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Quality Progress Report (QPR)
For
Wisconsin
FFY 2023

QPR Status: Accepted as of 2024-04-02 19:10:09 GMT

The Quality Progress Report (QPR) collects information from states and territories (hereafter referred to as lead agencies) to describe investments to improve the quality of care available for children from birth to age 13. This report meets the requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 for lead agencies to submit an annual report that describes how quality funds were expended, including the activities funded and the measures used to evaluate progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services.

For purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions of applicable laws printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text. The lead agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to the applicable laws regardless of these modifications.

The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

QUALITY PROGRESS REPORT

The Quality Progress Report (QPR) collects information from lead agencies to describe investments to improve the quality of care available for children from birth to age 13. This report meets the requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 for lead agencies to submit an annual report that describes how quality funds were expended, including the activities funded and the measures used to evaluate progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services. Lead agencies are also required to report on their Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) quality improvement investments through the CCDF Plan, which collects information on the proposed quality activities for a three-year period; and through the ACF-696, which collects quarterly expenditure data on quality activities.

The annual data provided by the QPR will be used to describe how lead agencies are spending a significant investment per year to key stakeholders, including Congress, federal, state and territory administrators, providers, parents, and the public.

Specifically, this report will be used to:

- Ensure accountability and transparency for the use of CCDF quality funds, including a set-aside for quality infant and toddler care and activities funded by American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act
- Track progress toward meeting state- and territory-set indicators and benchmarks for improvement of child care quality based on goals and activities described in CCDF Plans; and
- Understand efforts in progress towards all child care settings meeting the developmental needs of children
- Inform federal technical assistance efforts and decisions regarding strategic use of quality funds.

What Period Must Be Included: All sections of this report cover the federal fiscal year activities (October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023), unless otherwise stated. Data should reflect the cumulative totals for the fiscal year being reported, unless otherwise stated.

What Data Should Lead Agencies Use: Lead agencies may use data collected by other government and nongovernment agencies (e.g., CCR&R agencies or other TA providers) in addition to their own data as appropriate. We recognize that lead agencies may not have all of the data requested initially but expect progress towards increased data capacity. The scope of this report covers quality improvement activities funded at least in part by CCDF in support of CCDF activities. Lead agencies must describe their progress in meeting their stated goals for improving the quality of child care as reported in their FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan.

How is the QPR Organized?

The first section of the QPR gathers basic data on the population of providers in the state or territory and goals for quality improvement and glossary of relevant terms. The rest of the report is organized according to the ten authorized uses of quality funds specified in the CCDBG Act of 2014:

- 1) Support the training and professional development of the child care workforce
- 2) Improve the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines
- 3) Develop, implement, or enhance a quality rating improvement system for child care providers
- 4) Improve the supply and quality of child care for infants and toddlers
- 5) Establish or expand a lead agency wide system of child care resource and referral services
- 6) Support compliance with lead agency requirements for licensing, inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety
- 7) Evaluate the quality of child care programs in the state or territory, including how programs positively impact children
- 8) Support providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation
- 9) Support the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development
- 10) Other activities to improve the quality of child care services supported by outcome measures that improve provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten-entry.

The Office of Child Care (OCC) recognizes that quality funds may have been used to address the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. These activities should be reflected in the relevant sections of the QPR.

Reporting Activities Related to ARP Act Child Care Stabilization Grants

The ARP Act included approximately \$24 billion for child care stabilization grants, representing an important opportunity to stabilize the child care sector and do so in a way that builds back a stronger child care system that supports the developmental and learning needs of children, meets parents' needs and preferences with equal access to high-quality child care, and supports a professionalized workforce that is fairly and appropriately compensated for the essential skilled work that they do. Lead agencies must spend stabilization funds as subgrants to qualified child care providers to support the stability of the child care sector during and after the COVID-19 public health emergency. Please refer to the information memorandum [ARP Act Child Care Stabilization Grants](#) (CCDF-ACF-IM-2021-02) for further guidance on the child care stabilization grants made available through the ARP Act.

While the OCC has established a new data collection form, the ACF-901 – American Rescue Plan (ARP) Stabilization Grants Provider-Level Data, as the primary data collection mechanism for reporting related to ARP stabilization grants, Section 13 of the QPR asks about activities related to stabilization grants made possible through ARP funding. The OCC will inform lead agencies if the data reported through the ACF-901 is complete enough to warrant skipping Section 13 of the QPR. The following information is requested in Section 13:

- If the lead agency ran more than one grant program;
- How stabilization grants were used to support workforce compensation; and
- Methods to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse when providing stabilization grants

Section 13 should be used to report on ARP Stabilization Grants ONLY. Other child care sustainability or stabilization grant programs established or ongoing using other funding mechanisms (i.e., CCDF or other supplemental funding e.g., CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary Funds) should be reported in Section 11.

When is the QPR Due to ACF?

The QPR will be due to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) by the designated lead agency no later than December 31, 2023.

Glossary of Terms

The following terms are used throughout the QPR. These definitions can also be found in section 98.2 in the CCDBG Act of 2014. For any term not defined, please use the lead agency definition of terms to complete the QPR.

Center-based child care provider means a provider licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a non-residential setting, unless in care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work. Associated terms include "child care centers" and "center-based programs."

Director means a person who has primary responsibility for the daily operations and management for a child care provider, which may include a family child care provider, and which may serve children from birth to kindergarten entry and children in school-age child care.

Family child care provider means one or more individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work. Associated terms include "family child care homes."

In-home child care provider means an individual who provides child care services in the child's own home.

License-exempt means facilities that are not required to meet the definition of a facility required to meet the CCDF section 98.2 definition of “licensing or regulatory requirements.” Associated terms include “legally exempt” and “legally operating without regulation.”

Licensed means a facility required by the state to meet the CCDF section 98.2 definition of “licensing or regulatory requirements,” which explains that the facility meets “requirements necessary for a provider to legally provide child care services in a state of locality, including registration requirements established under state, local or tribal law.”

Programs refer generically to all activities under the CCDF, including child care services and other activities pursuant to §98.50 as well as quality activities pursuant to §98.43.

Provider means the entity providing child care services.

Staffed family child care (FCC) networks are programs with paid staff that offer a menu of ongoing services and resources to affiliated FCC educators. Network services may include individual supports (for example, visits to child care homes, coaching, consultation, warmlines, substitute pools, shared services, licensing TA, mental health services) and group supports (for example, training workshops, facilitated peer support groups).

Teacher means a lead teacher, teacher, teacher assistant or teacher aide who is employed by a child care provider for compensation on a regular basis, or a family child care provider, and whose responsibilities and activities are to organize, guide and implement activities in a group or individual basis, or to assist a teacher or lead teacher in such activities, to further the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of children from birth to kindergarten entry and children in school-age child care.

1) Overview

To gain an understanding of the availability of child care in the state or territory, please provide the following information on the total number of child care providers.

1.1 State or Territory Child Care Provider Population

1.1.1 Total Number of Licensed Providers:

Enter the total number of licensed child care providers that operated in the state or territory as of September 30, 2023. These counts should include all licensed child care providers, not just those serving children receiving CCDF subsidies.

Licensed center-based programs **2358**

Unable to provide number. Indicate reason:

Additional clarification: Based on most recent submission of the FY 2023 ACF-800 data there were 2026 licensed center-based programs receiving CCDF funding. Please report the number of ALL licensed center-based programs operating in the state here, regardless of receipt of CCDF funding.

Licensed family child care homes **1664**

Unable to provide number. Indicate reason:

Additional clarification: Based on most recent submission of the FY 2023 ACF-800 data there were 1427 licensed family child care homes receiving CCDF funding. Please report the number of ALL licensed family child care homes operating in the state here, regardless of receipt of CCDF funding.

2) Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce

Goal: *Ensure the lead agency's professional development systems or framework provides initial and ongoing professional development and education that result in a diverse and stable child care workforce with the competencies and skills to support all domains of child development.*

2.1 Lead Agency Progression of Professional Development

2.1.1 Professional Development Registry:

Did the lead agency use a workforce registry or professional development registry to track progression of professional development during October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023?

Yes. If yes, describe: **The Lead Agency uses a workforce registry to track all credit and non-credit based professional development completed by child care professionals.**

No. If no, what alternative does the lead agency use to track the progression of professional development for teachers/providers serving children who receive CCDF subsidy? Describe:

2.1.2 Participation in Professional Development Registry:

Are any teachers/providers required to participate?

Yes. If yes, describe: **The Lead Agency requires teachers, directors, and administrators who have worked at a licensed group program for three months or more to participate. Additionally, licensed family providers that began work with children on or after January 1, 2009, are required to participate.**

No. If no, describe:

2.1.3 Number of Participants in Professional Development Registry:

Total number of participants in the registry as of September 30, 2023 **16,929**

2.1.4 Spending - Professional Development Registry:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

2.2 Workforce Development

2.2.1 Professional Development and Career Pathways Support:

How did the lead agency help teachers/providers progress in their education, professional development, and/or career pathway between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023 (check all that apply)? If selected, how many staff received each type of support?

