

# PQR(I)S: The *Intersection* of QRIS, PD and Inclusion

NAEYC Professional Development Institute

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# Learning Outcomes

Participants will:

- learn more about State Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and how they promote quality teaching and learning across multiple early childhood sectors;
- gain a greater understanding of the intersections among QRIS, PD systems and Inclusion; and
- be introduced to self-assessment and goal-setting strategies, tools and PD resources.

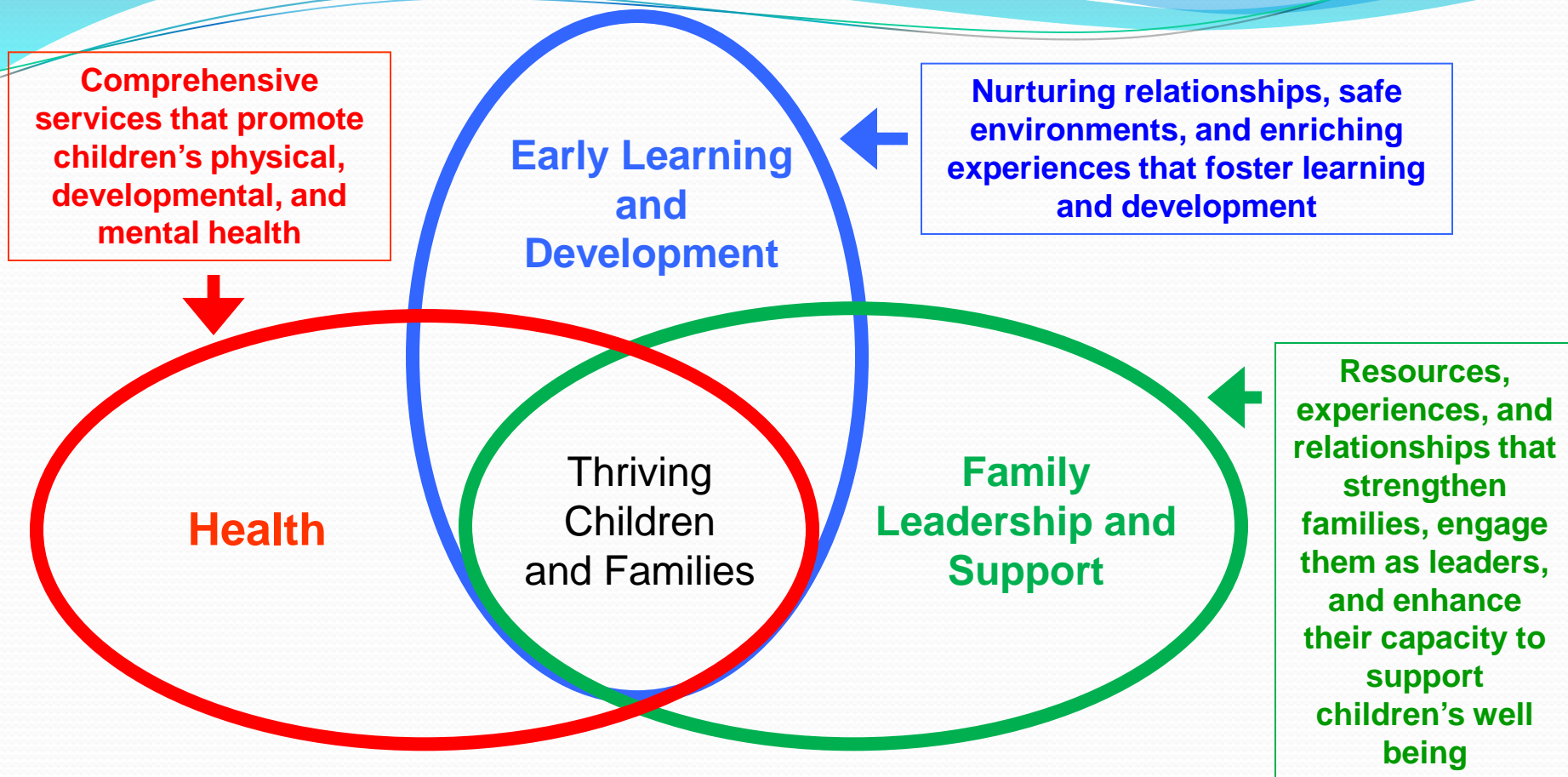
# Intersections: QRIS, PD, and Inclusion

