



**T**he project “**Support to Temporary, One- and Two-Star Programs**” was designed to increase the percent of three- to five- star early care and education programs in the N.C. Star Rated License to the extent possible by helping all temporary licensed and one- and two-star licensed programs attain a three-star or higher rated license. Child Care Resource and Referral Regional (CCR&R) lead agencies supported the efforts of technical assistance staff to provide technical assistance, grants, bonuses, and other supports to early care and education programs as they worked to increase their star rating to three-stars or higher.

CCR&Rs across the state identified and recruited temporary, one- and two-star rated programs to participate in the project at the beginning of each calendar year from 2013 - 2015. A variety of customized, technical assistance strategies were implemented to assist these programs to attain at least a three-star license.

Support services were provided on a customized basis and included: 1) development of mutually agreed-upon quality improvement plans (with specific goals, timetables and strategies) 2) mock Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessments 3) professional development planning and support. Site-based technical assistance (TA) supports consisted of coaching staff and modeling strategies for best practices; on-going support to achieve quality improvement goals; and support to refine

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## Support to Temporary, One- and Two-Star Programs to Improve Quality Ratings

### PARTNERS



## What did we learn?

- CCR&Rs reported that the new temporary licensed programs were more receptive to increasing licensure and more apt to change.
- Support for individuals as soon as they become interested in opening a child care program is needed. It is more difficult to change attitudes in regard to licensing after providers have been in the field for a longer period of time. Even after the initial startup, the programs need support in maintaining quality in their programs.

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- Grant funds allowed some regions the ability to hire additional TA staff that has been critical in providing the assistance needed to move programs along in the process of achieving higher licensure.
- Family child care home providers who may not have been interested in applying for higher rated licensure previously were open to new ways to improve quality, such as participation in professional associations, leadership academies, or other specific trainings.

The intentional collaboration between DCDEE licensing consultants and the CCR&R technical assistance staff over the three-year period of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funding has been extremely beneficial to child care facilities and greatly contributed to the success of this activity. Through this collaboration, many relationships were built between the licensing consultants and technical assistance staff. In addition, many relationships were built and enhanced between the technical assistance staff and child care program staff, working to help improve the quality of programs across the state. These successes will enable technical assistance staff to continue to provide supports in the future to some programs that would not otherwise have received it.

## Statewide, 100 percent of all temporary, one- and two-star programs...

were identified and recruited each calendar year (2013, 2014 and 2015) to participate in this project and 84 licensed programs serving children birth to five years of age agreed to work toward a higher star rated license.

- 100 percent of all participating programs received technical assistance and 95 percent developed quality improvement plans to work towards higher star ratings
- 99.5 percent of Temporary and one- and two-star programs receiving TA and still in operation achieved a minimum of a three-star license
- At the conclusion of the grant, only 3.3 percent of children were enrolled in one- and two-star rated licensed programs. If GS 110 programs were included (faith based programs that are not required to be licensed), only 3.6 percent of children were enrolled in one- and two-star rated licensed programs

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overall quality programming. Technical assistance occurred on-site and the frequency and duration of TA support services were determined based on progress needed towards achieving mutually agreed-upon goals identified in quality improvement plans and individual program needs. In most, but not all cases, the child development specialist made weekly on-site program visits and each visit was typically between two to four hours in duration. In some instances, leadership academies, support groups, and trainings were provided, while others may have received bonuses or grants to provide the incentives and supports needed. Upon completion of technical assistance activities and the achievement of quality improvement plans, participating programs made application for a three- star or higher rated license. Programs were surveyed at the end of each calendar year by the N.C. Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) and CCR&R staff to track the progress of the programs that attained a three- star or higher and, at the end of calendar year 2015, the number of children enrolled in one- and two-star programs was captured as well.

For more information on child care licensing in N.C., go to <http://ncchildcare.nc.gov>. ■