

QUALITY COUNTS

ABC's of Miami-Dade's Quality Rating Improvement System Quality Counts

Striving for 5 Star Early Learning



Quality Counts

Quality Rating Improvement System

- **Design and Funding**
 - The Children's Trust
 - The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
 - The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation/Ready Schools Miami
- **Implementation**
 - Florida International University
 - University of Miami
 - Miami Dade Public Schools
 - The United Way Center for Excellence
 - Devereux Florida
 - The Children's Forum
 - Head Start Program
 - Family Central, Inc.



Quality Counts Goals

- **Improve early care and education programs**
 - Voluntary incremental quality standards
 - Incentives and supports to programs
- **Provide parents with an easy-to-use tool**
 - 5 Star rating system (think of how restaurants and hotels are rated)



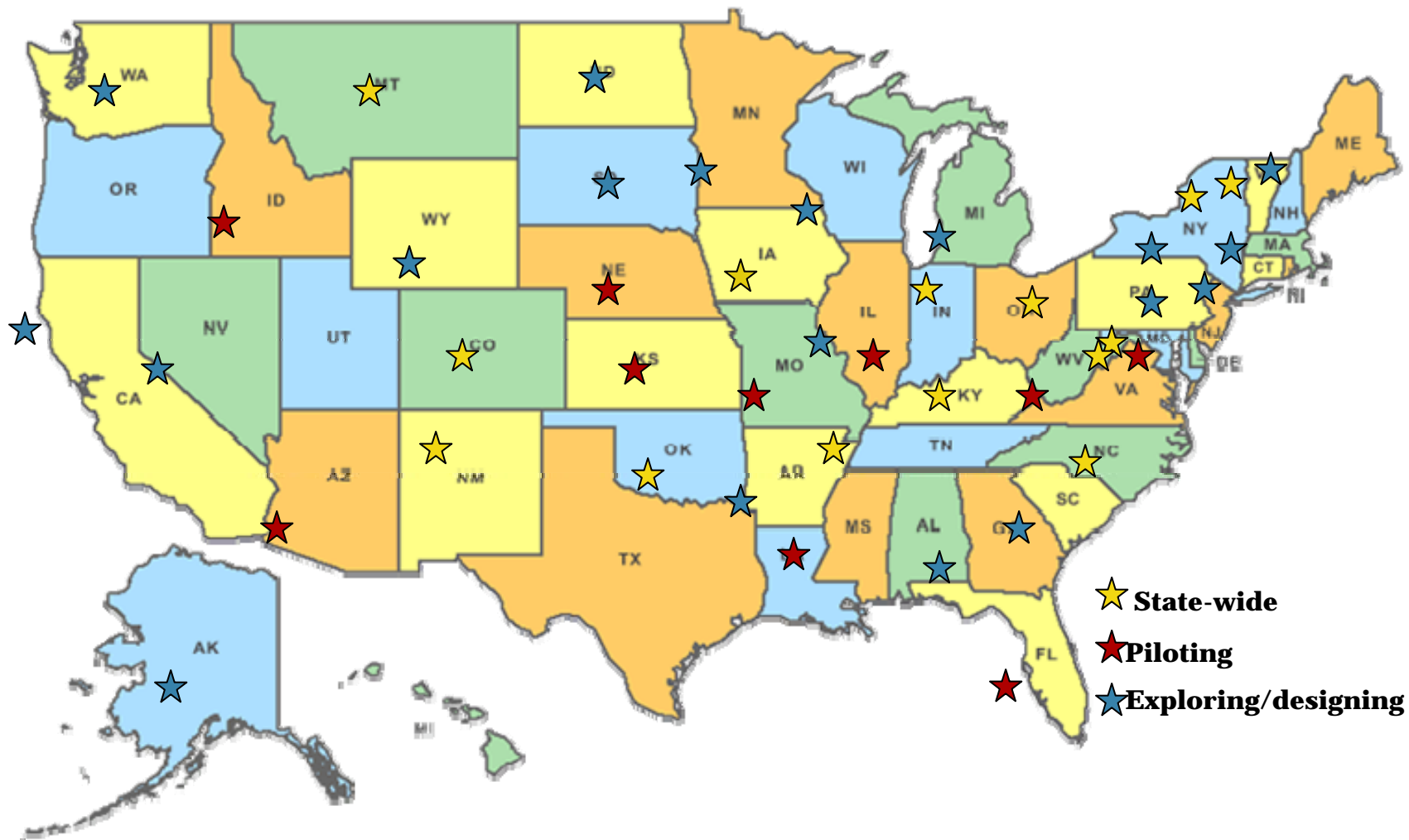
Quality Counts

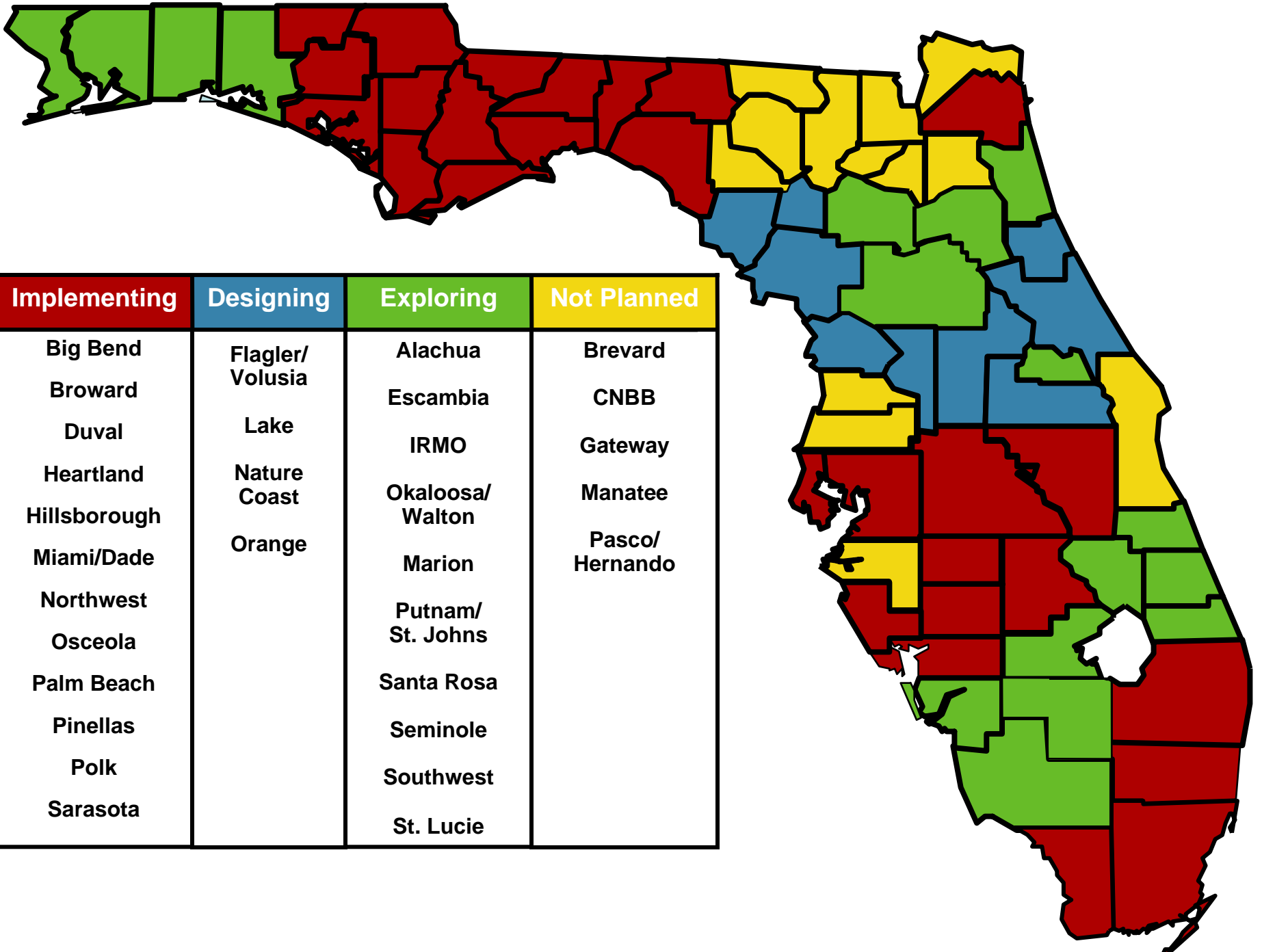
Why it is important to children?

