



IDAHO
STARS



ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

IMPACTING
QUALITY CHILD CARE

www.idahostars.org



ANNUAL REPORT

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THANKFUL FOR

TWENTY YEARS

OF IMPACT



This year we are highlighting the impact of IdahoSTARS' work improving the quality of child care in Idaho. The pandemic stabilization funding allowed us to support more early care and education professionals in new ways. We worked to enhance existing programs and introduced innovative new programs to fill the gaps in professional development offerings.

These new programs stretched and invigorated us as a project. We believe in continuous quality improvement not only for early care and education, but for the staff and offerings of the IdahoSTARS project. In this report, we have outlined the 10 new opportunities we've developed over the past three years and illustrated the impact and importance of our work for early care and education in Idaho.

The impact of changes to the early care and education workforce is always on our mind. We surveyed over 1,500 child care professionals about the impact stabilization

funds had on their businesses and lives through the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Phase 4 and the Wage Enhancement grants. Many expressed gratitude for the funding and trepidation about it ending. We included this information in our annual Workforce Report to tell the full story of Idaho child care post pandemic.

July 1, 2023, was our 20-year anniversary. We plan on spending this upcoming year celebrating the people, programs and partners that have made an impact on IdahoSTARS. We will continue our work to be the leading expert and resource for quality child care in Idaho. As always, our goal is to empower more families and early care and education professionals so that every child has access to high quality opportunities.

Melissa Crist
IdahoSTARS Project Director

IDAHOSTARS

Our work today impacts children and families tomorrow.

We support early care and education professionals and families with tools, resources, and educational opportunities in order to ensure that Idaho's children have access to the highest quality child care and early learning options possible.

GOAL 1

INCREASE QUALIFICATIONS OF IDAHO'S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

IdahoSTARS accomplishes this by encouraging, providing, and supporting continued professional development through training opportunities and academic education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION BADGE INITIATIVE

The Badge Initiative was created to recognize the professional development and expertise of early care and education professionals who may not be participating in academic programs. Badges were given in multiple domains through many methods of professional development. IdahoSTARS regional offices, training office and PDS office worked to implement meaningful educational opportunities and recognitions. Since October 2021, 664 Individuals have received 2,278 badges earning \$920,000.

664 INDIVIDUALS RECOGNIZED

2,278 BADGES EARNED

\$920,000 IN RECOGNITIONS



TRAINING

IdahoSTARS offers many opportunities to expand the knowledge of the child care community and improve quality child care practices. Our training catalog offers multiple ways to take trainings: webinars, live trainings, online trainings, and outside companies that offer training events.

- **4,876** Certificates were approved from companies and events outside of IdahoSTARS.
- **1,274** participants attended free trainings through IdahoSTARS.
- **89** live/webinar trainings had 1868 attendees.
- **54,072** eLearning online trainings were completed.
- **407** used IdahoSTARS scholarships to attend trainings.
- **187** attended at their own cost.

CDA COHORTS

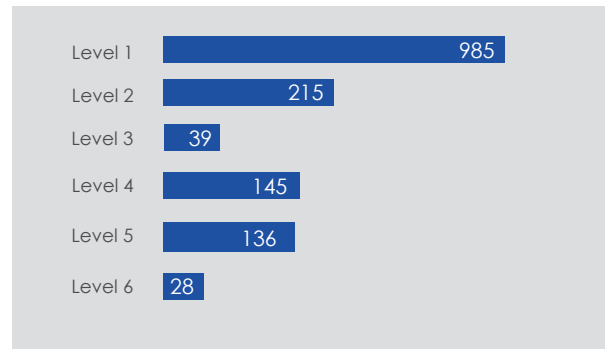


228 PARTICIPANTS

The Child Development Associate (CDA) is a way for early care and education professionals to advance their education and skills. Without support, it's challenging to complete or renew a CDA while working. IdahoSTARS hired 3 CDA specialists to lead cohorts. The impact was 228 early care and education professionals completed CDA cohort work. Out of the 228 participants, 186 received their CDA's, 47 renewed CDA certificates. These professionals were awarded \$234,500 in recognition of their work in the CDA program.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PDS)

The IdahoSTARS Professional Development System (PDS) is a voluntary, statewide professional development system for early care and education professionals. Eligible participants can receive financial recognition when completing 20 or more hours of training per year. The amount of recognition is based on the education level of the participant. We awarded \$296,700 to 1,548 early care and education professionals.



HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

Higher Education Grants were a 2-year project funded by supplement pandemic relief funds with an annual budget of \$2 M. Last year gave out \$1.7M in academic grants supported 339 individuals pursuing degrees and certificates in Early Childhood Education at accredited institutions of Higher Education.

339 RECIPIENTS

\$1.7M AWARDED



Thanks to the grants received, I had the opportunity to successfully complete all course requirements for my degree. Without such grants, the financial hardship would have made it impossible to complete all required courses.



ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Recipients receiving academic scholarships are pursuing a degree or coursework in Early Childhood Education at the college/university.