- Scholarships (for formal education institutions) **1,285**
- Financial bonus/wage supplements tied to education levels **18,706**
- Career advisors, mentors, coaches, or consultants **297 individuals received career development counseling and 9,042 providers received technical assistance.**
- Reimbursement for training **1,285 received reimbursement for training activities. Additionally, the Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESN) offers free resources for up to 3,000 providers throughout the state.**
- Loans
- Substitutes, leave (paid or unpaid) for professional development **1.285**
- Other. Describe: **Specific data regarding provided trainings:**

- Date Range: 10/1/22-9/30/23**
- Total # of Trainings: 619**
- Total # of Training Hours: 8,301.50**
- Total # of Attendees: 8,185**
- Total # of Unique Attendees: 4,542**

Additionally, the Lead Agency offered free Child Care Foundational Training (CCFT) courses from June 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023 as a response to the workforce shortages in child care. Participants were reimbursed at a rate of \$225/completer. Across the duration of the initiative, 4,899 unique individuals completed 9,194 courses leveraging \$2,068,650 in CRRSA funding. This included 7,239 completers across the

duration of this report (10/1/22-9/30/23). The non-credit courses, included:

- Introduction to the Child Care Profession
- Skills and Strategies for the Child Care Teacher
- Fundamentals of Infant and Toddler Care
- Fundamentals of Family Child Care

N/A. Describe:

2.2.2 Spending - Professional Development and Career Pathways Support:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

2.3 Child Care Provider Qualifications

2.3.1 Number of Licensed Child Care Programs Qualifications:

Total number of staff in licensed child care programs with the following qualification levels as of September 30, 2023:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) **598**
- Associate's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education) **2,440**
- Bachelor's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education) **3,063**
- State child care credential **283**
- State infant/toddler credential **613**
- Unable to report this data. Indicate reason:

2.3.2 Number of Licensed CCDF Child Care Programs Qualifications:

Total number of staff in licensed CCDF child care programs with the following qualification levels as of September 30, 2023:

Child Development Associate (CDA) **271**

Associate's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education) **1,428**

Bachelor's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education) **1,456**

State child care credential **189**

State infant/toddler credential **397**

Unable to report this data. Indicate reason:

2.4 Technical Assistance for Professional Development

2.4.1 Technical Assistance Topics:

Technical assistance on the following topics is available to providers as part of the lead agency's professional development system (can be part of QRIS or other system that provides professional development to child care providers):

Business Practices

Mental health for children

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

Emergency Preparedness Planning

Other. Describe other technical assistance available to providers as part of the professional development system: **There are a range of technical assistance topics offered, including (among others): supporting the training needs of providers' staff; certification, regulation and licensing support; parent engagement and community collaboration; Wisconsin Shares (the Lead Agency's subsidy program), food programs and basic needs supports, etc.**

2.4.2 Spending - Technical Assistance for Professional Development:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason: **New Information:**

The Lead Agency funds the Child Care Counts Support Center, a staffed helpline and monitored email address where anyone needing assistance with the Child Care Counts stabilization grant process can call or email their questions. The Support Center is open for phone calls 8 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and providers with questions can leave a detailed voicemail and receive a callback during business hours the next day if they call during times when the Support Center is closed. In addition, the Child Care Counts webpage houses on-demand resources for providers in the form of videos, written guides, flowcharts, spending tools, calendars, step-by-step visual walkthroughs, and other materials to meet the needs of a diverse population of providers. There are instructions for how to turn on closed captioning translation for all videos recorded in English. Both the website resources and the Child Care Counts Support Center assist providers with setting up accounts to enter applications through the application process, as well as answering spending and documentation questions.

No

2.5 Spending – Training and Professional Development

2.5.1 Spending – Training and Professional Development:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) to support the training and professional development of the child care workforce during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? \$

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason: **The Lead Agency was unable to separate the fiscal data and will improve our process for reporting this data in FFY 24.**

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported.

2.6 Progress Update

2.6.1 Progress Update – Training and Professional Development:

Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 6.3.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan.

The Lead Agency tracks several measures to evaluate the improvement in quality child care programs and services related to professional development: ☑ Workforce information about retention and continuity ☑ Providers with specific trainings that are of interest to the Lead Agency ☑ Trainings provided and taken by providers across the state ☑ Evaluations of trainings ☑ Scholarships awarded ☑ Retention stipends awarded ☑ Registry career level movement and educational attainment ☑ Technical assistance provided to families through the CCR&R agencies ☑ Referral services provided to families through the CCR&R agencies. The Lead Agency measures the technical assistance services given to child care programs by the CCR&R agencies across the state/region, assessing key needs, strengths, and attainment of quality improvement goals. The Lead Agency generates data reports that analyze program improvement in specific quality indicators, such as developmentally appropriate environments or high-quality practices, over time for the state/regions. The Lead Agency sets service delivery goals/standards and runs quarterly reports to make sure that the goals have been met.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 6.3.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **Between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023, the Lead Agency made sizable investments in the child care workforce, most significantly through its Child Care Counts (CCC) stabilization payments. As noted above, during this timeframe \$212,644,266 was invested throughout the state impacting 4,096 providers. Since the program's inception, CCC has impacted over 22,000 child care professionals which has enabled an estimated 113,000 children to remain enrolled in child care. CCC is currently undergoing a comprehensive evaluation process to more completely understand the statewide impacts of the initiative on the child care field and stabilization of the workforce.**

Further, the Lead Agency continues to invest in the child care workforce through its investments in T.E.A.C.H scholarships and REWARD stipends. The former provided scholarships to 1,285 individuals who completed 3,538 courses and earned over 10,000 college credits. This coursework supported early care professionals with increasing their wages by an average of 4.9%, respectively. These professionals, in turn, provided care for over 39,000 children across the state.

REWARD stipends were also provided to 18,706 individuals throughout the state totaling over \$11,464,475 of base and ARPA funding and averaging over \$600 per stipend. Stipends were allotted every six months and are based upon the career levels demonstrated through the Wisconsin Registry (here).

The Lead Agency invests greatly in training and technical assistance opportunities to support providers and referrals for families. DCF funding resulted in over 619 trainings totaling 8,301.50 hours and impacting 8,185 participants and 4,542 unique attendees. Trainings covered a range of topics. As noted above, the three most attended trainings during the reporting period were: "Fundamentals of Infant and Toddler Care" (131 attendees), "Fundamentals of Family Child Care" (120 attendees), and "Introduction to the Child Care Profession" (76 attendees). Further, 12 Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards trainings were held, serving 145 participants, and 34 Pyramid Model trainings were held, serving 412 participants.

Additionally, the Lead Agency offered free Child Care Foundational Training (CCFT) courses from June 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023 as a response to the workforce shortages in child care. Participants were reimbursed at a rate of \$225/completer and two rounds of grants were offered for "Training Sponsoring Organizations" (TSOs) to support implementation. Across the duration of the initiative, 4,899 unique individuals completed 9,194 courses leveraging \$2,068,650 in CRRSA funding. This included 7,239 completers across the duration of this report (10/1/22-9/30/23).

Referrals and technical assistance to families was also prioritized through our Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R's). Across this reporting period, 4,064 unique families received 5,513 unique referrals in support of 6,901 children. Additionally, 5,733 technical assistance interactions with families occurred in support of topics such as (among others): Wisconsin Shares, family support services, parent support, cost of care, and employment.

Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funds were also leveraged towards Provider coupons to support free access to Wisconsin Registry membership. Since January 2, 2023, 16,976 coupons were utilized. This initiative also generated strong momentum to make Wisconsin Registry membership free as of November 1, 2023.

Further, the Lead Agency continues to invest in Infant and Early Childhood Mental

Health Consultation (IECMHC) to ensure that providers have access to resources and training to best support the healthy social and emotional development of children. This has resulted in the creation of Health Minds, Healthy Children, the state's IECMHC website ([here](#)).

In addition to supporting the workforce with resources and training opportunities around the social and emotional development of children, the Lead Agency has also invested in an Educator Assistance Program (EAP) to ensure providers have access to confidential resources and supports they may need to thrive. The EAP is currently available to over 20,000 individuals employed by regulated child care programs in Wisconsin.

The Lead Agency continued its practice of monthly data reporting related to its Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), YoungStar ([here](#)). These reports provide statewide and regional data regarding QRIS levels across providers, as well as, indicators connected to developmentally appropriate and high-quality practices. Further, the Lead Agency receives monthly data reports from the Wisconsin Registry to support analysis of the child care workforce registry levels and educational attainment over time.

3) Improving early learning and development guidelines

Goal: To ensure the lead agency has research-based early learning and development guidelines appropriate for children birth to age 12, including children with special needs and dual language learners that are used to inform practice and professional development.

3.1 Early Learning and Development Guidelines

3.1.1 Spending - Early Learning and Development Guidelines:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to improve early learning and development guidelines during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) on improving upon the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines? \$

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason **The Lead Agency was unable to separate the fiscal data and will improve our process for reporting this data in FFY 24.**

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not capture in the item already reported:

No

3.2 Progress Update

3.2.1 Progress Update - Early Learning and Development Guidelines:

Improving upon the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 6.4.3 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan. Wisconsin takes a variety of approaches to supporting programs to implement the WMELS, including training, technical assistance, coaching, as well as ensuring all other initiatives align with WMELS. Each of these approaches includes opportunities to determine the effectiveness of the use of WMELS in improving the quality of child care programming, using quantitative data from surveys completed by QRIS participants, QRIS overall ratings along with indicator specific data, training participant evaluations, qualitative reports from coaching feedback, and community of practice provider implementation discussions. YoungStar contains an indicator and a high-quality practice directly connected to the WMELS, as well as others that align with different aspects of the WMELS. The overall YoungStar participation data in November of 2019 was 3,707 programs with a slight increase in November of 2020 when 3,726 programs were participating. With increased participation in the QRIS, programs have access to a host of supports that work to increase their quality. YoungStar indicators most directly related to the early learning standards include the Developmentally Appropriate Environments (DAE) indicator. Demonstrating the requirements of the DAE indicator shows programs are taking beginning steps toward offering child care that is reflective of the WMELS. This indicator is required for all programs earning 3, 4, or 5 Star ratings. Programs are provided with a YoungStar Consultant to assist them in putting the indicator requirements into action. DAE consists of five items: providing developmentally appropriate interactions and promoting positive relationships, organizing the environment into interest centers or play areas with a minimum number of materials reflective of WMELS, specifically books, fine motors materials, art materials, blocks, dramatic play, nature/science, and math materials. The materials must be easily accessible and offer varied levels of difficulty. The daily schedule must include at least 50 consecutive minutes of uninterrupted free choice. Our QRIS data shows that of 56% of programs choosing to participate AND choosing to request a rating were able to demonstrate the requirements in 2019, with that number increasing to 64% in 2020. For those programs ready to implement at a deeper level and/or wanting to earn a 4- or 5-Star rating, the QRIS includes a high-quality practice, Curriculum Aligned with WMELS, recognizing programs for aligning their curriculum with the WMELS. To earn this high-quality practice, programs must create lesson plans with activities/experiences and goals that reflect the WMES five domains, offer learning materials, activities and/or experiences that support children in reaching their goals, and share information with families about the WMELS. In 2019, 17% of programs earned this practice with an increase to 19% in 2020. As mentioned, YoungStar provides programs with free consultation along with coaching opportunities. YoungStar utilizes the Practice Based Coaching model to provide free coaching to providers as part of their available YoungStar

