This paper will propose a Key Indicator approach to developing an Early Care and Education Health & Safety and Program Quality (Fiene ECEPCPQ) instrument based upon key indicator research focusing on quality initiatives and child development research studies. The dependent variable in all these initiatives and studies is how well the child is doing in the respective ECE program (CO). The intervening variable that produces these positive aspects are adult-child interactions (ACI). The predicting variables which will be the focal point of this newly proposed tool are the following: A) Enhanced professional development represented by highly qualified ECE teachers, B) Developmentally appropriate/individualized curricula driven by developmental assessments, C) Language-based interactions between teachers and children, and lastly D) Enhanced family engagement for the program quality and E) Health & safety.

These predicting variables are drawn from past research in identifying key indicators in quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS), quality initiatives dealing with professional development of ECE teachers, and program quality studies as well as ECE licensing studies:

Fiene Algorithm: \[ CO \leq ACI \leq \sum (\Delta A(1+2) + \Delta B(3) + \Delta C(7-10) + \Delta D(4-6)) + (\Delta E(11-13)) \]

The following 13 questions/statements are drawn from these predictor variables/indicators that should be part of the newly proposed Fiene ECEPCPQ Scale:

1) The number of ECE AA and BA teachers? (A)
2) The number of ECE in-service ECE coaching or reflective supervision opportunities engaged in by ECE teachers? (A)
3) There is a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is individually based upon the developmental assessments of each child in the respective ECE classroom. (B)
4) The program provides opportunities for staff and families to get to know one another. (D)
5) Families receive information on their child’s progress on a regular basis, using a formal mechanism such as a report or parent conference. (D)
6) Families are included in planning and decision making for the program. (D)
7) Teachers encourage children to communicate. (C)
8) Teachers use language to develop reasoning skills. (C)
9) Teachers listen attentively when children speak. (C)
10) Teachers speak warmly to children. (C)
11 - 13) Children’s immunizations are up to date, the program is a hazard free environment, and there is proper supervision at all times. (E)