The Child Development Division is changing the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) for all child care, preschool and afterschool programs. These changes will happen in two phases:

Phase 1: The STARS rules were changed effective September 2019 and removed the regulatory history component. This streamlined STARS for new programs and eliminate an application process to have one star.

Phase 2: The division is using the information gathered in the evaluation and validation study to develop changes to the structure of and requirements in STARS.

Phase 2 Highlights

Goals

To create a transparent, clear, reliable, and aligned system that:

1) is comprised of research-based criteria to define quality, and
2) will guide stakeholders, including families, early child, and afterschool educators (providers), and communities.

Proposed Changes

- Change to a block system. From a system where programs can earn a variety of points in four areas to total a score, which determines the stars level.
  - A block system:
    - Requires programs to achieve similar criteria at each level.
    - Makes the process simpler for child care programs, clearer for families in understanding the meaning of STARS, and ensures a focus on the most important criteria at each level.
- Draft criteria are being developed.
- The Child Development Division has meet with child care providers throughout the state at each stage of the proposed changes and is prioritizing meeting with providers prior to any proposed rule making changes.

More details on the evolution of Vermont STARS:

https://dcf.vermont.gov/childcare/providers/stars/evolution

VERMONT
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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Highlights of Some Research and Information Used in the STARS Evolution:

STARS Evaluation and Validation Survey:
https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Reports/VermontSTARS_ChildTrends_December2018.pdf

- STARS Evaluation Study Key Findings - https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Reports/VermontEvaluationBrief_ChildTrends_October2018.pdf
- STARS Validation Study Key Findings - https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Reports/VermontValidationBrief_ChildTrends_October2018.pdf

National Presentation on Research for QRIS: https://youtu.be/KN6jj9M_noo