licensing QRIS

**I** Professional  
**Q** Development  
**B** Systems

**IDEA**

# What Results Should a Comprehensive Early Childhood System Deliver?



**Values and Principles** Optimally, a comprehensive early childhood system will:

- Reach all children and families, and as early as possible, with needed services and supports
- Genuinely include and effectively accommodate children with special needs
- Reflect and respect the strengths, needs, values, languages, cultures and communities of children and families
- Ensure stability and continuity of services along a continuum from prenatal into school entry and beyond
- Ease access for families and transitions for children
- Value parents as decision makers and leaders
- Catalyze and maximize investment and foster innovation

# What Do We Mean By High Quality Inclusion?

**naeyc** April 2009

## Early Childhood Inclusion

**A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

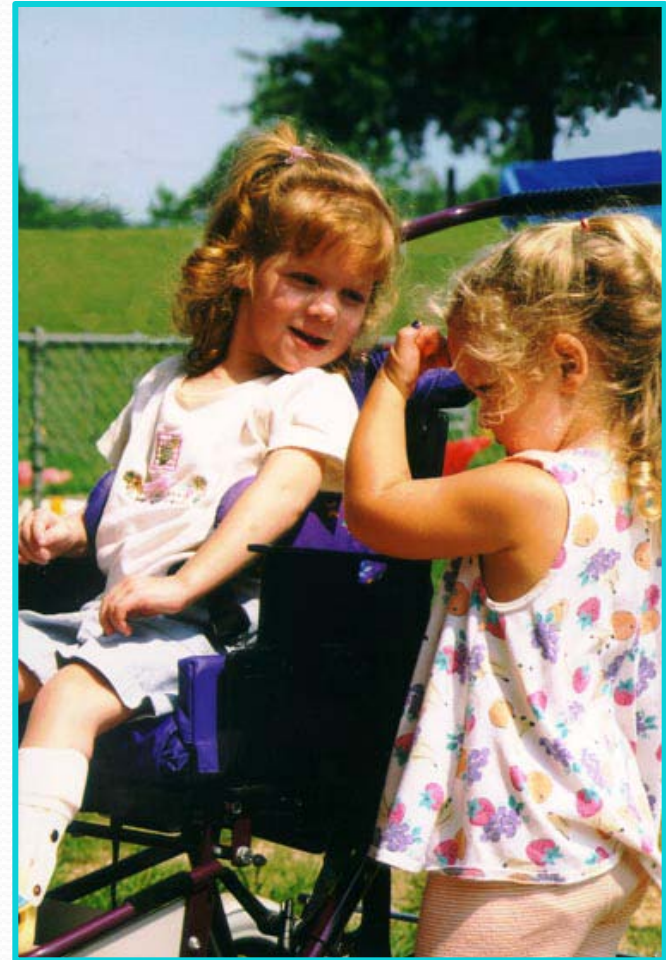
**T**oday an ever-increasing number of infants and young children with and without disabilities play, develop, and learn together in a variety of places – homes, early childhood programs, neighborhoods, and other community-based settings. The notion that young children with disabilities and their families are full members of the community reflects societal values about promoting opportunities for development and learning and a sense of belonging for every child. It also reflects a reaction against previous educational practices of separating and isolating children with disabilities. Over time, in combination with certain regulations and protections under the law, these values and societal views regarding children birth to 8 with disabilities and their families have come to be known as early childhood inclusion.<sup>1</sup> The most far-reaching effect of federal legislation on inclusion enacted over the past three decades has been to fundamentally change the way in which early childhood services ideally can be organized and delivered.<sup>2</sup> However, because inclusion takes many different forms and implementation is influenced by a

wide variety of factors, questions persist about the precise meaning of inclusion and its implications for policy, practice, and potential outcomes for children and families.

The lack of a shared national definition has contributed to misunderstandings about inclusion. DEC and NAEYC recognize that having a common understanding of what inclusion means is fundamentally important for determining what types of practices and supports are necessary to achieve high quality inclusion. This DEC/NAEYC joint position statement offers a definition of early childhood inclusion. The definition was designed not as a litmus test for determining whether a program can be considered inclusive, but rather, as a blueprint for identifying the key components of high quality inclusive programs. In addition, this document offers recommendations for how the position statement should be used by families, practitioners, administrators, policy makers, and others to improve early childhood services.

