



The Latest Resources: QRIS National Learning Network Website August 2012

Please find listed below the latest resources that have been posted to the QRIS National Learning Network at www.qrisnetwork.org. PLEASE contact us at dmathias@buildinitiative.org if you have new resources to add or share and if you have any questions or suggestions as to how to make the NLN a more useful opportunity for states and communities in the development and evolution of quality rating and improvement systems.

Debi Mathias, Director, QRIS National Learning Network, The BUILD Initiative

SPOTLIGHT ON MAINE: Quality for ME

Quality for ME is a four-step program designed to increase awareness of the basic standards of early care and Education, to recognize and support providers who are providing care above and beyond those standards, and to educate the community of the benefits of higher quality care. The website contains the Quality Rating System Application Manual - PDF which has an accompanying on line application format as well as the Quality for ME standards. <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/qualityforme.htm>

An interesting aspect of Maine's QRIS system is the number of research studies that have been completed and are in process on the QRIS and related systems. Recommendations from each study are evaluated for incorporation into policy, procedure and practice. See below for a few examples:

Maine's Quality for ME – Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS):

Final Evaluation Report December 2011

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/PDF/MCCPRC-qris-eval.pdf>

Research & Policy Brief June 2010

Early Childhood Professional Development: A Synthesis of Recent Research

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/PDF/MCCPRC-professional-development.pdf>

Maine Child Care Policy and Research Consortium

The Maine Child Care Policy and Research Consortium conducts applied research focused on early care and education services for children and families. The Consortium includes research staff from the University of Southern Maine, Muskie School of Public Service and from the University of Maine.

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/cutler/cyf/mainechildcare/>

Current projects in progress to complement the work noted above include:

- **Evaluation of the Implementation of Maine's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)** -This longitudinal study monitors the implementation of the QRIS and validates components of the QRIS.
- **US DHHS Research and Data Capacity Project** – This project is an evaluation of programs enrolled in the QRIS compared to those not enrolled in the QRIS and with a focus on differences in global quality and use of training and TA services. There is another related study investigating the use of state agency and Registry administrative data to examine the differences between programs enrolling in the QRIS and those that do not enroll. Finally, this work includes qualitative research investigating how child assessment data is used to inform improvements to program quality.

- **Educare Research Study-** Educare Schools are a research based program that prepares young, at risk children for school, and serves as a platform for quality early learning programming. Muskie staff serve as the local evaluation team for Educare of Central Maine. Using national formal assessments, data is collected on children, classrooms, teachers, and families. The findings are then shared with Educare program staff that uses the data for program improvement. Additionally, the results are transferred to the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina who serve as the national evaluation center for all Educare programs.

NAEYC and the National Center for Children in Poverty - Briefs on Technical Assistance

Two reports taken together can provide insight for states working on Technical Assistance Systems to support quality improvement in early learning programs:

- NAEYC's new public policy brief authored by Billie Young, **Strategic Directions: Technical Assistance Professionals in State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems** http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/TA_Professionals.pdf
- National Center for Children in Poverty's report by Sheila Smith, Taylor Robbins, William Schneider, J. Lee Kreader, and Christine Ong, **Coaching and Quality Assistance in Quality Rating Improvement Systems Approaches Used by TA Providers to Improve Quality in Early Care and Education Programs and Home-based Settings** http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_1047.html

New Early Learning Community for use of the CLASS™ in QRIS

Rebecca Berlin at Teachstone will be hosting a learning community for state-level QRIS leaders interested in discussing the integration of the CLASS™ into their QRIS's. This group is for states that are just beginning to integrate the CLASS™ or that are just in planning stages of adding CLASS™ into their QRIS. This group will start in October and meet virtually through web ex or a conference line the first Friday of the month from 3-4 EST. The dates for the calls are: October 5, November 2, December 7, January 4, February 1, March 1. Your participation will shape and inform future topics and discussions, so we invite you to make this YOUR learning community and share your CLASS experiences and questions with colleagues in other states and Teachstone staff. Please email Rebecca directly (rebecca.berlin@teachstone.org) if your state is interested in joining the learning community.