services. YoungStar has developed needs assessments specifically aligned with the WMELS to strengthen teaching practices within the ECE workforce. Additional support is provided through the many trainings made available by the statewide training network with both in-person and online options. Trainings include the 15-hour Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards training, 3-hour Learning Environments through the Lens of DAP (supporting the DAE indicator), 1-hour online self-paced DAE training, 3-hour WMELS Next Steps, and various domain specific trainings. While individual training agencies keep their own evaluation scores, each reports data incorporated in an annual statewide report providing information about the total number of trainings offered, number of participants and sector represented, and WMELS website usage. In 2019 there was a significant increase in the number of group child care staff who attended WMELS training, with the number of participants trained increasing from 383 in 2018 to 568 in 2019.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 6.4.3 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: YoungStar contains an indicator and a high-quality practice directly connected to the WMELS, as well as others that align with different aspects of the WMELS. The overall YoungStar participation data on September 30, 2023, was 3,796 providers which is a slight increase from 3,707 as reported in section 6.4.3 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan. Our QRIS data shows that 66% of providers choosing to participate AND choosing to request a rating were able to demonstrate the requirements in 2023, an increase of 2% from 2020. For those providers ready to implement at a deeper level and/or wanting to earn a 4- or 5-Star rating, the QRIS includes a high-quality practice, Curriculum Aligned with WMELS, recognizing providers for aligning their curriculum with the WMELS. To earn this high-quality practice, providers must create lesson plans with activities/experiences and goals that reflect the WMES five domains, offer learning materials, activities and/or experiences that support children in reaching their goals, and share information with families about the WMELS. In September 2023, 206 providers who chose to request a 4-or 5-Star achieved this indicator, which is 87% of all providers requesting a 4- or 5-Star rating.

While individual training agencies keep their own evaluation scores, each reports data incorporated in an annual statewide report providing information about the total number of trainings offered, number of participants and sector represented, and WMELS website usage. In 2022, there was an increase in the number of WMELS trainings offered in 2021 - 21 trainings were offered in 2022, reaching 297 individuals.

In addition, the process of revising the WMELS began in 2023, with joint collaboration meetings between DCF and DPI to coordinate the effort, which will involve multiple stakeholders

including both content experts and lived experience partners.

4) Developing, implementing, or enhancing a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) and other transparent system of quality indicator

Goal: To ensure the lead agency implements a quality rating and improvement system, or other quality rating system, to promote high-quality early care and education programs.

4.1 Quality rating and improvement system status

4.1.1 QRIS or other system of quality improvement status:

Indicate the status and include a description of the lead agency's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) or other system of quality improvement during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

The lead agency QRIS is operating state- or territory-wide.

- General description of QRIS: **YoungStar is the Lead Agency's statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that began in 2010. It is composed of five star-rating levels that are arranged in a block rating structure. Regulated (licensed, certified, license-exempt) center-based, school-age, day camp, and family child care programs can apply and are rated on 1) Education and Training Qualifications, 2) Learning Environment and Curriculum, 3) Business and Professional Practices, 4) Health and Well-Being Practices and 5) High-Quality Practices. Providers at the 1 Star level do not meet health and safety standards set by DCF Bureau of Child Care Regulation, and therefore cannot participate in YoungStar. Providers at the 2 Star level meet health and safety standards. Providers at the 3 Star level meet health and safety standards along with proficient levels of quality standards. Providers at the 4 Star level meet health and safety standards along with elevated levels of quality standards, and providers at the 5 Star level meet highest levels of quality standards. Programs rated at the 3 through 5 Star levels are considered high-quality programs.**
- How many tiers/levels? **5** [insert number of tiers below as required and describe each tier and check off which are high quality]
 - Tier/Level 1: **Program does not meet health and safety standards.**
[] High Quality
 - Tier/Level 2: **Meets health and safety standards.**
[] High Quality
 - Tier/Level 3: **Meets proficient levels of quality standards**
[x] High Quality
 - Tier/Level 4: **Meets elevated levels of quality standards.**

- High Quality
- Tier/Level 5: **Meets highest levels of quality standards.**
- High Quality
- Tier/Level 6:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 7:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 8:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 9:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 10:
 - High Quality

- Total number of licensed child care centers meeting high quality definition: **1,210**
- Total number of licensed family child care homes meeting high quality definition: **525**
- Total number of CCDF providers meeting high quality definition: **1,392**
- Total number of children served by providers meeting high quality definition: **19,736**

The lead agency QRIS is operating a pilot (e.g., in a few localities, or only a few levels) but not fully operating state- or territory-wide.

- General description of pilot QRIS (e.g., in a few localities, or only a few levels):
- Which localities if not state/territory-wide?
- How many tiers/levels? [insert number of tiers below as required and describe each tier and check off which are high quality]
 - Tier/Level 1:
 - High Quality
 - Tier/Level 2:
 - High Quality
 - Tier/Level 3:
 - High Quality
 - Tier/Level 4:
 - High Quality
 - Tier/Level 5:
 - High Quality
 - Tier/Level 6:
 - High Quality

- High Quality
- Tier/Level 7:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 8:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 9:
 - High Quality
- Tier/Level 10:
 - High Quality

- Total number of licensed child care centers meeting high quality definition:
- Total number of licensed family child care homes meeting high quality definition:
- Total number of CCDF providers meeting high quality definition:
- Total number of children served by providers meeting high quality definition:

The lead agency is operating another system of quality improvement.

- General description of other system:
- Describe assessment scores, accreditation, or other metrics associated with this system:
- Describe how “high quality” is defined in this system?
- Total number of licensed child care centers meeting high quality definition:
- Total number of licensed family child care homes meeting high quality definition:
- Total number of CCDF providers meeting high quality definition:
- Total number of children served by providers meeting high quality definition:

The lead agency does not have a QRIS or other system of quality improvement.

- Do you have a definition of high quality care?
 - Yes, define:
 - Total number of licensed child care centers meeting high quality definition:
 - Total number of licensed family child care homes meeting high quality definition:
 - Total number of CCDF providers meeting high quality definition:
 - Total number of children served by providers meeting high quality definition:

No

4.1.2 Spending - Quality rating and improvement system status:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

4.2 Quality Rating and Improvement Systems participation

4.2.1 QRIS or other system of quality improvement participation:

What types of providers participated in the QRIS or other system of quality improvement during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 (check all that apply)?

- Licensed child care centers
- Licensed family child care homes
- License-exempt providers
- Programs serving children who receive CCDF subsidy
- Early Head Start programs
- Head Start programs
- State Prekindergarten or preschool programs
- Local district-supported Prekindergarten programs
- Programs serving infants and toddlers
- Programs serving school-age children
- Faith-based settings
- Tribally operated programs
- Other. Describe:

4.3 Quality Rating and Improvement Systems Benefits

4.3.1 Quality Rating and Improvement Systems Benefits:

What types of financial incentives or technical assistance are available for providers related to QRIS or other system of quality improvement? Check as many as apply.

- One-time grants, awards or bonuses
 - Licensed child care centers
 - Licensed family child care homes
- On-going or periodic quality stipends
 - Licensed child care centers **1,479**
 - Licensed family child care homes **892**
- Higher CCDF subsidy rates (including tiered rating)
 - Licensed child care centers
 - Licensed family child care homes
- Ongoing technical assistance to facilitate participation in QRIS or improve quality of programs already participating in QRIS (or some other technical assistance tied to QRIS)
- Other. Describe **The micro-grant program, which provided a yearly quality improvement grant, ended on 6/30/2021. The funds were transferred to the Child Care Counts (CCC) initiative which combined with ARPA funding provided on-going payments to eligible providers. Providers who applied for and received CCC funding could use these funds for classroom improvements, curriculum, professional development for staff and other areas to support quality improvement goals. Providers who participated in YoungStar and met the eligibility criteria of the program could apply for an additional Quality Incentive Per-staff Amount which is a monthly per-staff payment in addition to general CCC funds and directed to staff compensation to help attract and retain qualified staff.**

4.3.2 Spending - Quality Rating and Improvement Systems Benefits:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

[] No

4.4 Spending – Quality Rating and Improvement Systems

4.4.1 Spending – Quality Rating and Improvement Systems:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) related to QRIS or other quality rating systems during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? \$

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason **The Lead Agency was unable to separate the fiscal data and will improve our process for reporting this data in FFY 24.**

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported.

4.5 Progress Update

4.5.1 Progress Update – Quality Rating and Improvement Systems:

Developing, implementing, or enhancing a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) or other transparent system of quality indicators.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.3.6 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan. **The Lead Agency tracks several measures to evaluate the improvement in quality of child care programs and services: provider number at star level by region, track, and regulation category; providers fully engaged in quality improvement (participating actively); services taken by providers (technical assistance, ratings, micro-grants, professional development); children in the subsidy program by star level; providers with specific trainings that are of interest to the Lead Agency; trainings provided and taken by providers across the state; evaluations of trainings; evaluation of consultation services provided through YoungStar; technical assistance provided to families through CCR&R agencies or FRCs; referral services provided to families through CCR&R agencies; monitoring issues of high-quality programs (serious violations); anecdotal information about the supply and demand of child care in the region. The Lead Agency measures the technical assistance services given to child care programs by the CCR&R agencies across the state/region assessing key needs, strengths, and attainment of quality improvement goals. The Lead Agency generates data reports that analyze program**

improvement over time for the state/regions in specific quality indicators of the QRIS, such as developmentally appropriate environments or high-quality practices. The Lead Agency sets service delivery goals/standards and runs quarterly reports to make sure that the goals have been met.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.3.6 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **The Lead Agency sets service delivery goals/standards for the vendor and runs quarterly reports to make sure that the goals have been met. For example, the Lead Agency measured service deliverables for each CCR&R agency by type on 9/30/2022, the first quarter of FY 2023.**

- (1) **Providers rated with 50 weeks (benchmark): This statistic is met if 95% of providers requesting ratings were rated within 50 weeks.**
 - a. **Only a few agencies met the deliverable. This was due to the pandemic and access to rate programs in most cases.**
- (2) **Providers receiving onsite or virtual consultation: At least 500 programs will receive virtual or onsite consultation each quarter to be on pace with the 2,000 annual-mark.**
 - a. **For the first quarter, 545 programs received 4,702 hours of onsite consultation services. This exceeded the benchmark volume.**
- (3) **Outreach to Automated 2 Star programs: This statistic is met if 13 programs that were Automated 2 Star at the beginning of a quarter received onsite service before the end of the quarter.**
 - a. **The benchmark was met for the first quarter as 24 programs received 71 hours on onsite service.**

To meet the region needs for training and technical assistance to providers CCR&R agencies must provide a variety of training opportunities around a variety of topics. These trainings are reported quarterly to the Lead Agency for ongoing performance monitoring.

