 dimensions:
    • Interactions – Staff/children
    • Physical structure and materials
    • Structure and variety of activities
    • Interactions – staff and parents
  – Ensure compliance with legal/regulatory requirements
Quebec (Cont’d)

What are the Measurement Tools?

1. Interactions – Staff and children
   - Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
2. Physical structure and materials
   - Observation chart
3. Structure and variety of activities
   - Interviews with educators
4. Interactions – Staff and parents
   - Questionnaires
5. Structure quality
   - Interviews with the administrator and with educators

What happens after the assessment
Pennsylvania Keystone Stars - QRIS

Keystone STARS – QRIS Program

• Core Principles
  ➢ A whole child approach to education
  ➢ Knowledgeable and responsive early care and education professionals
  ➢ Building and sustaining positive relationships

• 4 Primary Goals
  ➢ Improve Quality
  ➢ Support programs meet their quality goals
  ➢ Recognize programs continuous quality improvement
  ➢ Provide families a way to choose a quality program
Pennsylvania Keystone Stars – QRIS (Cont’d)

Performance Standards

• STAR 1 – Certification Compliance
• STAR 2 – Required quality standards must be addressed
• STAR 3 and STAR 4 – Earn points by choosing from a set of quality standards

STARS 2, 3, 4 quality improvement activities optional
Pennsylvania Keystone Stars – QRIS (Cont’d)

4 key components - quality improvement plan

1. Present level of quality
2. Program goals and supports needed
3. How the program will measure and report progress
4. Timeline for improvement
Colorado – QRIS and Key Indicators

- Study conducted on Colorado’s Qualistar Rating system for generating key indicators
- First time analysis using Key Indicator methodology in a Quality Rating System
- Analysis showed there were major limitations to utilizing this methodology with QRS/QRIS
- Food for thought
13 Key Indicators of Child Care Quality

The 13 Key Indicators of Child Care Quality
- Historical reference points
- National database established at Penn State University
- From the data collection effort, a core set of 13 indicators began to appear
- The indicators accomplish two things:
  - Statistically predict overall compliance
  - There is a significant relationship between indicators and positive outcomes for young children
Accreditation

- The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission
  - Standards based on latest knowledge and research
  - Standards focus on importance of quality child care curriculum
  - The NECPA Standards Reference – Divided into 14 chapters which encompass all 219 standards
Australia

Australia – National Quality Standard

• Seven Quality Areas
  – Education Program and Practice
  – Children’s Health and Safety
  – Physical Environment
  – Staffing Arrangements
  – Relationships with children
  – Collaborative partnerships with Families and Communities
  – Governance and Leadership
Quality Indicators Project – Questions to Answer Through the Process

1. Is quality included in the overall licensing, a separate component or a hybrid?

2. Range of assessment style:
   a. Self (facility) – Ministry – External?
   b. What is being measured – Build or Buy?

3. Improvement plans – Required or Voluntary?

4. Implications of results – None or funding or designation, etc?

5. Governance – Consultants role, etc?
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