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# Definition

**Early childhood inclusion** embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a **sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential.**

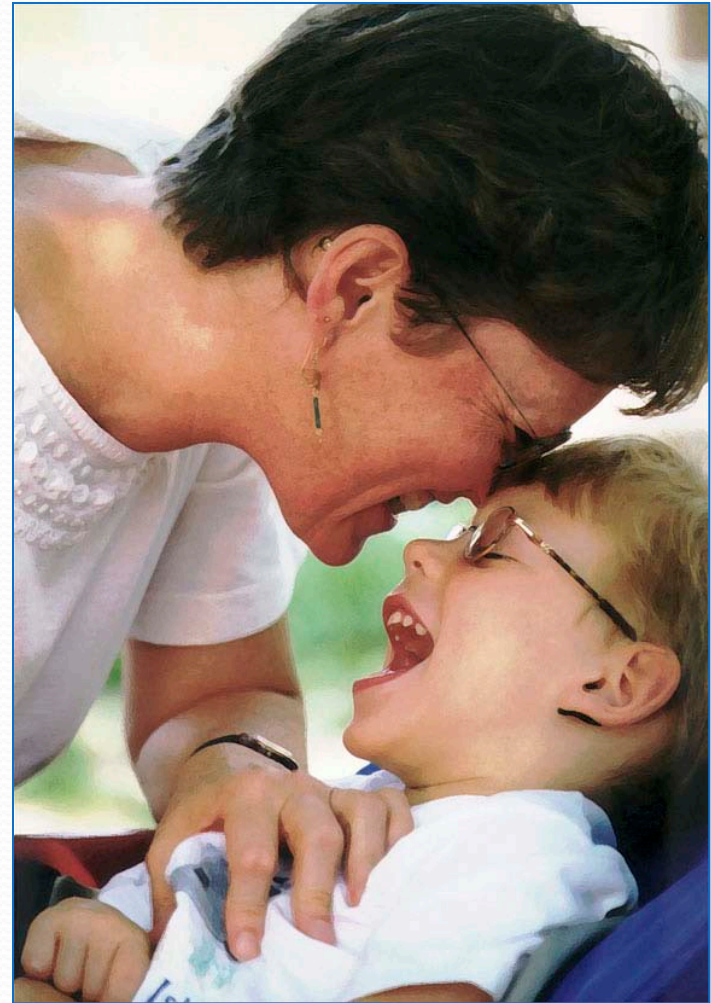
# Consider Key Features of Inclusion: Framework for Making QRIS Inclusive

ACCESS  
PARTICIPATION  
SUPPORTS



# Defining Feature

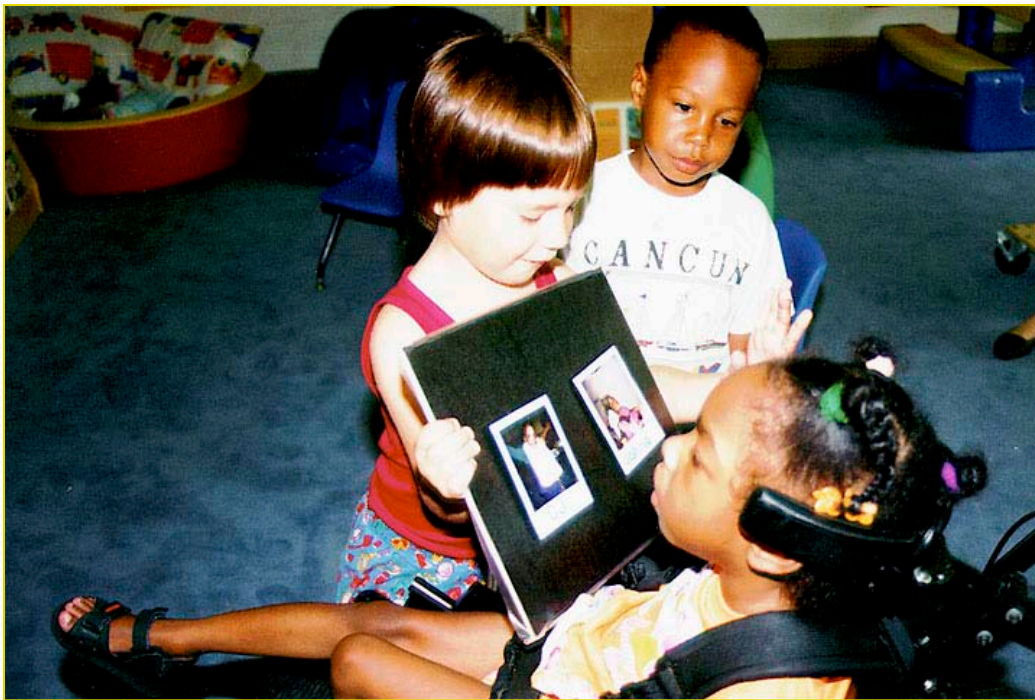
**Access** – means providing a wide range of activities and environments for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning and development