From October to December 2022, the top technical assistance need was around child care business practices with 1,241 unique interactions around this topic with a total of 5,670 total technical assistance interactions across all topic areas. 4,596 of these interactions occurred with regulated providers, while 1,060 interactions occurred with providers interested in becoming regulated, and 14 interactions occurred with unregulated providers.

The delivery of technical assistance is monitored quarterly to ensure regional delivery of YoungStar QRIS services are meeting the needs of providers and address their quality improvement goals.

CCR&R referrals to families are also closely monitored through quarterly reports.

From October to December 2022, 985 unique families received a total of 1,300 child care referrals, involving 1,616 children. Seventy-six percent, or 55, of Wisconsin's 72 counties and 1 First Nation tribe were reached with family referral services. This data showed that 44.8% of the annual goal for unique family referrals had been met by the second contract quarter. Across all counties, 2,208 unique families received 2,913 referrals which impacted 3,655 children in Wisconsin.

5) Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers

Goal: Ensure adequate and stable supply of high quality child care with a qualified, skilled workforce to promote the healthy development of infants and toddlers. Please report on all activities funded by quality dollars and infant toddler set-aside.

5.1 Infant/Toddler Specialists

5.1.1 Infant/Toddler Specialists:

Did providers have access to infant/toddler specialists during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

Yes

- Number of specialists available to all providers
- Number of specialists available to providers serving children who receive CCDF
- Number of specialists available specifically trained to support family child care providers
- Number of providers served
- Total number of children reached

No, there are no infant/toddler specialists in the state/territory.

N/A. Describe: **The Lead Agency contracts for approximately 24 early education coaches that work with programs statewide. The Lead Agency does not have coaches that are designated as infant-toddler specialists; however, our coaches provide consultation, coaching and training on all topics including high-quality infant toddler practices. The Lead Agency contracts for one Infant and Toddler Content Specialist who develops content, technical assistance and training supports focusing on the healthy development of infants and toddlers.**

5.1.2 Infant/Toddler Specialists Supports Provided:

If yes, what supports do the infant/toddler specialists provide?

Relationship-caregiving practices (or quality caregiving/developmentally appropriate practices)

On-site and virtual coaching

Health and safety practices

Individualized professional development consultation (e.g., opportunities for or awareness on career growth opportunities, degreed/credential programs)

- Group professional development
- Family engagement and partnerships
- Part C early intervention services
- Mental health of babies, toddlers, and families
- Mental health of providers
- Behavioral Health
- Other. Describe **The Lead Agency contracts for approximately 24 early education coaches that work with programs statewide who provide the above checked supports. These coaches are not designated as infant-toddler specialists; however, our coaches provide consultation, coaching and training on all topics including high-quality infant toddler practices. The Lead Agency contracts for one Infant and Toddler Content Specialist who develops content, technical assistance and training supports focusing on the healthy development of infants and toddlers.**

5.1.3 Spending – Infant/Toddler Specialists:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

- Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

- No

5.2 Staffed Family Child Care Networks

5.2.1 Number and Description of Staffed Family Child Care Networks:

How many staffed family child care networks operated during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

- Number of staffed family child care networks: **1**

- Describe what the network/hub provides to participating family child care providers: **During the indicated time frame, the Lead Agency continued investing in the Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESSN) to sustain and expand availability to shared service supports. In fall 2021, WEESSN services expanded into three tiers of engagement. Existing shared services regional cohort became designated as Tier 3 supports. Tiers 1 and 2 were created to serve providers anywhere in the state through virtual connections. In January 2022, all three tiers of services became fully accessible to Spanish speaking providers. Through targeted recruitment, in FFY23, around 44% of Tier 3 Shared Service Network cohort members and 42% of virtual members are family child care programs. At the end of FFY23, participation was as follows:**

- ☑ Tier 3: 281 (44% family, 56% group)
- ☑ Tier 2: 256 (63% family, 37% group)
- ☑ Tier 1: 1673 (42% family, 56% group)
- ☑ Total WEESSN: 2210 (44% family, 56% group)

WEESSN provides free services to support all Wisconsin regulated child care programs. Areas for support include business practices, professional development, and staffing support services to help improve their program quality. All tiers of support include free shared resources, tools, and templates, access to 20 hours of professional development per year, WEESSN newsletters, Kinside waitlist management software, Educator Assistance Program (EAP), and tax guides and tools for tax preparation. Professional learning opportunities and on-site coaching and mentoring are responsive to member needs. Although the specific support services provided will vary based on needs identified by its members, the Hub must provide support around:

- ☑ **Business practices:** This may include support around practices such as budgeting and setting rates, parent contracts, understanding depreciation and how it can impact financials, preparing for taxes, benefits management, banking, business structure, food services, increased automation, improved collections, enhanced marketing, joint purchasing, and/or centralized administration. In FY23, WEESSN partnered with Civitas Strategies Early Start to create a new set of tax guides specifically for child care businesses. These guides focus on helping providers use the three largest online tax preparation brands to address specific child care business scenarios and ensure more accurate and positive outcomes.

Civitas and WEESN also partnered to create financial and business resources to support child care providers.

☒ Professional development and/or consultation to members around high-quality care practices: This may include individual onsite, virtual, or group training and/or coaching around earning YoungStar high-quality rating standards, guiding children’s behavior, reducing suspension and expulsion of young children, Mindfulness, stress management, assistance in earning national accreditation, and/or addressing quality standards in the Environment Rating Scales, third edition (ERS-3). Training/consultation should lead to an increase of knowledge, skills, and practices around nurturing and responsive environments where children develop at their fullest potential. In FY23, WEESN Spanish speaking coaches hosted professional development trainings including

- o Budgeting and Rate Setting
- o Building Brains with Music
- o Getting Ready for Tax Time
- o Guiding Children’s Behavior: The Power of Positive Intent
- o Mindfulness
- o Nature Based Learning
- o Stress Management

☒ Staffing support services: This may include the creation of a sub-pool or floater staff member that can be used by members, and/or support in securing private investments to be used towards increases in staff compensation.

☒ Farm to ECE supports. This may include group training, consultation around growing gardens in ECE programs, and/or CSA memberships. In FY23, trainings were held on preparing fresh, local foods for children, as well as ☒Tasty Tuesday Virtual Lunch with Farm-to-ECE.☒

Additional Information: (2/29/24)

The Lead Agency supports the same amount of staffed FCCNs as was reported in the previous QPR, but the response was written from a different perspective. Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESN) provides services to five regions: Northeastern, Northern, Southeastern, Southern, and Western. The previous reporting of 5 staffed FCCNs was in reference to the five regions

WEESSN serves. This year's response considers WEESSN the sole provider of staffed FCCNs, however, they provide these services in all five regions.

No staffed family child care networks operate in state/territory

5.2.2 Spending - Staffed Family Child Care Networks:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

Non-CCDF funds

CARES funds

CRRSA Funds

ARP Supplemental Discretionary

ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside

Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

5.3 Spending - Programs and services for infants and toddlers

5.3.1 Spending - Programs and services for infants and toddlers:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside), above and beyond to the 3% infant and toddler set-aside, to improve the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? **\$6844430**

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason:

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported.

5.4 Progress Update

5.4.1 Progress Update - Programs and services for infants and toddlers:

Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.4.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan. **The Lead Agency will measure the percentage of infants and toddlers receiving Wisconsin Shares funding who are in high-quality care. The Lead Agency will also measure the number of providers who attend training and those who complete the Infant Toddler Credential. The Lead Agency developed an infant/toddler feature that serves two purposes. It can be used to filter data elements so that all the quality indicators can be analyzed for just infant/toddler care. In addition, the infant/toddler feature information is exported to Child Care Finder, the public search site, so that families can search for infant/toddler care/openings in their communities with specific quality levels.**

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.4.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **During the designated time, the Lead Agency made a sizable investment in professional development and career pathway support to improve the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers. This support included subsidized training opportunities specific to infant and toddler care for 131 attendees. Additional details on investments made in the child care workforce can be found under section 2.6.1.**

The Lead Agency tracks several measures to evaluate the improvement in quality child care programs and services related to professional development:

- Workforce information about retention and continuity**
- Providers with specific trainings that are of interest to the Lead Agency**
- Trainings provided and taken by providers across the state**
- Evaluations of trainings**
- Scholarships awarded**
- Retention stipends awarded**
- Registry career level movement and educational attainment**
- Technical assistance provided to families through the CCR&R agencies**
- Referral services provided to families through the CCR&R agencies.**

The Lead Agency measures the technical assistance services given to child care programs by the CCR&R agencies across the state/region, assessing key needs, strengths, and attainment of quality improvement goals.

The Lead Agency generates data reports that analyze program improvement in specific quality

indicators, such as developmentally appropriate environments or high-quality practices, over time for the state/regions. The Lead Agency sets service delivery goals/standards and runs quarterly reports to make sure that the goals have been met.