- Star rated programs ensure children receive high quality early care and education
- Research has repeatedly proven that children who attend high quality programs enter kindergarten better prepared to succeed



States Operating Quality Rating Systems





Implementing	Designing	Exploring	Not Planned
Big Bend	Flagler/ Volusia	Alachua	Brevard
Broward		Escambia	CNBB
Duval	Lake	IRMO	Gateway
Heartland	Nature Coast	Okaloosa/ Walton	Manatee
Hillsborough	Orange	Marion	Pasco/ Hernando
Miami/Dade		Putnam/ St. Johns	
Northwest		Santa Rosa	
Osceola		Seminole	
Palm Beach		Southwest	
Pinellas		St. Lucie	
Polk			
Sarasota			

What is the Quality Counts Process?



Quality Counts Process

- Overview training
- Application
- Selection
- Link to TA and career advisor
- Self-study
- Formal assessment I
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Formal assessment II
- Star rating (1 – 5)
- Renewal



What is evaluated to calculate a star rating?



What is evaluated to determine star rating?

Highly-trained and reliable specialists

- **Conduct Environmental Assessments**
 - ITERS – Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale
 - ECERS – Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale
 - Space and furnishings
 - Personal care routines
 - Language-Reasoning
 - Activities and Interaction
 - Program structure



What is evaluated to determine star rating?

Highly-trained and reliable specialists

- **Review and Verify Documentation**
 - Staff qualifications
 - Teacher/child ratios
 - Family engagement
 - Program administration
 - Curriculum
 - Accreditation
- **Determine baseline Star rating**



Quality Counts

Staff Qualifications

- **Knowledge about how children learn and develop helps teachers**
 - Respond effectively to children's needs
 - Offer stimulating and engaging learning experiences
 - Share child development information with families
- **Standards for staff encourage**
 - Continued education
 - Specialized training



Quality Counts Ratios and Group Sizes

Low ratios and small group sizes help ensure

- Individualized care
- Responsiveness to each child
- Safe environments



Quality Counts

Family Engagement

Families/Caregivers become

- Quality programs work together with families to support children's development
- More involved in their child's education
- More knowledgeable about child development



Quality Counts

Annual Grants and Awards

To implement Quality Improvement Plan

- **Support Grants**
 - Grant application for materials and equipment
 - Program works with TA to select and use items
- **Achievement Awards**
 - Only for 4-5 star programs
 - Help with program's quality improvement goals
- **Amounts relate to**
 - Size of program
 - Location or number of subsidized children



Quality Counts

Professional Development

Quality Counts Career Center

- Career advising for staff
- Scholarships
 - Non-credit/CEU trainings
 - English proficiency classes
 - Credentials such as CDA
 - College degree programs

WAGES

- Financial awards for staff based on education and job stability



What Parents Should Know About A Quality Program - Warning Signs

- Does the center/home discourage parents from visiting or observing during any time?
- Are caregivers physically abusive or rough with the children?
- Are there signs of a negative learning environment that make children feel guilty instead of welcome?
- Does the child have an unusual interest or knowledge in sexual matters inappropriate for his/her age?



What Parents Should Know about a Quality Program

10 Components for a High Quality Early Education Center:

- Licensed Programs following appropriate Health and Safety Practices
- Well trained staff in early childhood development
- Developmentally appropriate environments
- Small groups with optimal ratios
- Primary Caregiving and Continuity of Care
- Active and responsive caregiving to support children's development
- Curriculum and individualized programming
- Support and emerging language and literacy
- Family Involvement and cultural continuity
- Comprehensive support services

Based on the original work of :

Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (Eds.). (1997) *Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Programs*. Washington, D.C. NAEYC.

Lally, J.R., Griffin, A., Fenichel, ER., Segal, M., Szanton, E. & Weissbourd, B. (1995). *Caring for infants and toddlers in groups: Developmentally appropriate practice*. Washington, D.C: Zero to Three





*Many things we need
can wait. The child
cannot.*

*Now is the time his
bones are formed, his
mind developed.*

*To him we cannot say
tomorrow, his name is
today.* --Gabriela Mistral Nobel Laureate

Questions?



Quality Counts Contact Information

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

Website: www.elcmdm.org

Phone: 305-646-7242

Email: qualitycounts@elcmdm.org

Quality Counts Director: Pam Hollingsworth

