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Capital Quality is a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) in licensed child care facilities in the District of Columbia. It allows families to review and compare the quality of programs throughout the District and make informed decisions about where to enroll their child.

Why does quality early care and education matter?

Early learning program quality is an important part of providing children experiences that support their learning and development during their first five years, so that they are ready for kindergarten and beyond.

Your child's earliest years are the foundation for their future. According to a study published by the Families and Work Institute, the brain of a three-year-old is twice as active as an adult brain.¹

Studies have shown that children who receive high-quality early learning experiences often have higher reading, math and critical thinking skills.²

What does Capital Quality measure?

Capital Quality uses evidence-based assessments of what programs do to promote children's health, safety and development. Programs are assessed on how well their early care and education professionals provide age-appropriate activities and warm, supportive interactions with children.

Trained data collectors observe programs at least once per year. Programs then receive a Capital Quality designation.

What does this mean for my child?

As part of Capital Quality, your child's early learning program receives additional support to provide high-quality care and education for your child.

When your child's program is being observed, you may see one or more trained data collectors in the classroom or child development home. These professionals are observing the classroom or home environment and how the early care and education professionals engage with the children. Your child's center director or home provider will receive professional development opportunities and incentives to help the facility's staff provide the best possible care and education for your child.

1. Rima Shore, Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development. Families and Work Institute, 1997.

2. Hirokazu Yoshikawa et al., Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education, Foundation for Child Development, 2013.

Visit mychildcaredc.org for more information

A Family's Guide to Capital Quality

Capital Quality designations:

High-Quality

These programs meet children's basic health and safety standards and there is **considerable** evidence that the program provides a nurturing environment with supportive interactions (e.g., responsive scheduling, warm/positive interactions) that promotes children's cognitive, physical and social-emotional development.

Quality

These programs meet children's basic health and safety standards and there is **good** evidence that the program provides a nurturing environment with supportive interactions (e.g., responsive scheduling, warm/positive interactions) that promotes children's cognitive, physical and social-emotional development.

Progressing

These programs meet children's basic health and safety standards and there is **adequate** evidence that the program provides a nurturing environment with supportive interactions (e.g., responsive scheduling, warm/positive interactions) that promotes children's cognitive, physical and social-emotional development.

Developing

These programs meet children's basic health and safety standards and there is **minimal** evidence that the program provides a nurturing environment with supportive interactions (e.g., responsive scheduling, warm/positive interactions) that promotes children's cognitive, physical and social-emotional development.

Preliminary

These programs meet children's basic health and safety standards. This is an initial designation provided to programs that have just entered the Capital Quality rating system. These programs are still in the process of being rated to determine their Capital Quality designation of Developing, Progressing, Quality or High-Quality.