Using ARPA funds, the Lead Agency has contracted with the Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health to develop and administer a statewide Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation System, Healthy Minds Healthy Children. Through this program, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation will be available at no cost to early care and education professionals who are caring for children from birth up to age five in a regulated child care program. Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation is a prevention-based approach that pairs a mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children in different settings where they learn and grow, to equip caregivers to facilitate children's healthy social and emotional development. Healthy Minds Healthy Children was launched in July 2023. During the second half of FFY23, eight Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants were available to child care programs in the Southeastern Region. Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants have deep expertise in early childhood, social and emotional development, and mental health for children ages birth through five.

In FFY22, the Lead Agency contracted with the UW-Madison School of Human Ecology to pilot Early Childhood Health Consultation to early care and education programs, with a goal of addressing health-related concerns and offering guidance on best health and safety practices. In FFY23, this program continued and expanded. During FFY23, webinar trainings, a resource library, emails, and social media posts were available to early childhood education providers statewide. Over 1500 individuals attended monthly live webinars, with over 920 views of the recorded session. Over 1,100 contacts received monthly emails with information around health and safety practices, as well as information on upcoming webinars and expansion news. Social media information is as follows:

- 📄 Facebook: 87 posts, 6,584 reaches, 271 engagements
- 📄 Twitter: 99 tweets, 8,250 tweet impressions, 280 engagements
- 📄 LinkedIn: 168 page views, 87 unique visitors, 380 impressions
- 📄 Instagram to be added for FFY24

Additionally, health consultation was available in select locations, with more locations being added November of 2023. To see the map of service areas, [click here](#).

In FFY23, the Lead Agency created a child care licensing assistance program, Provider Assistance with Licensing (PAL) with a goal of increasing the number of licensed child care programs

available to families in the Northern and Western regions of Wisconsin, including tribal communities. PAL is available to unregulated programs (family, group, and day camps), certified family programs, providers who are in the pre-licensing process, and those interested in starting a child care business. Programming includes Build It Strong, a child care business foundations training series, 1-to-1 coaching support, start-up tool kits including items that support licensure, professional development navigation, connections to existing resources in Wisconsin, and grant opportunities. Grant value is up to \$40,000 per group center, \$20,000 per day camp, and \$10,000 per family child care program. During the time frame for this report, PAL worked with 54 providers. Of these providers, 16 licenses were obtained with an increase of 359 child care slots. 38 providers continue to work on the licensure process.

The Lead Agency continued its practice of monthly data reporting related to its Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), YoungStar. These reports provide statewide and regional data regarding QRIS levels across providers, as well as, indicators connected to developmentally appropriate and high-quality practices. Further, the Lead Agency receives monthly data reports from the Wisconsin Registry to support analysis of the child care workforce registry levels and educational attainment over time.

Additional Information: (2/29/24)

During the time frame indicated, 32% of infants and toddlers receiving Wisconsin Shares funding were in high-quality child care (4,500 out of 14,000 children). Additionally, 613 staff in licensed child care programs have completed the infant/toddler credential, with 397 of those staff working in licensed CCDF child care programs.

6) Establishing, expanding, modifying, or maintaining a statewide system of child care resource and referral services

Goal: Lead agency provides: services to involve families in the development of their children, information on a full range of child care options, and assistance to families in selecting child care that is appropriate for the family's needs and is high quality as determined by the lead agency.

6.1 Spending – Child Care Resource and Referral Services

6.1.1 Spending – Child Care Resource and Referral Services:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to establish, expand, modify, or maintain a statewide CCR&R during October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) to **establish, expand, modify, or maintain a statewide CCR&R** during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? **\$2598600**

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason:

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent

No

6.2 Progress Update

6.2.1 Progress Update – Child Care Resource and Referral Services:

Establishing, expanding, modifying or maintaining a statewide system of child care resource and referral services.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.5.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan.

The Lead Agency will evaluate the quality and effectiveness of these services in a variety of ways. Information will be collected and analyzed related to each of the four main resource and referral services: high-quality child care referral services for families across the state; referrals to other support services specific to the needs of each family being supported; resources and information to individual families around topics like child development, developmentally appropriate child behavior, expectations, guidance, and developmental screening; and training and customized support to early education providers around high-quality care practices. The Lead Agency will also evaluate consumer satisfaction with CCR&R services, as well as each agency's progress in forming and maintaining strong local partnerships and community visibility. Finally, the Lead Agency will monitor progress in: recruitment of qualified, regulated early education providers, especially in areas of the state where the child care capacity does not meet the child care need; movement of child care programs into the QRIS; each agency's ability to gather valid market rate survey information; progress towards increasing the number of early education programs that are trained in inclusive practices, are expanding capacity for infant care, or are providing care during non-traditional hours (weekend, overnight).

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.5.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Progress in FFY23 is demonstrated by the following accomplishments:

☑ **4,324 unique families, representing 7,387 children, received referrals to regulated child care,**

☑ **Families from 93% of Wisconsin's counties and 3 First Nations were provided with referral support,**

☑ **2,239 unique families received referrals to other support services including Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy (32.9%), employee services (17.8%), early intervention programs, food banks, and family resource centers,**

☑ **615 trainings were completed with 8,690 unique participants, with the most-attended training being Fundamentals of Infant and Toddler Care,**

☑ **211 Foundational trainings were completed with 1,825 unique participants with**

Introduction to the Child Care Profession being the most attended (935 participants),

☒ 1,777 technical assistance interaction occurred with families with the top concerns being Parent Support (39.7%), Cost of Care (10.4%), and Child Development/Age-Appropriate Expectations (9.8%)

☒ 5,340 technical assistance interactions occurred with potential providers and 130 of those interactions occurred with license-exempt or unregulated providers,

☒ 1,539 general technical assistance interactions occurred with community members.

☒ 10 free continuing education hours were offered to members of the 53206 zip code (amendment to one CCR&R contract) with titles focusing on the WI Pyramid Model.

7) Facilitating compliance with lead agency requirements for inspection, monitoring, health and safety standards and training, and lead agency licensing standards

Goal: To ensure child care providers maintain compliance with lead agency licensing, inspection, monitoring, and health and safety standards and training.

7.1 Complaints about providers

7.1.1 Number of Complaints about providers:

How many complaints were received regarding providers during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? **1259**

7.1.2 Spending - Complaints about providers:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity (including maintaining a hotline)?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

Non-CCDF funds

CARES funds

CRRSA Funds

ARP Supplemental Discretionary

ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside

Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

7.2 Licensing Staff

7.2.1 Number of Licensing Staff:

How many licensing staff positions were there in the state or territory during October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023? Number of staff **50.65 State Staff (FTE) complete licensing visits - The staff are broken down by region: NERO = 9.75 FTE, NRO = 4 FTE, SERO = 19.85 FTE, SRO = 10.8 FTE, and WRO = 6.25 FTE**

7.2.2 Spending – Licensing Staff:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

Non-CCDF funds

CARES funds

CRRSA Funds

ARP Supplemental Discretionary

ARP Stabilization 10% set aside

Unable to report. Indicate reason: **The Lead Agency does not use quality funds to support licensing staff. Additionally, regarding License-Exempt providers, all child care programs operated or contracted by a public school that wish to be eligible to receive Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy payments on behalf of an eligible family or that will participate in Wisconsin's quality rating and improvement system (YoungStar) must be monitored annually by the Lead Agency for compliance with a subset of the Administrative Code DCF 251 Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers. While only a subset of rules are monitored by licensors, public school-operated programs are expected to comply with all of the Administrative Code DCF 251 Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers.**

No

7.3 Health and Safety Standards Coaching and Technical Assistance

7.3.1 Coaching or technical assistance on health and safety standards as a result of inspection:

How many child care programs received coaching or technical assistance to improve their understanding and adherence to CCDF health and safety standards as a result of an inspection or violation during October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023? **234**

7.3.2 Spending - Coaching or technical assistance on health and safety standards as a result of inspection:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

7.4 Spending - Compliance with health, safety, and licensing standards

7.4.1 Spending - Compliance with health, safety, and licensing standards:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) on facilitating compliance with lead agency requirements for inspections, monitoring, health and safety standards and training, and lead agency licensing standards during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? \$

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason: **The Lead Agency was unable to separate the fiscal data and will improve our process for reporting this data in FFY 24.**

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported.

7.5 Progress Update

7.5.1 Progress Update - Compliance with health, safety, and licensing standards:

Facilitating compliance with lead agency requirements for inspection, monitoring, health and safety standards and training, and lead agency licensing standards.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.6.3 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan. **The Lead Agency monitors the initial YoungStar rating of providers who are newly regulated and the percentage of individuals who request pre-licensing technical assistance.**

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.6.3 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **The lead agency and certification agencies completed a total of 9,417 monitoring activities**

between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023. Of those monitoring activities, Of the total completed monitoring visits, 6851 were unannounced onsite visits.

8) Evaluating and assessing the quality of child care programs and services, including evaluating how programs positively impact children

Goal: Lead agency investment in effective quality improvement strategies using reliable data from evaluation and assessment

8.1 Evaluation and assessment of center-based programs

8.1.1 Evaluation and assessment of center-based programs:

What measure(s) or tool(s) were used to evaluate and assess the quality of and effective practice in center-based programs during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

QRIS

CLASS

ERS

FCCERS

ITERS

State evaluation tool. Describe

Core Knowledge and Competency Framework

Other. Describe **The Lead Agency is in the beginning stages of utilizing the Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD) to measure the social-emotional climate within programs.**

Additionally, the Lead Agency uses the Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS), Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), and the Teaching and Guidance Policy Essentials Checklist (TAG-PEC) to evaluate effective practice.

Do not evaluate and assess quality and effective practice

8.1.2 Spending - Evaluation and assessment of center-based programs:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

Non-CCDF funds

CARES funds

CRRSA Funds

- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

8.2 Evaluation and assessment of family child care programs

8.2.1 Evaluation and assessment of family child care programs:

What measure(s) or tool(s) were used to evaluate and assess the quality of and effective practice in family child care programs during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

- QRIS
- CLASS
- ERS
- FCCERS
- ITERS
- State evaluation tool. Describe
- Core Knowledge and Competency Framework
- Other. Describe **The Lead Agency is in the beginning stages of utilizing the Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD) to measure the social-emotional climate within programs. This tool will be used for technical assistance purposes.**

Additionally, the Lead Agency uses the Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) to evaluate effective practice.

