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Quality Progress Report (QPR)
For
Alabama
FFY 2024

QPR Status: Accepted as of 2025-03-28 19:58:34 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, 2023, through September 30, 2024), 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.

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, 2024.

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, 2024. These counts should include all licensed child care providers, not just those serving children receiving CCDF subsidies.

Licensed center-based programs **1336**

Unable to provide number. Indicate reason:

Additional clarification: Based on most recent submission of the FY 2024 ACF-800 data there were 1132 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 **525**

Unable to provide number. Indicate reason:

Additional clarification: Based on most recent submission of the FY 2024 ACF-800 data there were 168 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 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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

Yes. If yes, describe: **Alabama Pathways Professional Development Registry launched August 2022. Alabama Pathways Professional Development Registry went offline July 01, 2023 for transitional maintenance. After the completion of maintenance, Alabama Pathways Professional Development Registry became live July 11, 2024. Alabama Pathways' benefits include: creating an early childhood professional training profile, documenting professional accomplishments and professional certificates, identifying status on the Alabama Pathways Professional Development Career lattice, collaborating with state quality enhancement agencies to identify and reach professional development goals, and providing access to available resources.**

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: **All licensed child care teachers/providers in the state of Alabama are required to participate in Alabama Pathways Professional Development Registry.**

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, 2024 **23566**

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, 2023 and September 30, 2024 (check all that apply)? If selected, how many staff received each type of support?

- Scholarships (for formal education institutions) **887**
- Financial bonus/wage supplements tied to education levels **468**
- Career advisors, mentors, coaches, or consultants **We are unable to provide an unduplicated account. We have submitted a request for the Professional Development Registry (PDR) to have a feature built in to track information by individuals as a future enhancement.**
- Reimbursement for training
- Loans
- Substitutes, leave (paid or unpaid) for professional development **72**
- Other. Describe:
- 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, 2024:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) **1686**
- Associate's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education) **1625**
- Bachelor's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education) **2012; Additionally: 664 Master's; 49 Doctorate**
- State child care credential **During FY 2024, 295 individuals completed and were awarded the Alabama Early Learning Credential. However, this is not a cumulative number for all providers holding this credential.**
- State infant/toddler credential **FY24 was the first year offering the Alabama Infant Toddler Teacher Credential and 9 were awarded.**
- 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, 2024:

- Child Development Associate (CDA)
- Associate's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education)
- Bachelor's degree in an early childhood education field (e.g. psychology, human development, education)

State child care credential

State infant/toddler credential

Unable to report this data. Indicate reason: **We do not currently have a way to accurately indicate which providers are working in locations receiving CCDF funding.**

Data in staff accounts are entered and maintained on an individual basis and do not connect the employee to the specific facility at which they may be working, therefore, we are unable to determine which funding streams may be available at the facilities in which the individual works.

Although the ARISE and Pathways systems will both be live and have the ability to share data in some capacity, future discussions surrounding planning will have to occur regarding additional systems enhancements taking place that will enable the collection and the reporting of the data collectively.

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

Emergency Preparedness Planning

Other. Describe other technical assistance available to providers as part of the professional development system: **Additional topics available to providers as a part of the lead agency's professional development also include:**

Mental Health for Providers, Continuing Education/CDA Attainment, Child Development, Nutrition/Healthy Practices, Family Engagement/Building Positive Relationships/Social Media, Developmentally Appropriate Practices in the Child Care Setting, Nurse Family Partnership model, Parents as Teachers model, National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation (NAFCCA), Challenging Behaviors, STEM for Infants & Toddlers, Socio-Emotional, Language, First Teacher Home Visitor sessions training, My Care Alabama orientation sessions, Pathways Professional Development Registry training, and Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) Orientation sessions.

UPDATE/CLARIFICATION:

Quorum is an electronic professional development delivery system. Annual subscriptions are provided at no cost to individuals working in child care. It is used for the virtual delivery of many of the training topics listed above.

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:

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$25466554**

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.

The figure above does include QRIS services and Quorum. It does not include QRIS incentive payments/bonuses.

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 contracts training and professional development to community-based organizations referred to as Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs). The Lead Agency requires the agencies to submit quarterly reports of the training and TA provided to child care providers. The QEAs complete pre- and post-testing of each training to measure progress. The QEAs may also award continuing education units to those that successfully complete courses. The Lead Agency uses this information to measure progress attained by the providers. Indicators are used by the lead agency in determining additional needs for training, including frequency and varying methods. Other measurable indicators include number of scholarship awards, retention stipends, equipment grants, accreditations received, etc.