# Defining Feature

**Participation** – means using a range of instructional approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every



# Defining Feature

**Supports** – broader aspects of the system such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals



# What is SPP APR?

State Data on Children with Disabilities and their Families Collected and Reported to Congress

- Includes % of preschool children with disabilities receiving services in regular early childhood programs (Least Restrictive Environment)
- States must identify targets for increases in % in LRE, identify improvement activities, and explain state progress

# What is BQI?

A current work in progress, the intent of the *Benchmarks for Quality Improvement* initiative is to track State progress with program quality improvement systems

- Builds on 5 elements of QRIS framework
- Used as a tool to guide strategic planning, target technical assistance, and inform a research agenda

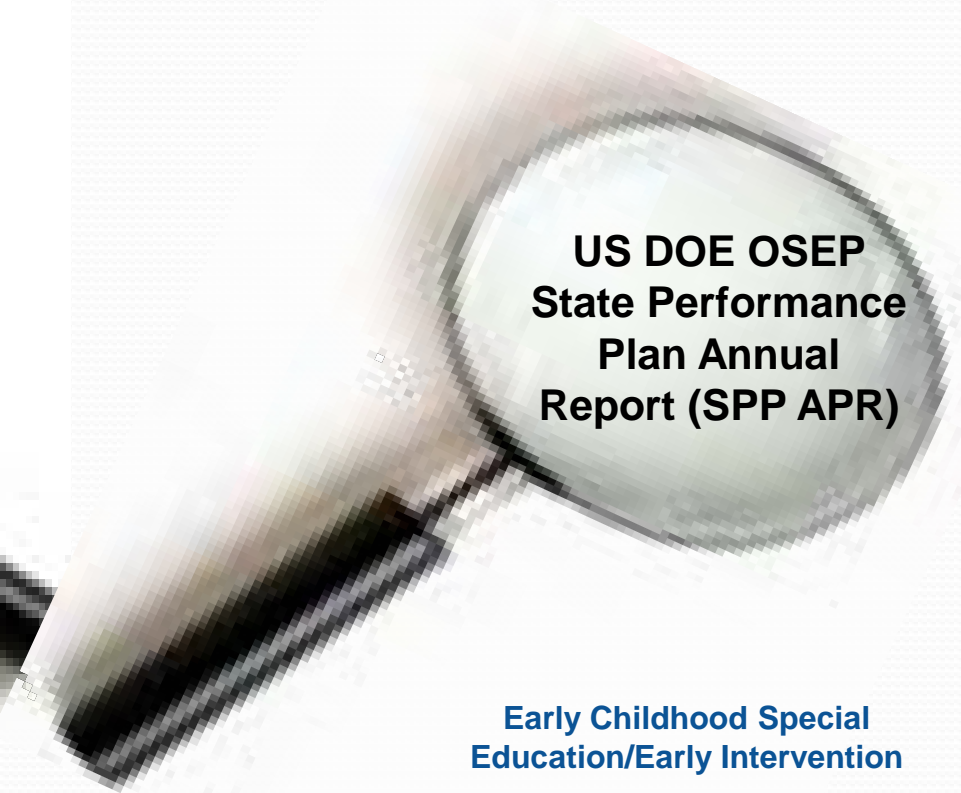
# Two Different Quality Initiatives

 **Quality Inclusion**



**Office of Child  
Care CCDF  
State Plan and  
Quality  
Performance  
Report (QPR)**

**Early Care and  
Education and Out of  
School Time Care**



**US DOE OSEP  
State Performance  
Plan Annual  
Report (SPP APR)**

**Early Childhood Special  
Education/Early Intervention**

# BQI & APR

## Points of Intersection: Indicators of Program Quality

- Cross-sector Alignment
- Meeting the Needs of All Children
- Family Engagement
- Health and Development Screenings
- Program and Practitioner Supports

# OCC Assumptions about QRIS (per State Plan)

## State Program Quality Improvement Systems:

- Are based on common elements of current quality improvement efforts;
- Vary based on State context and stage of development of State's quality improvement activities;
- Allow flexibility in meeting goals and reporting progress over time;
- Promote collaboration within and across sectors; and
- Are aligned with the most current research findings and best practices.

