

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.
- ▶ Contact DEL or Child Care Aware Washington to learn more about Early Achievers and providers who participate, including Early Achievers ratings, at 1-800-446-1114 or online www.wa.childcareaware.org.
- ▶ 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!

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



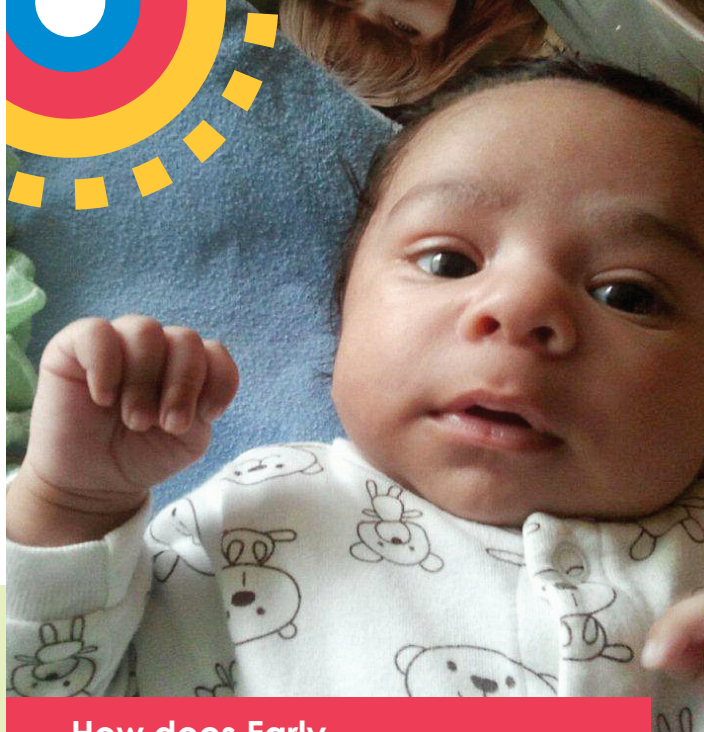
EARLY ACHIEVERS, Washington's Quality Rating and Improvement System
A guide for parents and families

What is Early Achievers?

Early Achievers is a voluntary program that empowers early learning professionals through coaching and resources to provide high-quality care that supports 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, child care and early learning providers demonstrate a commitment to improving quality.
- ▶ At level 1, licensed child care providers must 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.
- ▶ Beginning in 2012, ratings for providers who participate in Early Achievers will be available on DEL's website.

How long has Early Achievers been in Washington?

- ▶ 2009 to 2011: DEL and Thrive by Five Washington worked with 90 providers in five communities to develop the program.
- ▶ 2011 to 2012: DEL, Thrive and the University of Washington identified 64 early adopters to participate in the program.
- ▶ July 2012: Statewide Early Achievers roll-out begins.

Why is quality important?

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