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: **According to Quality Enhancement Agencies' submitted Quarterly Reports, the following progress has been indicated regarding supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce: A total of 194,987 training and technical assistance opportunities were provided. Many include the completion of pre and post-tests by attendees to measure comprehension of the material presented, and participants earning continuing education units.**

-Approximately 13,500 retention stipends were issued as employee bonuses for recruitment and retention

-117 TEACH incentive bonuses were awarded to graduates maintaining employment in Alabama child care facilities

-23 equipment grants were awarded totaling \$15,640

-295 accreditations were awarded (Alabama Early Learning Guidelines credential)

-123 providers maintained a National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation (NAFCCA)

-\$1,273,894 was disbursed as scholarship awards

-\$277,827 was awarded as Dependent Care Grants (an afterschool quality improvement grant to 16 local education agencies)

-6 grants were awarded to 9 counties that use the home visiting models Parents as Teachers and Nurse Family Partnerships

-\$62,400 in FCCP provider assistance was disbursed

-19 providers received NAFCCA Application Scholarships totaling \$8,430

-18 providers received NAFCCA Self Study Scholarships totaling \$14,170 in assistance

- 150 providers were supported in accreditation by FCCP
 - 44 providers received NAFCCA Memberships totaling \$1,965
 - 89 providers received Focus on Family Child Care Conference stipends totaling \$17,800
 - Challenging Behaviors expended \$301,500 for project enhancements
 - Early Language and Literacy, Feed Me Words project, expended \$49,100 as incentives
 - Quality Incentives: Equipment grants are issued to family child care providers based on their NAFCCA level reviews to purchase items to assist with meeting/maintaining National Accreditation standard requirements (cribs, cots, items for safety, infant/toddler, literacy, art, cognitive & physical development). Providers awarded & maintaining NAFCCA through the annual update, enrolled in NAFCCA self-study, or who successfully submitted a first-time application, received a financial bonus. Progress in this area include:
 - 143 providers received stipends for progress towards, attaining, or maintaining accreditation totaling \$12,025
 - 4 providers earned a CDA credential
 - 4 providers earned an associates
 - 12 providers earned a bachelor's
 - 1 provider earned a master's
 - 17 retention incentive bonuses were disbursed for TEACH scholarship graduates
 - Challenging Behaviors Project Enhancement and participation stipends totaled \$310,500, Cox Campus Professional Development awarded 250 incentives for \$49,100 (167 of those work in a facility that serves subsidy children)
- The lead agency also provides ongoing training and professional development opportunities to early childcare professionals within the state through access to services provided by Alabama Early Learning Guidelines training/credentialing, and more. Through Quorum, our online professional development platform, the following occurred during FY24:
- 36,226 courses completed
 - 116,838 training hours awarded

The above items been broken out as much as possible, with no duplications. Because the majority of grant funding was expended previous fiscal years, there was a decrease in grants issued through Supplemental/Stabilization funding. However, there was an increase in the following: TEACH incentive bonuses, AELG credentials awarded, individuals receiving NAFCCA accreditation, Dependent Care Grants, individuals supported in accreditation by FCCP, individuals receiving stipends for progress towards/attaining/maintaining accreditation, number of individuals who earned a CDA,

number of individuals who earned an AA, number of individuals who earned a BS, and retention incentive bonuses disbursed for TEACH Scholarship graduates.

There was a slight decrease in the following:

amount of funds disbursed as scholarship awards (TEACH Leadership), total dollars disbursed as FCCP provider assistance, individuals who received NAFFCA Self Study Scholarships (-7), individuals who received sponsorship for NAFCCA memberships (-2), individuals who received Focus on Family Child Care Conference stipends (-8), and number of LEA's who were awarded grant funding for quality afterschool programs.

Additionally, there was an overall decrease in the number of online courses completed through Quorum during FY24, resulting in a decrease in total training hours awarded. It is perhaps due to an increase number of in-person opportunities available post-COVID.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

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

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. **Measurable indicators used to evaluate progress in improving quality is the number of individuals which obtain the state's early learning guidelines credential. The state averages over 100 individuals each year that obtains the state guidelines credential. The state's early learning guidelines and the completion of the credential recognizes higher levels in quality as related to the QRIS. The QRIS uses the achievement of the credential to acknowledge quality by the number of staff that have obtained it.**

The state plans to update standards as the last update was made in 2009. Updates to the state plan will be made upon completion.

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: **In FY24, 295 teachers earned the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) credential which is Alabama's State Credential. Training for the AELG is provided online and in-person by Quality Enhancement Agency (QEA) trainers. Each QEA trainer completed the Train the Trainer trainings to ensure fidelity.**

The Lead agency is actively reviewing the vision and scope of work to update and revise the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines with a goal to enter into a new agreement for revision.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

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

- **General description of QRIS: The Lead agency's QRIS began full implementation in February 2014. Eligible programs include all licensed family childcare homes, group daycare homes, and childcare centers that are in good standing with the Alabama Department of Human Resources. Childcare programs that cannot be licensed by the Alabama Department of Human Resources, such as military, public school, college, university, and tribal programs are also eligible to participate. The system was redesigned in 2021 when DHR contracted with the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education as the vendor. The QRIS program uses research-based criteria to evaluate, assess, and assign STAR ratings based on the child care program's level of quality.**

Alabama Quality STAR ratings are divided into two groups: foundational or advanced. The foundational category includes both 1 STAR and 2 STAR ratings, while STAR levels 3-5 are advanced, or high-quality. Every licensed child care provider in good standing is automatically assigned a STAR rating of 1 unless the provider chooses to opt out of QRIS participation. STAR levels 2-5 are based on the results of two scoring guides: the Best Practice Rubric and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). The Best Practice Rubric covers six domains: curriculum & instruction, screening & assessment, family engagement, professional credential, environment, and program design. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System is an observational tool that is used to assess the quality of teacher-child interactions. CLASS recognizes the unique developmental needs of various age groups and includes separate rubrics for each: infant, toddler, and Pre-K.

