

What does high quality look like?

Quality child care and early learning programs help children enter school ready to succeed. These programs have:

- ▶ Nurturing and supportive relationships between adults and children.
- ▶ Care and education that meets each student's individual needs.
- ▶ Facilities that are safe, well-organized and have age-appropriate resources.
- ▶ Programs that support the development of the whole child.
- ▶ Open communications and genuine engagement with families.
- ▶ Meaningful efforts to embrace diversity.

What can I do as a parent?

- ▶ Ask your child care provider about Early Achievers and learn more about what they are doing to ensure that young children enter school ready to succeed.
- ▶ Learn more about Early Achievers and who is participating by contacting Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114 or online at www.wa.childcareaware.org. Information about participation is also on DEL's Child Care Check tool at www.del.wa.gov/check.
- ▶ Sign up for DEL's newsletter for the most up-to-date information on Early Achievers and other DEL programs that help families and children prepare for kindergarten and beyond! Just go to www.del.wa.gov

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How are your local early learning programs preparing children to succeed?



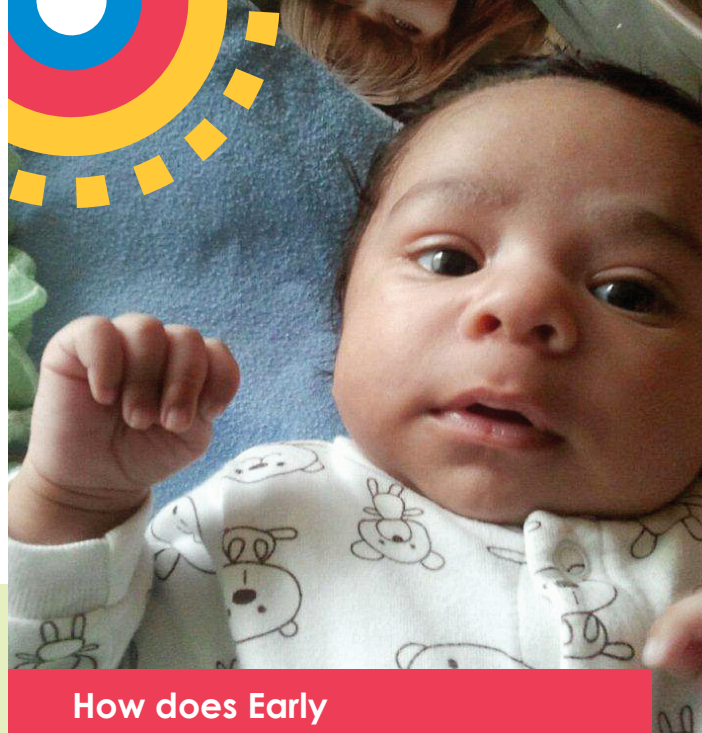
EARLY ACHIEVERS, Washington's Quality Rating and Improvement System
A guide for parents and families

What is Early Achievers?

Early Achievers gives early learning professionals access to coaching and resources to provide high-quality care. High-quality programs support each child's learning and development so they are prepared to be successful in school and life!

What does that mean for parents?

- ▶ Early Achievers helps parents and caregivers find high-quality child care and early learning programs that fit theirs and their children's needs.
- ▶ Choosing child care is an important decision. Families deserve to know that their children are in quality care environments that foster a love of learning, promote each child's unique skills and cultures, and support the development of the whole child.
- ▶ Participating child care and early learning providers receive free resources and training to improve the quality of their programs, and **there is no additional cost for families**. Funding comes from the state Department of Early Learning (DEL), through the federal Child Care and Development Fund and the federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.



How does Early Achievers work?

- ▶ Early Achievers rates the quality of child care and early learning programs on a scale of 1 to 5. Simply by participating in Early Achievers, early learning professionals demonstrate a commitment to improving quality.
- ▶ At level 1, licensed child care providers meet Washington's licensing requirements for health and safety. Programs with higher ratings have strong instruction, training for staff, and family engagement to support children's success.
- ▶ View providers' Early Achievers participation status at www.del.wa.gov/check.
 - ▶ Providers working on or rated level 2 are "participating in quality improvement."
 - ▶ Providers rated level 3-5 have achieved a "quality level of excellence."

Understanding participation status

- ▶ **Participating in Quality Improvement:**
Your provider has joined Early Achievers and is demonstrating commitment to high-quality care. Your provider has not yet been rated.
- ▶ **Demonstrating a quality level of excellence:**
Your provider has rated level 3 to 5 and is offering a high-quality program. With a coach, your provider is using data to continually improve the program. As a part of rating, your provider might also have earned "areas of specialization" where the program is especially strong.



Why is quality important?

- ▶ High-quality child care helps children succeed in kindergarten and beyond. Yet child care quality varies considerably around Washington.
- ▶ When child care providers get one-on-one coaching and training, the quality of the care they give children quickly increases.