

NAEYC Public Policy FACT SHEET

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation

Currently 24 states are operating *statewide* quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) for early care and education programs. Nineteen of these QRIS link to NAEYC early childhood program accreditation in different ways. Some require accreditation to earn the top level in the rating scale; others allocate a certain number of points for accreditation.

At their heart, both NAEYC Accreditation and QRIS share the same charge: ensuring the quality of children’s daily experiences in early childhood programs, promoting positive child outcomes, and supporting continuous program quality improvement. By providing the tools to guide early childhood programs on the path to higher quality within a QRIS, NAEYC plays a key role in working to strengthen all aspects of

the early childhood delivery system—as the Association has throughout its 80-year history.

Research and evidence based, NAEYC Accreditation standards and criteria set the national standard of excellence for center- and school-based early childhood programs. The benefits of linking QRIS to NAEYC Accreditation are clear: Using a national standard of high program quality in conjunction with state quality standards ensures that more early childhood programs meet uniform measures of quality that are research and evidence based, regardless of the state in which the programs are located.

Of the 24 states, only Louisiana, Mississippi and North Carolina have no linkage to any accreditation.

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| Must be NAEYC-Accredited to reach the highest level | District of Columbia New Hampshire |
| Must be NAEYC-Accredited and meet additional criteria to reach the highest level | Illinois Indiana Kentucky Maine Maryland Montana New Mexico Oklahoma |
| Must be NAEYC-Accredited and meet additional criteria or must meet a separate set of criteria to reach the highest level | Arkansas Delaware Pennsylvania Rhode Island |
| NAEYC Accreditation included in cumulative points scheme | Colorado Iowa Tennessee Vermont |
| NAEYC Accreditation used as an “alternate pathway” for reaching higher levels, plus additional criteria | Idaho Ohio Wisconsin |
| NAEYC Accreditation not included | Louisiana Mississippi North Carolina |