- 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: **A STAR 1 rating automatically assigned to all programs successfully meeting and maintaining all required elements in the Alabama Department of Human Resources' Child Care Licensing and Performance Standards, unless the child care provider opts out of participation in the QRIS program. STAR 1 ratings are valid for two years, with an annual renewal that coincides with the child care provider's licensing dates.**
 High Quality
 - Tier/Level 2: **The STAR 2 level builds upon Child Care Licensing and Performance Standards by incorporating the use of the Best Practice Rubric. To earn a 2 STAR rating, programs need a minimum of 40 points on the Best Practice Rubric. STAR ratings 2-5 are effective for a period of three years, with annual renewals.**
 High Quality
 - Tier/Level 3: **STAR 3 rated child care programs have built upon foundational quality and continue to strengthen and advance with more focus on quality teacher-child interactions. In order to receive a STAR 3, the site must have a minimum of 80 points on the Best Practice Rubric and at least 30 CLASS points.**
 High Quality
 - Tier/Level 4: **Providers at the STAR 4 level have empowered their teams to continue to strengthen teacher-child interactions and implement advanced program-wide quality initiatives. A STAR 4 rating is earned by obtaining at least 95 points on the Best Practice Rubric, in addition to a minimum of 40 CLASS points.**
 High Quality
 - Tier/Level 5: **Child care programs that have been assessed at a STAR 5 rating have continued to strengthen foundational quality through internal mentorship and have exhibited consistently high levels of program-wide, quality teacher-child interactions, as well as solid business practices. In order to achieve a STAR 5, child care programs need a minimum of 110 points on the Best Practice Rubric and a minimum of 50 CLASS points.**
 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: **163**
- Total number of licensed family child care homes meeting high quality definition: **71**
- Total number of CCDF providers meeting high quality definition: **133**
- Total number of children served by providers meeting high quality definition: **13791**

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
 - 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, 2023 to September 30, 2024 (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 **1195**
- Licensed family child care homes **480**

Higher CCDF subsidy rates (including tiered rating)

- Licensed child care centers **913**
- Licensed family child care homes **266**

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 **168 family providers and 163 group providers were reported in the 800 report for a combined total of 331 total home providers. Of those home providers, 266 are receiving higher subsidy rates and participating in the QRIS program.**

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$23590731**

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.

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 revised QRIS system was updated on 1/18/22. The state will measure quality improvements in childcare programs by evaluating the number of programs at the different star ratings from one year to the next. As of 6/22/23, there are 1,126 star 1 rated centers, 452 star 1 rated homes, 48 star 2 rated centers, 15 star 2 rated homes, 28 star3 rated centers, 11 star 3 rated homes. 49 star 4 rated centers, 21 star 4 rated homes, 22 star 5 centers, and 15 star 5 homes.**

More information on the QRIS can be found at www.alabamaqualitystars.org.

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 revised QRIS system was updated on 1/18/22. The state will measure quality improvements in childcare programs by evaluating the number of programs at the different star ratings from one year to the next. As of 9/30/24, there are 1,195 star 1 rated centers, 480 star 1 rated homes, 68 star 2 rated centers, 9 star 2 rated homes, 50 star 3 rated centers, 9 star 3 rated homes, 67 star 4 rated centers, 26 star 4 rated homes, 47 star 5 rated centers, and 36 star 5 rated homes.**

By September 30, 2024, the following outcomes were achieved:

- 164 childcare employees participated in an orientation training (in-person or virtual) for the redesigned QRIS.**
- 90 new programs received a STAR rating of 2 or higher using the updated criteria**
- 36 STAR-rated childcare programs also applied for higher STAR ratings and succeeded**
- 170 childcare programs participated in one of the two technical assistance models (93 in guided support and 77 in enhancement) and increased their STAR ratings by an average of 1.6 STARS**

-QRIS Specialists conducted an additional 51 trainings (325 participants) covering a range of topics related to QRIS and its assessment criteria, including the Best Practice Rubric and CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System)

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

Yes

- Number of specialists available to all providers **9**
- Number of specialists available to providers serving children who receive CCDF **9**
- Number of specialists available specifically trained to support family child care providers **9**
- Number of providers served **1,447**
- Total number of children reached **8194**

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

N/A. Describe:

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

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

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

- o Describe what the network/hub provides to participating family child care providers: **The hub provides the following to participating Family Child Care (FCC) providers:**

- one-on-one, home-based education and assistance individualized to the specific needs and quality improvement goals of the provider