Do not evaluate and assess quality and effective practice

8.2.2 Spending - Evaluation and assessment of family child care programs:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds

- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

8.3 Spending - Evaluation and assessment of child care programs

8.3.1 Spending - Evaluation and assessment of child care programs:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) on evaluating and assessing the quality of child care programs, practice, or child development during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?
\$

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason: **The Lead Agency was unable to separate the fiscal data and will improve our process for reporting this data in FFY 24.**

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported.

8.4 Progress Update

8.4.1 Progress Update - Evaluation and assessment of child care programs:

Evaluating and assessing the quality of child care programs and services, including evaluating how programs positively impact children.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.7.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan.

The Lead Agency regularly analyzes program ratings at the indicator and overall level. Using this data, rating and indicator attainment change over time is measured and analyzed as well. The percent of children in high-quality care (3 Star or higher) and the number of programs rated as high-quality (3 Star or higher) are captured monthly and reported on the DCF public website at (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/impact>)

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/impact> . The Lead Agency measures the percentage of low-income children from high-needs populations (children from families experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, children of teen parents, and children with disabilities) who attend high-quality programs. The number of programs that receive onsite technical assistance, training, and/or micro-grants to improve quality is measured by the Lead

Agency on a regular basis. The Lead Agency reviews the analytics reports from the ERS scoring tools. The reports provide comparisons and changes in classroom ERS scores over time, both at the individual item score level and at the average program score level. The reports can also show assessor reliability and reliability percentage for visits and number of visits conducted. The Lead Agency increased its goal around the percentage of programs rated as high quality from 49% to 52% in January 2018. The Lead Agency has met or exceeded the 52% goal since September 2016. At the beginning of CY2021, Wisconsin met this indicator with 56.7% of programs rated 3 Star or higher. In January 2020, the Lead Agency also set a goal that at least 67% of low-income children will attend high-quality programs. At the beginning of CY2021, Wisconsin met this indicator with 67.8% of children authorized to programs rated 3 Star or higher.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.7.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **The Lead Agency regularly analyzes program ratings at the indicator and overall level. Using this data, rating and indicator attainment change over time is measured and analyzed. The percent of children in high-quality care (3 Star or higher) and the number of programs rated as high-quality (3 Star or higher) are captured and reported monthly on the DCF public website at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/impact>. The website contains the monthly statistics, as well as a detailed narrative of the YoungStar activity. Agency measures the percentage of low-income children from high-needs populations (children from families experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, children of teen parents, and children with disabilities) who attend high-quality programs. The number of programs that receive onsite technical assistance, training, and/or micro-grants to improve quality is measured by the Lead Agency on a regular basis. The Lead Agency reviews the analytics reports from the ERS scoring tools. The reports provide comparisons and changes in classroom ERS scores over time, both at the individual item score level and at the average program score level. The reports can also show assessor reliability and reliability percentage for visits and number of visits conducted. The Lead Agency increased its goal around the percentage of programs rated as high quality from 49% to 52% in January 2018. The Lead Agency has met or exceeded the 52% goal since September 2016. At the beginning of CY2021, Wisconsin met this indicator with 56.7% of programs rated 3 Star or higher. In January 2020, the Lead Agency also set a goal that at least 67% of low-income children will attend high-quality programs. At the beginning of CY2021, Wisconsin met this indicator with 67.8% of children authorized to programs rated 3 Star or higher.**

Data from FY22 shows that a total of 109 observations took place that resulted in 70 Formal Ratings (22 Family Providers, 47 Group Programs and 1 School Age Program) completed.

There were 49 ERS observations during this year (5 FCCERS-3, 19 ITERS-3, 23 ECERS-3, and 2 SACERS-U).

Data from Q2 of FY23 shows that at this point there were 105 observations conducted that resulted in a total of 60 Formal Ratings (23 Family Providers and 37 Group Programs) completed. There were a total of 105 ERS observations completed in this time period (23 FCCERS-3, 36 ITERS-3, 36 ECERS-3 and 10 SACERS-U).

YoungStar recently transitioned to a new vendor for the administration of YoungStar services. YoungStar Connect has posted its initial Q1 report for FY24. A total of 52 Technical Ratings and 13 Formal Ratings were completed and 31 total ERS observations. The expectation is that these number will continue to climb throughout the year.

9) Supporting child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation

Goal: Support child care programs and FCCs in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of quality

9.1 Accreditation Support

9.1.1 Accreditation Support:

How many providers did the lead agency support in their pursuit of accreditation (e.g., financial incentives, technical assistance with the accreditation process, coaching/mentoring by accredited programs) during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

Yes, providers were supported in their pursuit of accreditation

- a. Licensed center-based programs
- b. License-exempt center-based programs
- c. Licensed family child care homes
- d. License-exempt family child care homes (care in providers' home)
- e. Programs serving children who receive CCDF subsidy

No lead agency support given to providers in their pursuit of accreditation.

N/A. Describe: **Any of the approximately 1,500 providers that received consultation services during the last fiscal year had the ability to receive technical assistance specific to accreditation support. Unfortunately, the Lead Agency is unable to quantify this subset of providers receiving technical consultation.**

9.1.2 Spending – Accreditation Support:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

Non-CCDF funds

CARES funds

CRRSA Funds

ARP Supplemental Discretionary

ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside

Unable to report. Indicate reason:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) on **accreditation** during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? **\$20599732**

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason:

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent
CCDF Quality Funding = \$1,066,820

No

9.2 Progress Update

9.2.1 Progress Update – Accreditation Support:

Supporting providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.8.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan.

The Lead Agency measures progress around programs' accreditation attainment monthly. Both the overall number of accredited programs and the number of accredited programs by accrediting body are used to evaluate progress in this area.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.8.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:
During FFY23, the number of accredited programs in our state who are also participating in our QRIS slightly increased from 466 programs to 496 programs. In Wisconsin, the Lead Agency incentivizes providers to achieve accreditation by recognizing them as a 4 or 5 Star provider, our highest levels of quality rating. YoungStar recognizes the following accreditations as equivalent to a 4 or 5 Star rating:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- Association for Early Learning Leaders' National Accreditation Commission
- City of Madison Group and School-Age Accreditation
- Council on Accreditation (COA)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- Satellite Family Child Care Accreditation
- American Camp Association (ACA)
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)

- ☐ Cognia
- ☐ American Montessori Society (AMS)

Through the Lead Agency's newly contracted QRIS vendor, Shine Early Learning, Wisconsin has expanded access and support to family child care providers who are pursuing Satellite accreditation through both financial support and technical assistance to up to 90 providers with \$360,000 of earmarked funding.

10) Supporting providers in the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development

Goal: Assist programs to meet high-quality comprehensive program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development

10.1 High-Quality Program Standards

10.1.1 High-Quality Program Standards:

How did the state or territory help providers develop or adopt high quality program standards during October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023?

QRIS, check which indicators the lead agency has established:

- Health, nutrition, and safety of child care settings
- Physical activity and physical development in child care settings
- Mental health of children
- Learning environment and curriculum
- Ratios and group size
- Staff/provider qualifications and professional development
- Teacher/provider-child relationships
- Teacher/provider instructional practices
- Family partnerships and family strengthening
- Other. Describe:

Early Learning Guidelines

State Framework. Describe

Core Knowledge and Competencies

Other. Describe

N/A – did not help provider develop or adopt high quality program standards

10.1.2 Spending - High-Quality Program Standards:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

CCDF quality funds

Non-CCDF funds

- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) to support providers in the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? **\$106415224**

- Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason:

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported. **Funding breakdown as follows:**

APRA Supplemental: \$89,731,524

CCDF Quality: \$16,683,700

Total Allocation = \$106,415,224

- No

10.2 Progress Update

10.2.1 Progress Update - High-Quality Program Standards:

Supporting the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.9.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan. **The Lead Agency has specific quality indicators in YoungStar related to high-quality program standards, including those for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. The requirements for meeting these quality indicators are reviewed each year. The Lead Agency monitors the percentage of programs meeting these quality indicators over time. The Lead Agency also partners with the University of Wisconsin System to present health and nutrition data on providers by county to visually demonstrate the progress in meeting these indicators.**

Finally, the Lead Agency will continually examine and report on the accessibility of high-quality child care that is responsive to all families' needs.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.9.2 of the FFY 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **The Lead Agency has specific quality indicators in YoungStar related to high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. YoungStar is composed of five star-rating levels that are arranged in a block rating structure. Programs rated 3 through 5 stars are considered high-quality programs. At the end of FFY23, 1,782 regulated providers participating in YoungStar met the high-quality definition.**

Beginning in 2021, the Lead Agency's rating system requires providers to demonstrate progress on at least one healthy nutrition and/or physical activity policy and/or practice goal from their previous rating cycle in order to achieve a 3, 4, or 5 Star rating using either the Go NAPSACC or REDCap online assessment tools. The Lead Agency supports providers to achieve their goals through coaching and training.

In FFY23, YoungStar coaches worked with ECE (birth to five) providers to support them to complete online Go NAPSACC (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care) assessment to document and track their physical activity and nutrition goals. The user-friendly tool takes a child care provider from assessment through implementation (a five-step process) to achieve quality goals based on evidence-based high quality practices. The Lead Agency partners with Go NAPSACC leadership from the University of North Carolina, Center for Health Promotion & Disease Prevention to collect data on implementation of best practices as well as policy development. YoungStar coaches worked with school-age programs to support them to complete the OSNAP (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) assessments in an online DHS-owned assessment system, REDCap. The tool is titled Active OST (Out-of-School Time) Healthy Bites Assessment.

The Lead Agency continued to fund provider training in online formats around Active Early, Healthy Bites, Breastfeeding Friendly Programs, Gardening, and Family Engagement. The newest training created in early 2022 was the Active OST training.

The number of providers who demonstrated progress on their healthy nutrition and or/physical activity goals on September 30, 2023 is shown by Star rating below:

3 Star providers ☐ 1108

4 Star providers ☑ 149

5 Star providers ☑ 62

These numbers represent 66% of the total number of providers who chose to participate in YoungStar and complete the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria rating process.