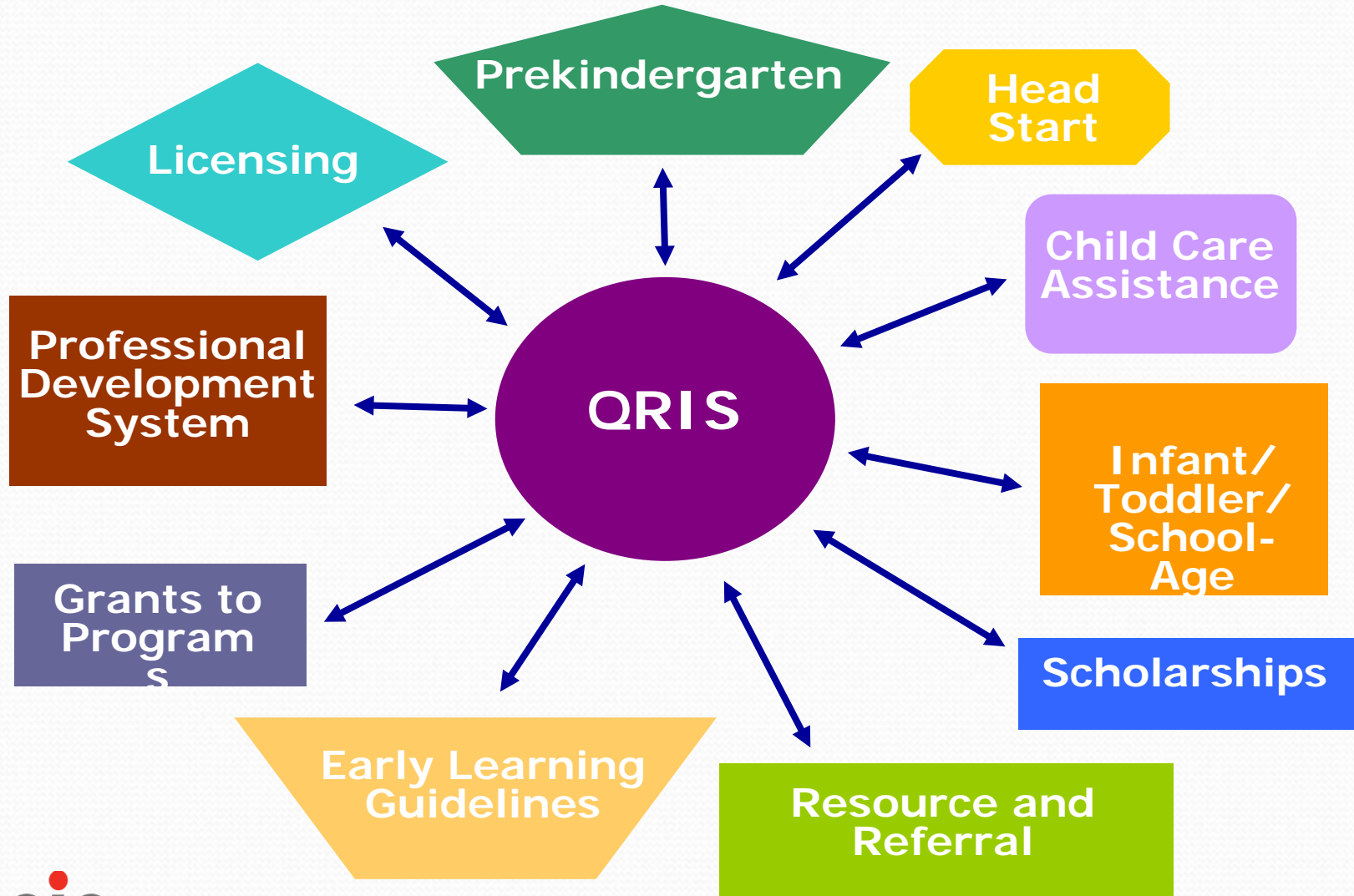
# Purpose of QRIS

*Improve the quality of programs through a systems approach*

- Align standards:
  - licensing,
  - Head Start,
  - State-funded preschool, and
  - programs serving children under IDEA
- Link program and practitioner supports to a quality framework
- Provide accountability



# Connecting Existing Initiatives



# Determining Quality Standards

- OCC focus on standards in 5 content areas:
  - Professional development
  - Curriculum/Learning Activities
  - Child Assessment
  - Health and Developmental Screenings
  - Parent Engagement

# Ensuring Quality and Access

- Program and Practitioner Supports
- Financial Incentives
- Quality Assurance
- Consumer Engagement

# QRIS Support of Inclusion

- Staff complete training related to inclusion and caring for children with special needs;
- Children have developmental screenings after enrollment;
- Program staff communicate with parents about children's progress and special needs and share information on resources;
- Programs have written policies about the inclusion of children with special needs;
- Program staff use individualized education plans (IEP) and individualized family service plans (IFSP) for planning;
- Programs make adaptations to serve all children; and
- Self-assessments of the program and environment are conducted.

# Some Examples From States

- **Illinois:** Program receives information about developmental screenings at Level 1 (centers, homes)
- **Indiana:** Includes written plans and accommodations for children with special needs at Level 3:
  - Written plan for caring for children with special needs
  - Space is arranged to provide access
  - Materials are adapted
- **New Hampshire:** Program must welcome children and families of all abilities, modify program and make reasonable accommodations.

# Some Examples From States, (cont.)

- **New Mexico** (applies to centers and family child care homes):
  - Physical Environment:
    - Organized into functional, identifiable learning centers/spaces, including modifications
    - Adaptations to materials to accommodate various abilities of all children