- support and rewards efforts to move beyond licensing standards toward NAFCC accreditation level standards

- Promotes professionalism within the family child care community

- Training opportunities specific to FCC in an effort to reduce economic barriers family child care providers face in seeking opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills

- Training and mentoring designed to increase provider knowledge of institutional, educational, financial, and social resources supporting the

implementation of best practices

-Support to FCC providers interested in creating Family Child Care Associations

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$1075803**

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 contracts with community-based organizations referred to as Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) to provide training and professional development to child care providers. The Lead Agency requires the QEAs to submit quarterly reports of the training and TA provided to child care providers. The QEAs complete pre- and post-testing of each training to measure progress. The QEAs may also award continuing education units to those that successfully complete courses. Other measures include the number of participants and programs reached by the quality initiative and the number of technical assistance visits provided and type of provider settings receiving the technical assistance visits. The Lead Agency uses this information to measure progress attained by the providers.

The data will be collected based on the revised QRIS and Infant Toddler Professional Development Network

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: **The Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) provided the following trainings during FY24. Participants completed pre/post tests and received continuing education units after successful completion of course. The Network cumulatively collects and reports this information to the agency in the form of quarterly reports.**

-144 sessions to 134 center directors/assistant directors, 742 center teachers/aides, 79 child care homes, 74 relative providers, and 579 individuals holding other positions in child care

Training topics include: approaches to play and learning, autism, challenging behaviors, early brain development, fostering attachment, health and safety, language and literacy, math for infants and toddlers, mealtimes, music and movement, observation and assessment, outside play, physical development, positive guidance, social emotional development, space and furnishings, and staff well-being.

Additionally, the ITSN completed 14,323 technical assistance efforts in the forms of virtual meetings, telephone calls, emails, etc.

FY24 yielded an increased amount of services accessed through the ITSN for individuals working

with infants and toddlers in Alabama. These increases include: number of providers and individuals served, coaching participants, consultations and visits, technical assistance provided, training participants, and the addition of expanding services to include the Infant Toddler Teacher Credential which has experienced much interest in participation and had 9 successful completers. The ITSN also hosted their first annual, statewide Infant Toddler conference.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$6915273**

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 requires the Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) who serve as CCR&Rs to submit quarterly reports of the training and TA provided to child care providers. The QEAs complete pre- and post-testing of each training to measure progress. The QEAs may also award continuing education units to those that successfully complete courses. Other performance measures include the number of participants and programs reached by program quality initiatives, number of technical assistance visits and impact of professional development initiatives. The Lead Agency uses this information as data to measure progress attained by the providers.**

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: **CCR&Rs are maintained by CCDF funds by providing training and technical assistance to child care providers, to include. The CCR&Rs utilizes funding provided to deliver high quality services assisting families in search of childcare according to the family's individual needs.**

FY24 numerical targets achieved based on the measurable indicators:

- o 393 DHR Health and Safety Trainings**
- o 19,970 providers/teachers received support to facilitate their progress in education, professional development, and/or career pathway**
- o 1,654 Zoom/Online Trainings**
- o 12,264 Participants received additional professional development and/or technical assistance in the following areas: Business practices, Mental health, Diversity, Equity, inclusion, and Emergency Preparedness**
- o 490 Participants were offered CDA support**
- o 163 Participants received CDA Certification**

During FY24, CCDF funds were used by Quality Enhancement agencies (QEAs) through the following efforts to expand services for providers and families through the following:

- o Overall, pre and post-test scores improved throughout the year, indicating the learning objectives and training content were effective.**
- o QEA created a reproducible "parent page" in their quarterly newsletter to provide parenting information and to encourages quality parent-child interaction, etc.**
- o A CCR&R enhanced its website by adding additional links regarding parenting information and resources.**

- o Distribution of materials related to brain development, early learning, child development, health and safety, parenting, literacy, preventing child abuse and neglect, etc.
- o E-Newsletters, Facebook Posts, Podcast recordings including current information and research regarding quality early care and education and parent education.
- o School Readiness Calendars "Getting Ready for Kindergarten" (2,550 distributed).
- o QEA advisor for providers and/or parents seeking guidance on CCDF related topics added a CCDF article to their quarterly Child Care Connection newsletter focusing on health and safety topics.
- o Increased the number of health and safety trainings
- o Materials pertaining to health and safety were added to the resource library for providers to check out.
- o Educational brochures, pamphlets and posters were added to resource area for those seeking more information on related topics.
- o Clients were assisted in obtaining and completing applications to apply for childcare through the state subsidy program and given a provider list of licensed and exempt providers as a source of Resource and Referral and a copy of QEA's Choosing Quality Child Care in Alabama.
- o QEA collaborated with experts to enhance trainings on specific topics quarterly and monthly (First 5 Alabama Mental Health Consultants, Alabama Infant Toddler Specialist Network).
- o QEA secured nationally recognized speakers for larger trainings.
- o QEA conducted trainings in greater depth on topics with coaching, resources and materials and provided to the participants.
- o The Learning Center, Rolling Resource Van, and Parent Resource Library added new kits, materials, and resource books for child care professionals and parents to check out.
- o QEA developed innovative ways to engage families with community events (STEAM it Up and Family Fun Night).
- o QEA conducted face-to-face training sessions, on-site training, mentoring, and e-Learning classes.
- o Step-Up to Quality initiative was expanded to include 1-hour sessions that included one-on-one mentoring, and hands-on demonstrations.
- o Classroom incentives were given to providers during training and through on-site visits. Providers were able to observe and take a hands-on approach during the hour-long session.
- o CCDF sessions were updated to keep providers informed of changes made by the CDC regarding health and safety.
- o Learning modules were updated to reflect changes and made accessible to providers living in rural areas.