Additionally, as part of the YoungStar evaluation process, programs can be evaluated for having key high-quality practices. The number of high-quality practices is shown below across regions. In total, as of September 1, 2023, 1,507 programs were counted as meeting at least one of these high-quality practices. The high-quality practices include:

- ☑ Use of age-appropriate learning plans;
- ☑ Gathering information on children’s experiences;
- ☑ Experiences are adapted to each child’s needs;
- ☑ Uses a developmental screener;
- ☑ Tracks children’s growth and progress;
- ☑ Most staff have social/emotional or inclusion training;
- ☑ Staff have Strengthening Families training

Specifically, the developmental screener, social/emotional inclusion training, and Strengthening Families trainings support program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development.

11) Other activities to improve the quality of child care services

Goal: To improve the quality of child care programs and services related to outcomes measuring improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten-entry

11.1 Sustainability funding to child care providers

11.1.1 Sustainability funding to child care providers:

Did the state or territory continue to provide stabilization grants to child care providers using funds other than the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Stabilization funds during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

Yes. If yes, describe and check which types of providers were eligible and number served. **The Lead Agency created the Child Care Counts (CCC) program at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued to fund the program to get funding directly in to the hands of the providers across the state. During the period in question, FFY23 (October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023) the Lead Agency utilized the following federal revenue sources to fund the programs:**

1. Child Care Counts (CCC): Stabilization Payment Program Round 2 (8/1/22 - 4/30/23)

* ARPA Stabilization - 93% of total monthly payments from 10/1/22 - 3/31/23.
3% of total monthly payment for 4/1/23 - 4/30/23.

* ARPA Supplemental - 7% of total monthly payments from 10/1/22 - 4/30/23.
93% of total monthly payment for 4/1/23 - 4/30/23.

2. Child Care Counts (CCC): Stabilization Payment Program Round 2 (May 2023 - January 2024)

* 100% of total monthly payments from 5/1/23 - 9/30/23.

Licensed center-based programs **3869**

License-exempt center-based programs **213**

Licensed family child care homes **2336**

License-exempt family child care homes (care in providers' home) **0**

In-home (care in the child's own home) **4**

- Other (explain)
- No.
- N/A. Describe:

11.1.2 Spending – Sustainability funding to child care providers:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

- Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

- No

11.2 Data Systems Investment

11.2.1 Data Systems Investment:

Did the state/territory invest in data systems to support equitable access to child care (e.g., modernizing and maintaining systems; technology upgrades and data governance improvements to provide more transparent and updated information to parents; a workforce registry; updated QRIS systems; CCR&R updates; monitoring systems) from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

- Yes. Describe:
- No

11.2.2 Spending - Data Systems Investment:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

- Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

11.3 Supply and Demand Analysis

11.3.1 Supply and Demand Analysis:

Did the state/territory conduct an analysis of supply and demand or other needs assessment to identify areas of focus to build supply or target funding from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023?

Yes. Describe findings: **The Lead Agency collaborated with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute of Poverty Research (IRP) to survey child care providers across the state to identify specific areas of need to ensure high-quality child care is available to families in a sustainable format. Survey data was used to direct funding to support staffing and benefit levels.**

New Information:

The evaluation study focused on the use of ARP Act-related funding in two program areas. Program A is for "increasing access to high-quality care.

Allowable expenditures and number of providers spending Program A funding include:

- 1. Physical operating expenses such as mortgage, rent, or utilities = 2,469 Providers Used Funding for this expense**
- 2. Building maintenance or upgrades = 2,260 Providers Used Funding for this expense**
- 3. Covering payroll and benefits = 2,061 Providers Used Funding for this expense**
- 4. Reducing COVID-19 risk, such as providing PPE or cleaning supplies = 1,946 Providers Used Funding for this expense**
- 5. Providing materials or supplies for enhancing program environment and curriculum = 1,872 Providers Used Funding for this expense**

6. Providing social and emotional development supports or mental health services for staff = 1,439 Providers Used Funding for this expense
7. Providing social and emotional development supports or mental health services for children = 1,368 Providers Used Funding for this expense
8. Providing credit-based training for professional development and continuing education = 1,272 Providers Used Funding for this expense
9. Providing other non-credit-based professional development training or education = 1,026 Providers Used Funding for this expense
10. Providing family engagement activities = 696 Providers Used Funding for this expense
11. Providing financial assistance for families = 647 Providers Used Funding for this expense

Program B is for "funding workforce recruitment and retention".

Allowable expenditures and number of providers spending Program B funding include:

1. Efforts to recruit new staff, such as sign-on bonuses = 2,219 Providers Used Funding for this expense
2. Bonuses or stipends for current staff = 1,590 Providers Used Funding for this expense
3. Increased hourly wages or annual salary = 997 Providers Used Funding for this expense
4. New or increased paid time off, such as sick leave or vacation = 992 Providers Used Funding for this expense
5. New or increased benefits such as health or dental insurance or retirement = 829 Providers Used Funding for this expense
6. Providing credit-based training for professional development and continuing education = 738 Providers Used Funding for this expense
7. Providing other non-credit-based professional development training or education = 441 Providers Used Funding for this expense

Evaluation Summary:

In sum, the CCC Stabilization program appears to have provided much-needed monetary relief to child care programs across the state during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Via their responses to the open-ended questions, providers demonstrated an acute need for the funding; often to simply make ends meet, but also to address staffing issues and make improvements in their facilities and programming. As reflected in the quantitative data analysis, at least some providers reported spending in each of the allowable categories across Programs A and B; however, they indicated clear preferences. For Program A, focused on "increasing access to high quality care," providers overwhelmingly reported using funds for covering current payroll and benefits (especially group providers) and

physical operating expenses (especially family providers). For Program B, focused on funding workforce recruitment and retention, providers heavily prioritized using funding to give bonuses or stipends to current staff in contrast to wage increases or improved benefits. In both programs, providers showed a preference for using funds to support non-credit versus credit-based training. Differences in spending patterns, particularly between family and group providers, reflected the very different needs of these types of programs based on the children they serve and highlight potential questions regarding equity that need to be explored further.

These reported spending choices, corroborated by the open-ended question responses, reflect consistent concerns about long-term sustainability of funding as well as gaps in financial support of the “true cost” of providing high quality child care. While the CCC Stabilization program undoubtedly delivered immediate financial relief for providers during a particularly tumultuous time and many providers reported spending that could lead to better financial stability, reduced staff turnover, and improved program quality, the uncertainty of future funding clearly limited longer-term investments such as wage increases and benefits. Although there is some evidence that providing short-term financial incentives may reduce turnover in early care and education (Bassok et al., 2021), evidence remains mixed regarding the best way to attract and retain high-quality child care workers and address gender and racial inequities in the field (Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center, 2022). Prior research also suggests mixed results regarding the association between teacher qualifications, classroom quality, and children’s outcomes (e.g., Lin & Magnuson, 2018), and of note in this study, CCC Stabilization spending on professional development was not evenly distributed among providers. It is unclear whether spending patterns and outcomes would have been different with the promise of continued or a higher level of funding; therefore, future policy experimentation and research could help establish adequate levels of funding and evidence-based spending priorities.

If policymakers choose to extend CCC Stabilization, providers offered many specific, although sometimes conflicting, recommendations about ways to improve the program, including how funding is distributed, how funding could be used to better meet provider needs, and how to reduce administrative burden associated with participation. Again, differences in providers’ particularly family versus group may need to be considered in any program restructure.

[] No

11.3.2 Spending - Supply and Demand Analysis:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

11.4 Supply and Demand Initiatives

11.4.1 Supply and Demand Initiatives:

Did the state/territory implement initiatives designed to address supply and demand issues related to child care deserts and/or vulnerable populations (such as infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, English language learners, and children who need child care during non-traditional hours) during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? Check all that apply.

- Child care deserts
- Infants/toddlers
- Children with disabilities
- English language learners
- Children who need child care during non-traditional hours
- Other. Describe:

11.4.2 Spending - Supply and Demand Initiatives:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds
- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

11.5 Provider Compensation and Benefits

11.5.1 Spending - Provider Compensation and Benefits:

What compensation and benefits improvements did teachers/providers receive between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023 (check all that apply)? If indicated, how many providers received each type of support?

- Financial bonuses (not tied to education levels)
- Salary enhancements/wage supplements **18,706 participants received wage enhancements through the REWARD program.**
- Health insurance coverage
- Dental insurance coverage
- Retirement benefits
- Loan Forgiveness programs
- Mental Health/Wellness programs **314 active users receive benefits through the Educator Assistance Program (EAP)**
- Start up funds
- Other. Describe:
- N/A. Describe:

11.5.2 Spending - Provider Compensation and Benefits:

Were funds from any sources (e.g., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, or ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) spent to support this activity?

Yes, if so which funding source(s) were used?

- CCDF quality funds
- Non-CCDF funds

- CARES funds
- CRRSA Funds
- ARP Supplemental Discretionary
- ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside
- Unable to report. Indicate reason:

No

11.6 Spending – Other Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care Services

11.6.1 Spending – Other Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care Services:

What is the total amount spent across all funding sources (i.e., CCDF quality set aside, non-CCDF funds, CARES, CRRSA, ARP Supplemental Discretionary, and ARP Stabilization 10% set-aside) on other activities to improve the quality of child care services during October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023? \$

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason: **The Lead Agency was unable to separate the fiscal data and will improve our process for reporting this data in FFY 24.**

Optional: Use this space to tell us any additional information about how funds were spent that is not captured in the items already reported.

11.7 Progress Update

11.7.1 Progress Update – Other Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care Services:

Other activities to improve the quality of child care services supported by outcome measures that improve provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten-entry.

