

TO: Early Childhood Education Professionals

DATE: April 13, 2017

SUBJECT: Step Up To Quality Validation Study

The Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services are excited to provide the results of the Step Up To Quality Validation Study. Step Up to Quality is Ohio's five-star quality rating and improvement system for preschool and child care programs. It recognizes programs that exceed minimum health and safety standards and promote children's learning and development. Step Up To Quality also helps parents choose preschool and child care providers and gives child care providers enhanced funding for offering high-quality care. The independent study of SUTQ conducted by COMPASS Evaluation and Research, Inc. indicates the program is making a real, positive difference for Ohio's youngest citizens. According to the authors of the study "there is evidence that sites with higher star ratings (3-star or higher) are associated with better child outcomes."

Highlights of the validation study include:

1. **High Quality Classroom Practices:** participation in SUTQ is associated with higher quality classroom practices, compared to sites that are not participating in SUTQ.
2. **Better Preparedness for Kindergarten:** children who participated in early learning and development programs sponsored by the Department of Education had mean scores on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment second only to students who were not economically disadvantaged. Moreover, children who participated in publicly funded child care had higher scores, on average, than students who were economically disadvantaged and had not participated in a publicly funded early care experience.
3. **Family Child Care:** Type A and B homes perform on par with their center and Early Childhood Education classroom counterparts.

This study was conducted by COMPASS Evaluation and Research, Inc. It examined five different types of validity of the Step Up To Quality program:

- ✓ **Face Validity:** Measured stakeholders and participants ideal belief of quality and if Step Up To Quality captures those components of quality within a program.
- ✓ **Content Validity:** Conducted a literature review of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems as well as evidence based practices of 44 states to determine commonalities within Step Up To Quality.
- ✓ **Construct Validity:** Measured Step Up To Quality tiered requirements and tools against the quality displayed within the program. Utilized the tiered rating assigned to determine if it appropriately linked to the behavior, practices, and concepts observed. Measured differences in quality across star ratings.
- ✓ **Procedural Validity:** Measured whether a star rating would change if different measurement criteria or techniques were applied, measured if the star rating level demonstrated meaningful and robust quality.
- ✓ **Predictive Validity:** The ability to utilize a star rating and link child kindergarten readiness abilities.

For more information on Step Up to Quality, visit <http://earlychildhoodohio.org/sutq/index.st> A complete copy of the evaluation can be found at <http://earlychildhoodohio.org/index.stm> under "What's New?".



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