QEAs reported the following notable practices during the reporting period:

- o Increased number of Statewide Zoom trainings and Hybrid Zoom trainings
- o Development of the Resource Place New On-line Check-Out System
- o Over 2,669 resources were added to the new cloud-based check-out system which increased the usage of the materials as well the number of items checked out by providers.
- o In August 2024, over 170 participants attend the Early Childhood Institute event with Louis Torelli, M.S.Ed
- o Professional Development team was featured on Tiny Talks on Early Learning podcast for early childhood education professionals, released 6 episodes that were downloaded a total of 747 times.
- o QEA saw an increase demand for our Professional Study Kits, not only in its region, but also across the State
- o Two Early Childhood Conferences were held resulting in 525 participants
- o QEA collaborated with experts to enhance trainings on specific topics quarterly and monthly (First 5 Alabama Mental Health Consultants, Alabama Infant Toddler Specialist Network).
- o The Learning Center, Rolling Resource Van, and Parent Resource Library added new kits, materials, and resource books for child care professionals and parents to check out.
- o QEA developed innovative ways to engage families with community events (STEAM it Up and Family Fun Night).
- o Incentives were provided to participants during the training sessions and through on-site visits. Participants had the opportunity to observe and engage in hands-on activities during the hour-long session.

The following are areas of progress made during FFY2024:

- 627 DHR Health and Safety Trainings resulted in an increase of 39 trainings compared to FFY2023.
- 12,264 In FFY2024 when compared to FFY2023, there was an increase of 6716 providers who received additional forms of professional development and/or technical assistance in Business practices, Mental health, Diversity, Equity, inclusion, and Emergency Preparedness
- 1,654 In FFY2024, there was a 468 decrease in the number of Zoom/Online Trainings compared to FFY2023. However, the number of participants who attended Face-to-Face training sessions in FFY2024 was greater than the number of participants attending Zoom trainings.
- 490 In FFY2024 there was an increase of 120 Participants/Providers offered CDA

support compared to FFY2023

- 163 In FFY2024 there was an increase of 13 Participants/Providers who received CDA Certification compared to FFY2023

Additional areas of progress include:

- o Increased number of Statewide Zoom trainings and Hybrid Zoom trainings
- o Development of the Resource Place New On-line Check-Out System
- o QEA entered over 2,669 unique items into the new cloud-based check-out system allowing all items view of the QEA's website which has increased the usage of the materials as well the number of items checked out by providers.
- o In August 2024, over 170 participants attended the Early Childhood Institute event with Louis Torelli, M.S.Ed.
- o Increased the number of onsite Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) Credential Training sessions
- o Professional Development team was featured on Tiny Talks on Early Learning podcast for early childhood education professionals, released 6 episodes that were downloaded a total of 747 times.
- o Pre and post-test scores were higher than pre-test scores throughout the year
- o During FFY2024 there was a 26% increase in Mental Health (TA) support offered to providers to help them progress education, professional development, and/or career pathways compared to FFY2023.
- o QEA saw an increased demand for Professional Study Kits, not only in its region but also across the State.
- o Two Early Childhood Conferences were conducted, with a total of 525 participants in attendance. In FY2023 only one conference was held.
- o QEA collaborated with experts to enhance trainings on specific topics quarterly
- o Nationally recognized speakers were secured for larger training sessions, with a total of 171 participants attending the "Super Special Saturday" event.
- o QEA conducted in-depth training sessions on various topics, accompanied by coaching, resources, and materials provided to the participants.
- o The Learning Center, Rolling Resource Van, and Parent Resource Library added new kits, materials, and resource books for child care professionals and parents to check out. The Rolling Resource Van added 7 new

programs this year.

- o During FFY2024, QEA experienced a steady increase in the number of participants attending training sessions, resulting in a total increase of 10,157.
- o QEA developed innovative ways to engage families with community events with over 600 participants attending STEAM it Up and 75 participants attending Family Fun Night.
- o QEA reported a 20% increase in scores when comparing the pre-test results to the post-test results for FFY2024.
- o QEA reported a 57% increase in number of participants attending training sessions when compared to FFY2024
- o QEAs offered additional onsite CCDF and behavior management training sessions as requested by providers.
- o Step-Up to Quality initiative was expanded to include 1-hour sessions that included one-on-one mentoring and hands-on demonstrations.
- o 1,402 incentives were provided to participants during training sessions and through on-site visits. Participants had the opportunity to observe and engage in hands-on activities during the hour-long session.