Measurable indicators of progress the state/territory reported in section 7.10.1 of the 2022-2024 CCDF Plan:

Note: The information displayed is from the most recent approved FFY2022-2024 CCDF Plan. **The Lead Agency supports additional training and technical assistance to rural and tribal communities. Contracted YoungStar staff received reliability training on the new Environment Rating Scales tools before the Lead Agency implemented the 3rd editions as the YoungStar rating tool in 2021. With Preschool Development Grant funds, the Lead Agency was able to enter into a partnership with WIDA, a recognized and trusted leader in resources and services for supporting the success of multilingual learners in early childhood and K-12 settings. Within this partnership, WIDA and DCF: updated the Wisconsin Connection document, which presents a crosswalk between the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and the WIDA Early English**

Language Development Standards; provided access to WIDA Early Years online learning modules for an unlimited number of early educators to support young multilingual learners; and critically evaluated language-focused family engagement, child assessment, teacher-child interactions, environment, and child developmental screening practices within the YoungStar evaluation criteria. The Lead Agency also contracted with the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners Group to translate the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Family Tip Sheets into Spanish and make them available statewide, and to fund and work with three Regional Early Childhood Outreach Specialists who have education and experience around: 4K/4KCA and inclusion practices within general education; Homeless and Child Find activities/information; Culturally and linguistically responsive practices/Tribal Nations. Through Preschool Development Grant funds, the Lead Agency was able to provide free memberships to The Registry to all Wisconsin early care and education professionals. The Registry is the sole entity that verifies whether early childhood professionals meet or exceed entry level and on-going training requirements established by the Lead Agency's regulatory section. It determines placement on The Registry Career Levels based on each ECE professional's education and training and records educational and professional contributions that surpass basic requirements. By increasing the number of professionals who are current members of The Registry by over 13,500 through this initiative, the Lead Agency can more accurately understand early educators in terms of educational background, continuing education, demographic information, and wage data.

Please include information on the outcomes and numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators of progress specified in section 7.10.2 of the 2022-2024 CCDF Plan: **New Information:**

- * Provided additional training and technical assistance to rural and tribal communities through a budget investment of \$1.3 million dollars directed to Child Care Resource & Referral agencies.
- * Contracted YoungStar staff continued to receive reliability training on the new Environment Rating Scales tools.
- * Entered into a partnership with WIDA, a recognized and trusted leader in resources and services for supporting the success of multilingual learners in early childhood and K-12 settings.
- * WIDA and DCF updated the Wisconsin Connection document, which presents a crosswalk between the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and the WIDA Early English Language Development Standards;
- * Provided access to WIDA Early Years online learning modules for an unlimited number of early educators to support young multilingual learners; and critically evaluated language-focused family engagement, child assessment, teacher-child interactions, environment, and child developmental screening practices within the YoungStar evaluation criteria.
- * Contracted with the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners Group to translate the

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Family Tip Sheets into Spanish and make them available statewide, and to fund and work with three Regional Early Childhood Outreach Specialists who have education and experience around: 4K/4KCA and inclusion practices within general education; Homeless and Child Find activities/information; Culturally and linguistically responsive practices/Tribal Nations. Through additional funding enhancements,
* Provided free memberships to The Registry to all Wisconsin early care and education professionals.

12) Annual Report

Lead agencies must submit an annual report, as required at 45 CFR § 98.53(f) (4), describing any changes to lead agency regulations, enforcement mechanisms, or other lead agency policies addressing health and safety based on an annual review and assessment of serious child injuries and any deaths occurring in child care programs receiving CCDF, and in other regulated and unregulated child care centers and family child care homes, to the extent possible.

12.1 Annual Report and Changes

12.1.1 Annual Report:

Describe the annual review and assessment of serious injuries and any deaths occurring in child care programs receiving CCDF, and in other regulated and unregulated child care centers and family child care homes, to the extent possible. **Under the current definition of serious injury reported between 10/01/2022 and 09/30/2023, 956 incidents were reported. There were two deaths reported in regulated child care programs and one death reported in an unregulated program between 10/01/2023 and 09/30/2023. Additionally, nine referrals for child protective services resulted in a substantiated finding of maltreatment or neglect while a child was in care and there were seven substantiations of maltreatment or neglect that did not involve the provider/center. The Lead Agency's regional licensing managers and licensing supervisors conduct periodic reviews of all self-reports submitted to the regional office to determine whether there is a pattern of incidents that may suggest the need for administrative rule or procedural changes. Reviews are conducted at least annually.**

12.1.2 Annual Report Changes:

Describe any changes to lead agency regulations, enforcement mechanisms, or other lead agency policies addressing health and safety based on the annual review and assessment. **In March of 2023, the Lead Agency revised child care licensing rules affecting chapters DCF 250, 251, and 252. The primary purpose of the rule revisions was to accurately reflect the nature of school-age child care in DCF 251 and used the opportunity to propose revisions for DCF 250, 252, and other 251 rules. New requirements include but are not limited to mandatory radon testing and updated private well testing requirements. Additionally, the Lead Agency reviewed the list of health and safety rules for DCF 250, 251, and 252 and updated the lists to reflect revised rules and new recommendation. The Lead Agency's licensing system (WISCCRS) module has been updated to reflect these changes. The changes were effective March 1, 2023. The Lead Agency's**

regional licensing managers and licensing supervisors conduct periodic reviews of all self-reports submitted to the regional office to determine whether there is a pattern of incidents that may suggest the need for administrative rule or procedural changes. Reviews are conducted at least annually.

13) American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Child Care Stabilization Grants

Goal: To ensure the lead agency implements an equitable stabilization grant program. The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act included approximately \$24 billion for child care stabilization grants, representing an important opportunity to stabilize the child care sector and do so in a way that builds back a stronger child care system that supports the developmental and learning needs of children, meets parents' needs and preferences with equal access to high-quality child care, and supports a professionalized workforce that is fairly and appropriately compensated for the essential skilled work that they do. Lead agencies must spend most stabilization funds as subgrants to qualified child care providers to support the stability of the child care sector during and after the COVID-19 public health emergency. Section 13 should be used to report on ARP Stabilization Grants ONLY.

13.1 Multiple Grant Programs

13.1.1 ARP Act Stabilization multiple grant programs:

Did you run more than one grant program? If so, list the number of separate grant programs and describe their uses.

Yes. Describe: **Since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic the Lead Agency has run multiple rounds of funding for child care providers. This program is called the Child Care Counts (CCC) and is composed of two different areas that are available for providers through an application process. Programs "A" and "B" are distinct in nature and providers can apply for both programs or individually, The programs areas are defined as follows:**

Payment Program A: Increasing Access to High-Quality Care

Program A includes:

*** Per-Child Amount: Program A payment amount for each child entered in the application that was in attendance during the Count Week**

*** Wisconsin Shares Add-On Amount: Program A payment amount given in addition to the Per-Child Amount for each child included in the application who had a Wisconsin Shares Authorization during the Count Week**

*** Inclusive Birth to 3 Pilot Add-on Amount: Program A payment amount given in addition to the Per-Child Amount for each child included in the application who is participating in the Inclusive Birth to 3 Child Care Pilot**

Program B includes:

* **Base Per-Staff Amount:** Program B payment amount for each eligible full-time/part-time staff listed in the application

* **Quality Incentive Per-Staff Amount:** Program B additional payment amount based on YoungStar rating for each eligible full-time/part-time staff listed in the application

No

13.2 ARP Act Stabilization Grants workforce compensation

13.2.1 ARP Act Stabilization Grant strategies for workforce compensation:

Which of the following methods were used to support workforce compensation (e.g., bonuses, stipends, increased base wages, or employee benefits) with stabilization grants? (check all that apply)

Targeted grants to support workforce compensation (no other allowable uses)

Providing bonus funds to providers that increased child care staff compensation through stabilization grants

Requiring a specific percentage or amount of stabilization grant funding go toward child care staff compensation increases. Percent or amount for staff compensation:

Other (Describe): **Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program, Round 2: (August 2022 - April 2023)**

Payment Program B: Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention includes:

Base Per-Staff Amount: Program B payment amount for each eligible full-time/part-time staff listed in the application

Quality Incentive Per-Staff Amount: Program B additional payment amount based on YoungStar rating for each eligible full-time/part-time staff listed in the application

Allowable Use of Funds Program B

Under Program B **Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention**, all programs will receive

a Base Per-Staff amount. Programs participating in YoungStar will receive a Quality Incentive Per-Staff amount. These amounts will be included in the monthly Payment Letter. Program B funds must be used to support necessary and reasonable costs associated with recruiting and retaining high-quality staff.

If I receive funding for Program B - Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention I agree to the following:

I will, at minimum, maintain existing compensation (wages, bonuses, or benefits) for each staff person included in that month's Count Week using at least the Base Per-Staff amount.

For programs participating in YoungStar, I will use the awarded Quality Incentive Per Staff amount towards one or more of the following: wages; bonuses; benefits; recruiting; professional development; and staff trainings, scholarships, or other continuing education expenses.

Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program Round 3: (May 2023 - January 2024)

The Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program Round 3 is a nine-month payment program that runs May 2023 through January 2024. Once approved for payments, eligible providers may continue to receive ongoing monthly payments, providing the financial stability they need to stay open, to recruit and retain qualified staff, and to continue providing high-quality care for children.

Allowable Use of Funds

Payment Program B funds must be used to support necessary and reasonable costs associated with recruiting and retaining high-quality staff.

Base Per-Staff Amount must be used toward the goal of maintaining existing compensation (wages, bonuses, or benefits) for each staff person included in that month's Count Week

Quality Incentive Per-staff Amount must be used toward one or more of the following: wages, bonuses, benefits, recruiting, professional development, staff trainings, scholarships, or other continuing education expenses.

Allowable Use of Funds Program B

Under Program B ☐ Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention, all programs will receive a Base Per-Staff amount. Programs participating in YoungStar will receive a Quality Incentive Per-Staff amount. These amounts will be included in the monthly Payment Letter. Program B funds must be used to support necessary and reasonable costs associated with recruiting and retaining high-quality staff.

● If I receive funding for Program B - Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention I agree to the following:

o I will use at least the Base Per-Staff amount for each staff person included in that month's Count Week toward the goal of maintaining existing compensation (wages, bonuses, or benefits).

o For programs participating in YoungStar, I will use the awarded Quality Incentive Per Staff amount towards one or more of the following: wages; bonuses; benefits; recruiting; professional development; and staff trainings, scholarships, or other continuing education expenses.