



STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CHARLES J. KROGMEIER, DIRECTOR

June 19, 2009

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 56Z-553-CFS

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Child Care and Community Services,
Division of Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: Comm. 303, "Iowa's Quality Rating System for Child Care," revised.

Summary

Comm. 303 has been revised to indicate that the "Iowa QRS" logo is trademarked. This brochure is designed for parents who are interested in the Quality Rating System. The Quality Rating System is a voluntary rating system for child development homes, licensed child care centers, and school-based child care programs. Child Care Resource and Referral staff shall give out the brochure to any individuals upon request.

Effective Date

Upon receipt.

Material Superseded

Remove Circular Letter No. 56Z-529-CFS, dated June 20, 2008, from the file and destroy it.

Additional Information

Use up any remaining supplies of Comm. 303, dated 1/08, before ordering supplies of Comm. 303, dated 7/08, from Anamosa in the usual manner.

Refer questions about this circular letter to the Quality Rating System program manager in the Division of Children and Family Services.

To Find a QRS Facility Near You

All QRS Star-Rated facilities are given certificates designating their rating, so ask to see the certificate of any potential child care provider. You can also find a list of rated providers at:

www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs



The Goals of Iowa QRS

- Raise the quality of child care in Iowa.
- Increase the number of children in high-quality child care settings in the state.
- Educate parents about quality in child care.
- Make providers aware of the many paths and steps they can take to improve the quality of child care provided to children.
- Offer parents another resource in evaluating and selecting a child care provider.
- Give local communities, businesses, organizations, and funders a "menu" of activities, training and support they can offer to providers right in their own communities.

An Iowa Department of Human Services production.



For more information or to find a QRS Star-Rated provider near you, visit www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs

Before you drop off your Star . . .

Ask about our stars.



Iowa QRS

Iowa's **Quality Rating System** for Child Care

Iowa Department of Human Services
Child Care Unit
Hoover State Office Building
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319
www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs



Spotlight on Quality Child Care

Choosing child care may be one of the most important decisions you'll ever make, and there's a lot to consider. To help you evaluate and select a child care provider, the Iowa Department of Human Services has established the Quality Rating System (QRS) for child care.

QRS: A Preview

Iowa QRS is a voluntary program that provides a guided way for child care providers to improve their quality of care. Participating providers are "rated" with 1 to 5 stars, depending upon how many improvement steps they have completed in the program. The more steps they've completed, the more stars they're awarded. QRS is meant to assist you in your child care search, not replace other methods, such as visiting and interviewing providers, conducting your own research, and relying on your own judgment.

Rated S for "Smart"

What does Iowa QRS mean for parents?

- Iowa QRS can help you narrow down your child care options.
- Each rating has minimum standards you know the provider has completed.
- Iowa QRS can help educate you about quality in child care.
- A rating shows the provider is committed to providing quality child care.

Now Showing: QRS Rated Facilities

A provider who earns 1 star has met Iowa's registration or licensing standards. A 2-star provider has received additional training and made the first steps toward improving quality. 3 to 5 stars are earned based upon the number of points a provider earns by meeting indicators of key quality in areas of:

- Professional development (education, certification and experience)
- Health and safety (checklists, records and assessments with child care nurse consultant)
- Environment (training, self-assessment, improvement plans)
- Family and community partnerships (professional memberships, new parent orientations)
- Leadership and administration (staff evaluations & orientation, center improvement plans, professional development plans)