During FY24, CCDF funds were used by regional agencies to expand services for providers and families through the following initiatives:

- o Overall, pre and post-test scores were higher than pre-test scores throughout the year.
- o QEA created a reproducible parent page in their quarterly newsletter
- o QEAs assisted early childhood educators with expanding their educational careers via consultation to identify a career path and plan the necessary steps to achieve the educational levels identified in Alabama Pathways.
- o QEA consultants helped providers create individualized career development plans.
- o CCR&R enhanced its website, adding links regarding parenting information and resources
- o Distribution of materials related to brain development, early learning, child development, health and safety, parenting, literacy, preventing child abuse and neglect, etc.
- o Resource centers were maintained with supplies such as bulletin board paper, construction paper, die cuts, resource books, and lamination.

- o QEA advisor for providers and parents seeking guidance on CCDF-related topics added an article on CCDF in their quarterly Child Care Connection newsletter, focusing on health and safety issues.
- o QEAs had an Increase the number of health and safety trainings offered
- o Materials pertaining to health and safety were added to the resource library for providers to check out.
- o Educational brochures, pamphlets and posters were added to resource area for those seeking more information on related topics.
- o Clients were assisted in obtaining and completing applications to apply for childcare through the state subsidy program and given a provider list of licensed and exempt providers as a source of Resource and Referral and a copy of the QEA's Choosing Quality Child Care in Alabama list.
- o QEA secured nationally recognized speakers for larger trainings where over 600 participants attended STEAM it Up and 75 participants attended Family Fun Night.
- o QEA used CCDF funds to conduct trainings in greater depth on topics with coaching, resources and materials and provided to the participants.
- o The Learning Center, Rolling Resource Van, and Parent Resource Library added new kits, materials, and resource books for child care professionals and parents to check out.
- o QEA conducted face-to-face training sessions, on-site training, mentoring, and e-Learning classes.
- o Step-Up to Quality initiative was expanded to include 1-hour sessions that included one-on-one mentoring, and hands-on demonstrations.
- o QEA utilized CCDFs for classroom incentives that were given to providers during training sessions and through on-site visits. Providers were able to observe and take a hands-on approach during the hour-long session.
- o CCDF sessions were updated to keep providers informed of changes made by the CDC regarding health and safety.
- o Learning modules were updated to reflect changes and made accessible to providers living in rural areas.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **1550**

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? Number of staff **51**

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:

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **77**

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$3895745**

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.

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 following performance measures are used to evaluate progress: Number of Participants and Programs reached by program quality initiatives; Number of technical assistance visits provided and type of provider setting receiving technical assistance visits; and impact of professional development initiatives on quality indicators such as: Business and Management Skills, Child Development, Health and Safety, Inclusion, Ongoing Training to Meet Minimum Standards and Parent Involvement.**

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: **During FY24, 3,755 center providers and 1,204 family home providers received technical assistance to facilitate compliance with Lead Agency requirements including individualized training and monitoring by licensing consultants. As a result, 75 center providers and 2 home providers were identified as in need of additional support, targeted training, and additional monitoring to meet State Performance Standards.**

During FY24, there was a decrease in the amount of technical assistance provided to center and home providers to facilitate Lead Agency Requirements, including individualized training and monitoring by Licensing consultants. Contributing factors may include the decreased number of total licensed providers when compared to FY23. This technical assistance resulted in a slight

increase in the number of centers and a decrease in the number of family providers who were identified as in need of additional support, targeted training, and additional monitoring in order to meet State Performance Standards.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

QRIS

CLASS

ERS

FCCERS

ITERS

State evaluation tool. Describe **The Best Practice Rubric covers six domains: curriculum & instruction, screening & assessment, family engagement, professional credential, environment, and program design. These domains have been validated by research and identified as markers of quality. Each domain of the Best Practice Rubric includes a set of indicators that are assigned a point value. Since the rubric is cumulative, child care providers can select only the indicators that best fit the structure of their program.**

Core Knowledge and Competency Framework

Other. Describe

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

- QRIS
- CLASS
- ERS
- FCCERS
- ITERS
- State evaluation tool. Describe **The Best Practice Rubric covers six domains: curriculum & instruction, screening & assessment, family engagement, professional credential, environment, and program design. These domains have been validated by research and identified as markers of quality. Each domain of the Best Practice Rubric includes a set of indicators that are assigned a point value. Since the rubric is cumulative, child care providers can select only the indicators that best fit the structure of their program.**
- Core Knowledge and Competency Framework
- Other. Describe
- 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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?
\$2272906

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.

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.
Not applicable.

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:

By September 30, 2024, the following outcomes were achieved:

-164 childcare employees had participated in an orientation training (in-person or virtual) for the redesigned QRIS

-90 programs had received a STAR rating of 2 or higher using the updated criteria

-36 STAR-rated childcare programs also applied for higher STAR ratings and succeeded

-170 childcare programs participated in one of the two technical assistance models (93 in guided support and 77 in enhancement) and increased their STAR ratings by an average of 1.6 STARS

-QRIS Specialists conducted an additional 51 trainings (325 participants) covering a range of

topics related to QRIS and its assessment criteria, including the Best Practice Rubric and CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System)

During FY24, the QRIS program experienced some changes in numerical outcomes when compared to FY23.

