youngstar
Wisconsin's Child Care Rating Program

Spring 2014

Registry Coupons

Coupons are now available through funds from the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/rttt/) to eliminate the cost of new applications to the Registry and renewal of current Registry Career Levels (http://www.the-registry.org/Membership/CareerLevels.aspx).

The purpose of the coupons is to assist child care programs in increasing their star rating levels if they are ready to move up, but the cost of the Registry is holding them back. Coupons are available from your YoungStar Technical Consultant and can be used by any program type, including Licensed Day Camps.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for a Registry Coupon you must meet a few criteria:

1. Have earned at least 6 credits in credit-based instruction
2. Be currently participating in YoungStar, with a rating of 2 Stars
3. Be ready to increase your YoungStar rating

Technical Consultants will use the criteria above, along with their best judgment and knowledge of your program to determine eligibility.

Coupons will be available until October 2015 or until the funds are all depleted.

Tools to Use in YoungStar Quality Improvement

Knowing where to start improving your child care program or classroom can be daunting. Below are three key concepts for early educators to include within their programs in order to be successful.

1. Ages and Stages Questionnaires
Children's development is constantly evolving, especially within the earliest stages of their lives. The Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs) glean information from parents and providers about their children's development by having them answer questions about their children's physical and emotional development, not just once, but on a regular basis throughout their early childhood. Implementing regular screening processes like this early on in a child's life allows caregivers to catch developmental delays in children when they first appear, so that children can get the extra supports they need right away. Successful implementation of ASQs means the children in your care are being supported in their learning and development throughout their early childhood, not just at one point in time, setting them up for long-term success. Learn how to implement ASQs here: http://agesandstages.com/what-is-asq/implementing-asq/.

2. Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards
These standards are a collaborative effort between the Wisconsin Departments of Children & Families (DCF), Public Instruction (DPI), and Health Services (DHS). The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-about.php) are an evidence-based guide to help providers and parents set realistic developmental expectations for their children from birth until they start the first grade. This gives parents and providers a common language, understanding, and knowledge about their children's development, allowing them to better support that early development and see its connection to success throughout a child's life. Building Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards into the foundation of your child care program or classroom builds stronger supports for your children's development, both in the classroom and ideally, at home. Read more about ways to engage families around the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-family-training.php), and about how to work these standards into your child care environment (http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-curriculum-assessment-tools.php).

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Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Quality Improvement Plans *(continued from page 1)*

3. The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

Developed by the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) (http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/index.htm) and the Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) (http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/), the Pyramid Model is a framework made for implementation in early childhood education settings that takes a tiered approach to supporting children's social emotional development. This means identifying through careful observation of the children in your care, what each child needs for healthy social emotional development, and being responsive to those needs. Whether they require the universal or general supports that most children need, or if they are a higher needs child that requires more targeted or intensive supports. Building this approach to social emotional development into your child care program will allow you to better meet the overall needs of the children in your care, allowing each child to learn and grow more efficiently in an environment that is tailored to what they need to learn and engage. Explore demonstration sites that are implementing the Pyramid Model within their programs, and watch videos where individuals discuss their experiences with the Pyramid Model (http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/pyramid_model/demonstration_sites.html).

Get Registry Credit for Online Gardening Class

It's the beginning of gardening season, which is a great time to teach children where food comes from, how to eat healthy, and how to grow their own vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Consider starting a small garden at your child care center and get 1.5 hours of Registry Continuing Education Units for participating in a free, online class about youth gardening, called "Cultivating Childhood Wellness Through Gardening." You can apply what you learn from this class and your garden activity to help improve your health and wellness categories of your YoungStar Quality Improvement Plan, too.

The "Cultivating Childhood Wellness Through Gardening" online video training was developed by Wisconsin Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Program, along with Community Groundworks, in partnership with UW Extension, Wisconsin Obesity Prevention Network, UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, and UW-Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems. The seven short chapters discuss planning a youth garden, growing food with kids, tasting the harvest, garden-based activities, and much more. Learn more about this fun activity here: http://www.communitygroundworks.org/content/resources-and-partners#Professional_Development

The more you know...

YoungStar Frequently Asked Questions Updated

As part of our ongoing effort to provide parents and child care programs with relevant and timely information about YoungStar, we have recently updated nearly all of our **Frequently Asked Questions**, located on this YoungStar webpage: http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/faq.htm

Many of the questions have been substantially revised, and numerous questions have been added. The questions are organized by topic, including:

- Overview of the YoungStar Quality Rating and Improvement System
- Application and Participation
- Education and Training
- Learning Environment and Curriculum
- Families
- School-Age Programs
- Day Camps
- YoungStar Evaluation Criteria
- Environment Rating Scales
- Four-Year-Old Kindergarten
- And many other topics

A PDF with the complete list of Frequently Asked Questions is available to download here: http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/ys_faq.pdf

We encourage you to take time to read through the new Frequently Asked Questions to help find answers to your YoungStar questions, or to re-familiarize yourself with specific YoungStar topics.

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