  - Social-Emotional Responsive Environment:
    - Reflects an atmosphere where all children feel accepted and successful
  - Observation & Documentation of Children's Progress & Curriculum:
    - Knowledge of child development
    - Activities are meaningful, developmentally appropriate, modified as needed
  - Professional Development Plan
    - Complete 6-hour inclusion course within 6-months of hire date

# Some Examples From States, (cont.)

- **Ohio:** All children receive developmental screening within 60 days, referrals by 90 days.
- **Rhode Island:** Program must provide written information to parents about EI services and Child Outreach screenings, levels 2-5 for centers and homes.
- **Vermont:** The program is prepared to serve children with special needs, including protective services(i.e., is a Specialized Child Care Services site)
- **Wisconsin:** 3 credits of inclusion training or Registry-verified 15 or more hours of non-credit training on inclusive practices; lead teacher with inclusion credential.

# Some Examples From States, (cont.)

- **Idaho** (requirements increase with each of 5 tiers):
  - Director, 75% of lead teachers, 50% of assistants have taken 1-5 hours of special needs training
  - 25-100% of classrooms have completed *Inclusion Self-Reflection*
  - Written policies for serving children with special needs and communicating with parents
  - Written policies to document children's development; frequency of methods used increases with each tier
  - At Tier 5, 90% of children are screened by qualified staff
  - within 90 days



# Some Examples From States, (cont.)

- **Pennsylvania** – Partnerships with Family and Community (applies to centers and homes) :
  - Families provided information on services at enrollment, STAR 1
  - Child information collected at enrollment; observations and goals shared with family within 45 days, STAR 1
  - Classroom practice is informed by IEP or IFSP, STAR 2
  - Written plan is implemented to refer parents to services, STAR 3
  - Two parent conferences/year to discuss progress, STAR 3
  - Program implements activities to meet IEP or IFSP, STAR 4