Those are as follows:

A decreased number of childcare employees participated in an orientation session (-83), and a decreased number of new programs received a STAR rating of 2 or higher (-35). The Lead Agency set a goal of 100 new programs for FY24 and met this goal at 90%. The goal would have been met and exceeded if all applicants met eligibility requirements at the time of submitting their application, however, due to various reasons, including not being open/operating for one year, being in renewal period, and not being in good standing at time of applications, these programs were not eligible to receive QRIS services at the time of application and did not become eligible prior to the close of the fiscal year. There was a 71% increase in STAR-rated childcare programs who applied and successfully obtained a higher STAR, and a 16% overall increase in the number of childcare programs that participated in one of the two technical assistance models (6% increase in guided support and 33% increase in enhancement). On average, these providers who participated increased their STAR rating by 1.6 STARS (compared to 2 STARS in FY23). Specialists conducted a 42% increased number of trainings, but did experience an overall decrease in the number of participants who attended.

The decreases in FY24 could possibly be attributed to the amount of ARPA and Stabilization funds that were still available. Furthermore, it is projected that an increase during FY25 might occur now that those funding streams have been exhausted; providers may lean in to the financial incentives available through participation in the QRIS system as a result.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

Yes, providers were supported in their pursuit of accreditation

- a. Licensed center-based programs **0**
- b. License-exempt center-based programs **0**
- c. Licensed family child care homes **150**
- d. License-exempt family child care homes (care in providers' home) **0**
- e. Programs serving children who receive CCDF subsidy **93**

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

N/A. Describe:

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$1521867**

Unable to report total amount spent. Indicate reason:

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

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 evaluates progress by tracking the number of new programs participating in accreditation initiatives, the number of new programs achieving accreditation during the fiscal year, the number of accredited programs maintaining accreditation, and the number of programs making progress beyond the initial baseline assessment.**

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 FY24:

- 93 Providers are Child Care Subsidy/CCDF participants; 47 Group Family Homes; 46 Family Child Care Homes.
- 123 Providers held an Accreditation Certificate during FY24; 5 Accreditation extensions were given to re-accrediting providers because NAFCC was back logged for observations
- 42 Providers completed the 12-month Service Plan and received full scholarships for first time or re-accreditation applications. Breakdown of the providers:
 - 23 Providers received observations from NAFCC and received first time accreditation certificates.
 - 19 Providers received observations from NAFCC and received re-accreditation certificates.
 - 6 Providers were still on a waiting list for NAFCC observations on September 30, 2024
- 17 new providers who enrolled in the program during FY24, had not reached their 12 months in the program as of September 30, 2024, and working towards first time accreditation.
- 12 Providers left the program because they were unable to meet the criteria of the 12-month Service Plan or left FCC.
- 5 Providers who were on Intermission* returned to work on re-accreditation during FY24

***Intermission-** A provider begins a period of intermission for 2 and ½ years starting on the date listed on their NAFCC certificate. Six months prior to certificate expiration, the provider can contact FCCP office for assistance in seeking Re-Accreditation.

-150 Providers were supported in accreditation by FCCP.

Breakdown of FCCP Providers who received financial assistance:

-44 Providers received NAFCC Memberships totaling \$1,965 in assistance.

-19 Providers received NAFCC Application Scholarships totaling \$8,430.22 in assistance.

-18 Providers received NAFCC Self Study Scholarships totaling \$5,740 in assistance.

-89 Providers received Focus on Family Child Care Conference stipends totaling \$17,800 in assistance.

-143 Providers received stipends for progress towards attaining or maintaining accreditation totaling \$12,025 in assistance.

-23 Providers received Equipment Grants totaling \$15,640.07 in assistance.

-5 Providers received re-accreditation update assistance totaling \$800.

-\$62,400.29 total in FCCP provider assistance.

-The Lead Agency increased the funding spent to support individuals working in child care in their pursuit of accreditation.

-During FY24, an increased number of family child care home providers were supported in their pursuit of accreditation (+6)

-During FY24, there was an increase in the number of programs who participated in their pursuit of accreditation who receive CCDF subsidy funding (+27)

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$2272906**

- 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.