Baby Talk: Resources to Support The People Who Work With Infants and Toddlers:

Baby Talk is a free, one-way listserv that is distributed every other week. Each issue features one or more resources, the majority of which are available to download at no cost. To join the listserv, send an email with no message to subscribe-babytalk@listserv.unc.edu. To suggest resources, please contact Camille Catlett at camille.catlett@unc.edu or (919) 966-6635.

National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Releases Resources:

States that are reviewing or revising the QRIS practitioner and learning standards to build quality services and supports for young children and their families who are culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse may find these new resources helpful. The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) has profiled four early childhood education programs from their network of affiliates that exemplify best practices in serving young Latino children, English language learners, and their families. Each report profiles one NCLR affiliate and provides policy recommendations to help bring these programs to scale. Click on each link below to read the reports.

- Preparing Young Latino Children for School Success: Best Practices in Professional Development http://www.nclr.org/index.php/publications/preparing_young_latino_children_for_school_success_best_practices_in_professional_development
- Preparing Young Latino Children for School Success: Best Practices in Student Assessments http://www.nclr.org/index.php/publications/preparing_young_latino_children_for_school_success_best_practices_in_assessmentsstudent_assessments
- Preparing Young Latino Children for School Success: Best Practices in Language Instruction http://www.nclr.org/index.php/publications/preparing_young_latino_children_for_school_success_best_practices_in_language_instruction

- Preparing Young Latino Children for School Success: Best Practices in Family Engagement
http://www.nclr.org/index.php/publications/preparing_young_latino_children_for_school_sucess_best_practices_in_family_engagement

BRIEF PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF VALIDATION FOR QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS (QRIS) April 2012

QRIS validation approaches and planning are the focus of an Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation's (OPRE) Research-to-Policy, Research-to-Practice Brief. Validation of a QRIS is defined as "a multi-step process that assesses the degree to which design decisions about program quality standards and measurement strategies are resulting in accurate and meaningful ratings." Validation is crucial to providing designers, administrators, and stakeholders with information about how well a QRIS is functioning and achieving its intended goals. OPRE's brief on QRIS validation is meant to help those involved with authorizing, designing, financing, and refining QRIS to better understand validation and outline a set of validation-related activities.

OPRE recommends that states develop a QRIS validation plan at the beginning of their QRIS design process. Ideally, the plan would incorporate multiple approaches; however, time, duration, and costs of each approach must be taken into consideration when choosing which approaches to pursue. This brief emphasizes the importance of validation in understanding whether a QRIS is working as it should, how the system can be improved, and how it ultimately aids in increasing the odds that the QRIS will be successful.

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/cc/childcare_technical/reports/val_qual_early.pdf

Read OPRE's full brief on QRIS validation <http://www.qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/gscobb/2012-05-28%2007:36/Report.pdf>

NEW BUILD INITIATIVE REPORT RELEASED:

Family and Community Knowledge Systems: New Tools for Engagement

Minnesota, like other states, is in the early stages of designing an early childhood data management system that will provide information about young children and their families and the public services they receive. This unified data system will integrate data across the departments of education, health, and human services and provide information useful for monitoring and evaluating programs for improvement and accountability, tracking progress on achieving goals, assessing impacts of policies and services on young children and their families, identifying and analyzing gaps in service access and disparities in well-being and other outcomes based on geography, income, and race/ethnicity. The early childhood database will in time be integrated into the broader P-20 Longitudinal Data System. The paper identifies constructs and indicators representing family and community knowledge systems that should be incorporated in the Minnesota unified early childhood data system and the methods for collecting the new data. It also describes how to make the data system available and transparent for use at all levels. In addition, it offers strategies for using the data system to develop feedback loops from families and communities to programs and agencies. Such feedback loops are essential to authentic family and community engagement – including rural and cultural communities – and serve to strengthen them.

<http://www.buildinitiative.org/files/BUILD%20Brief%20Family%20&%20Community%20Knowledge%20Systems.pdf>