# Some Examples From States, (cont.)

- **Massachusetts** – Family and Community Engagement:
  - Program collaborates with schools and service providers (Level 2)
  - Program completes Strengthening Families assessment (Level 2)
  - Program ensures access to developmental, mental health, health, and nutrition services (Level 3)
  - Program ensures all children and families have access to comprehensive screenings, referrals, and services (Level 4)

# Delaware Stars for Early Success



- Delaware has a five level QRIS system
- Funded by a public/private partnership
- Quality assured PD system supports BOTH QRIS and OSEP initiatives in the state
- QRIS standards include varying levels of PD requirements
- Technical Assistance and Quality Improvement Plans support inclusion
- <http://dieec.udel.edu/delaware-stars-overview>

# Delaware Stars Inclusion Standards

- Qualifications and Professional Development for Administrators

- 2 Star Standard
  - Shows evidence of having completed education/training in...
    - Inclusion Best Practice (at least 3 hours)
  - **[Supports]**

- Qualifications and Professional Development for Teachers and Asst. Teachers

- 2 Star Standard
  - Shows evidence of having completed education/training in...
    - Inclusion Best Practice (at least 3 hours)
  - **[Supports]**

# Delaware Stars Inclusion Standards

- Learning Environments and Curriculum
  - 3 Star Standard
    - Program documents activities/instruction that help to support goals in a child's IEP/IFSP
    - **[Access and Participation]**

# Delaware Stars Inclusion Standards

- Family and Community Partnerships

- 2 Star Standard

- Program has a written inclusion policy that is reviewed with staff and shared with families

- **[Support]**

- 3 Star Standard

- Program requests copies of a child's IEP/IFSP, assessment results, and other pertinent written information from families

- **[Participation]**

- 4 Star Standard

- Program involves families in planning to meet the needs of their child(ren), including IFSP/IEP goals

- **[Participation]**

- 5 Star Standard

- When applicable, program makes staff available to attend IEP-IFSP meetings to participate in planning efforts with family and service providers

- **[Support]**

# Intersections: QRIS, PD, and Inclusion

licensing QRIS

BOI Professional  
Development  
Systems

IDEA

# Discussion Questions

- How could QRIS increase Access, Participation and Supports for Inclusion?
- How can consumer awareness support the movement towards increasing the amount of high quality inclusive services?
- How can early intervention, child care, and education work together to support initiatives such as QRIS?



# QRIS and Inclusion Resources

For more information about QRIS,  
visit NCCIC's Web site at

<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/topics/topic/index.cfm?topicId=44>.

“QRIS Standards About Inclusion”

Links to all QRIS Web sites at

<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/qrs-defsystems.html>

For products, blogs, discussions about inclusion and  
quality at NPDCI, visit

<http://community.fpg.unc.edu/npdci>

# Resources (cont.)

- The *Quality Rating and Improvement System Resource Guide* (2010), by NCCIC, is a Web-based tool for states and communities to help users plan, implement, or revise QRIS,  
<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/qrisresourceguide/index.html>
- The *Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) Assessment: Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations* (April 2010), by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, includes descriptive analysis of key program and evaluation components plus profiles of all QRIS nationwide,  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/cc/childcare\\_quality/compendium\\_qrs/qrs\\_compendium\\_final.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/cc/childcare_quality/compendium_qrs/qrs_compendium_final.pdf)

# The Big Picture Planning Guide

Building Cross-Sector Professional Development Systems  
in Early Childhood  
2nd Edition

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National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2011). The big picture planning guide: Building cross-sector professional development systems in early childhood, 2nd ed. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author.

# Sources

- Mitchell, A. (2005, July). *Stair steps to quality: A guide for states and communities developing quality rating systems for early care and education*. Retrieved March 11, 2009, from [www.earlychildhoodfinance.org/ArticlesPublications/StairStepstoQualityGuidebook\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.earlychildhoodfinance.org/ArticlesPublications/StairStepstoQualityGuidebook_FINAL.pdf).
- Data compiled by NCCIC as of May 2011 from State documents and Web sites.

# Reflections

- I learned...
- I am surprised by...
- I want to say...
- I am interested in...
- I want to know more about...