- 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 requires the Quality Enhancement Agencies (QEAs) to submit quarterly reports of the training and TA provided to child care providers. The QEAs complete pre- and post-testing of each training to measure progress. The QEAs may also award continuing education units to those that successfully complete courses. Other performance measures include the number of participants and programs reached by program quality initiatives; number of technical assistance visits, and the impact of professional development initiatives. The Lead Agency uses this information as data to measure progress attained by the providers.**

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: **From the trainings provided by the lead agencies' Quality Enhancement Agencies in high-quality program standards, which were to assist in either maintaining or achieving higher levels of**

quality, 90 new programs achieved a STAR 2 or higher in participation in the state's QRIS system. The lead agency sets an increase target of 10% each year from the pool of over 1800 providers eligible to participate in the program. This target has been put in place to evaluate the change in the assessment criteria which includes the use of CLASS scores to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The lead agency met this target at 90% for FY24. The previous program was based solely on the Environmental Rating Scales and produced lower numbers in participation from previous fiscal years. The new system has proven to be a success in the past three years in operation. Progress and program evaluation will continue to be monitored each fiscal year. During FY24, 295 individuals completed and achieved the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Credential.

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

Yes. If yes, describe and check which types of providers were eligible and number served. **During FY24, the lead agency provided a grant opportunity based on provider type and capacity to eligible, licensed facilities for stabilization purposes.**

Licensed center-based programs **953**

License-exempt center-based programs

Licensed family child care homes **266**

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

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

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

Yes. Describe: **Alabama Pathways Professional Development Registry launched August 2022 and went offline July 1, 2023 for transitional maintenance and became live again on June 11, 2024. The state purchased a childcare data management system which is an update to replace the previous system.**

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, 2023 to September 30, 2024?

- Yes. Describe findings:
 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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? 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, 2023 and September 30, 2024 (check all that apply)? If indicated, how many providers received each type of support?

- Financial bonuses (not tied to education levels) **4561**
- Salary enhancements/wage supplements
- Health insurance coverage
- Dental insurance coverage
- Retirement benefits
- Loan Forgiveness programs
- Mental Health/Wellness programs
- Start up funds
- Other. Describe: **Child Care Workforce Stabilization Grant Round 9 -quarterly bonuses to employees (Supplemental); Child Care Stabilization Grant - capacity grant (Supplemental); ARISE - data management system (Supplemental); and the QRIS/Quality Stars - Quality Rating Improvement System (Supplemental)**
- 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, 2023 to September 30, 2024? **\$162991511**

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. **CCSG Grant - 55,571,293**

CCWS9 - 33,211,500

Pathways - 250,571

Arise - 3,708,257

QRIS Services - 2,272,906

UCP Slots - 67,956,984

20,000-The lead agency partners with United Cerebral Palsy to oversee the administration and processing of the application and eligibility process for subsidized childcare spots for children who have been identified as having special needs.

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 is in the development stages of revamping its QRIS system. The system is being overhauled after being in full implementation since 2016 to adjust to the changing landscape of Alabama’s child care community. The Lead Agency plans to include all licensed child care to enter the first tier of the QRIS system by including higher quality criteria within the state’s licensing standards. The state plans to pilot the new system in August 2021.

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: **The lead agency has implemented an additional activity to improve the quality of child care services by allotting 500 slots to serve children with special needs. In collaboration with the United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley (UCP), children identified as having special needs receive a higher subsidy reimbursement in support of inclusion services. The program is designed to help families that are unable to find childcare or to avoid suspension/expulsion in the current child care setting due to the child's physical, cognitive, and/or developmental needs. The families are vetted by UCP and provided with inclusion services in the child care setting. Income and activity requirements are waived for the first year of service in the program as this is considered a protected category of eligibility. As of September 30, 2024, all 500 slots have been filled. The program has proven to be successful in the meeting the immediate needs of families of children with special needs.**

-The QRIS system is up and running since the initial pilot began in August 2021. The system is experiencing increasing interest and growth over time. The Lead Agency is pleased with the progress and continues to strive to spread the word to providers to increase participation across the state. During FY24, the Lead Agency partnered with the vendor to create a detailed recruitment and retention plan that includes all specialists on the QRIS team by tasking them individual responsibilities for recruitment and consumer education, including systematic outreach opportunities, attending conferences to share about the QRIS system, and more.

-The UCPC special needs childcare subsidy has successfully reached all goals once again for FY24. 500 spaces were once again allotted for the UCPC subsidy in order to improve the quality of child care for children with special needs in support of inclusion services. UCPC subsidy remains at full capacity.

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. **The lead agency continues to assign risk scores to each complaint received to determine the time frame of the investigation. Death and serious injuries are investigated immediately or within 24 hours. All reports of serious injuries and death are investigated by a Child Care Consultant, Program Specialist, or Supervisor. In any instances where the provider/facility was at fault, deficiencies were written and an action (corrective or adverse) was taken against the license of the facility. In FY2024, there were 475 reports of serious injuries in licensed child care facilities, and one (1) reported death in any licensed child care facilities.**

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. **-Created Intake Daily Log and Documentation (Complaints, Incidents/Accidents)**

-Updated information on Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Clearances

-Added a Plan of Correction for providers to address any hazards that cannot be correct during the visit (form)

-Added information regarding writing deficiency reports for Corrective/Adverse Actions

-Clarified procedure for intake of complaints on other exempt facilities

-Created a form to capture witness statements during investigations for complaints, incidents/accidents

-Created a form for Consultants/Program Specialists to use when interviewing providers and staff during investigations for complaints, incidents/accidents