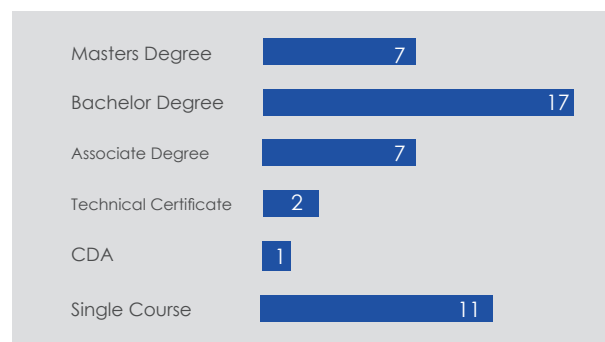
45 SCHOLARS SUPPORTED

FUTURE EDUCATORS

The Future Educator Scholarship covers 100% of a student's freshman year tuition and is awarded to a graduating high school senior to pursue a degree in Early Childhood Education at an Idaho college or university. This year that scholarship was awarded to 5 students from high schools across the state of Idaho, all will attend Idaho universities and colleges in the fall.

WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Workforce Scholars are early childhood professionals seeking higher education degrees through IdahoSTARS scholarship opportunities.



EMERGING LEADERS

The Emerging Leaders Program is designed to support those that are pursuing leadership roles in Idaho's early childhood education system with a Master's degree. There are two different programs through Emerging Leaders, one at Boise State University and one at the University of Idaho. This year we had 7 early care and education professionals pursuing degrees with this scholarship.

GOAL 2

INCREASE QUALITY PRACTICES IN IDAHO'S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

IDAHOSTARS COHORTS

This year, IdahoSTARS had three cohort programs that focused on improving the quality of child care. Participants networked and shared information with their peers and received coaching and training from IdahoSTARS staff.



STQ HOME-BASED COHORTS

The Steps To Quality Home-Based Cohort focused on helping home-based child care programs work through the quality improvements outlined in STQ. Through this program, 21 home-based programs verified at a Step 2 or higher, more than doubling the previous number. The impact is that more Idaho children than ever before are receiving care in home-based programs engaged in quality improvement.

29

PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED

72%

of participants verified at a Step 2 or higher upon completion



BUSINESS PRACTICES COHORTS

Child care program owners and directors can be more knowledgeable about working with children than how to run a business. IdahoSTARS developed the Business Practices Cohort to address the widespread need to strengthen child care business practices and increase sustainability. Participants attended up to a series of four training modules. Upon completion, participants were eligible for a \$5,000 grant to purchase materials for their business goals.

137

PARTICIPANTS

"By having the supplies needed to organize my office and plan for the year, I will be able to keep better records and hold myself accountable for the changes and plans I have set for myself and my school."



NUTRITION AND ACTIVE PLAY COHORTS

Promoting healthy development, including good nutrition and active play is crucial for child development. The Nutrition and Active Play cohort was led by IdahoSTARS Health Consultants over 3 months with 3 focus areas - Basics of Food, Nutrition and Mealtimes; Basics of Active Physical Play; and Childhood Food Insecurity. Upon completion of the program, participants were eligible for a \$5,000 grant to support the implementation their goals.

106

PARTICIPANTS

4,000+

CHILDREN IMPACTED

"We wouldn't have been able to start family style dining or a classroom garden without the support of the Cohort. It was a huge blessing so thank you!"



**STQ PROGRAMS
VERIFIED AT A
STEP**

- **159**
center-based programs
- **39**
home-based programs

STEPS TO QUALITY (STQ) PROGRAM

Steps to Quality (STQ) is Idaho's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for child care programs. Voluntary participants work with regional IdahoSTARS consultants to assess, improve, and communicate quality practices.



EXCHANGING BEST PRACTICES WAS SO HELPFUL, ALL OF US STRUGGLE IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER AND BEING ABLE TO BRING ISSUES TO THE TABLE WITH OTHER PROVIDERS AND A REP FROM IDAHOSTARS WAS SO HELPFUL.



GOAL 2 CONTINUED

SAFE SLEEP GRANTS

Children often sleep during their time in child care programs. Many child care programs wanted to improve their safe sleep practices, but money was often a barrier. Health inspectors commonly saw violations of sleeping conditions around the state. Safe Sleep Grants were created to meet this very real need. Over the last two years, 331 programs worked with IdahoSTARS consultants to increase their knowledge of quality practices,

then were given grants to purchase cribs, cots, mats and more to impact an estimated 13,850 Idaho children in child care. Nearly \$685,000 in grants for materials was given. IdahoSTARS Health Consultants report these materials, plus provided coaching support, improved safe sleep practices in child care settings and spared children from sleeping on the floor, on couches, and in broken cribs.

13,850
CHILDREN IMPACTED

331
PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED



AGES AND STAGES (ASQ) QUESTIONNAIRE

Conversations about developmental screening results and concerns can be time-consuming and anxiety-provoking for families and early care educators, but the benefits of early intervention are clear. The ASQ-3 is a developmental screening tool for families to recognize the developmental progress of their children from birth to age 5. Since 2021, IdahoSTARS has partnered with Idaho Infant and Toddler Program (ITP) to increase the use of the ASQ-3 among early care and education professionals and families. The pilot program has been highly successful with child care programs implementing the ASQ-3 in their programs.

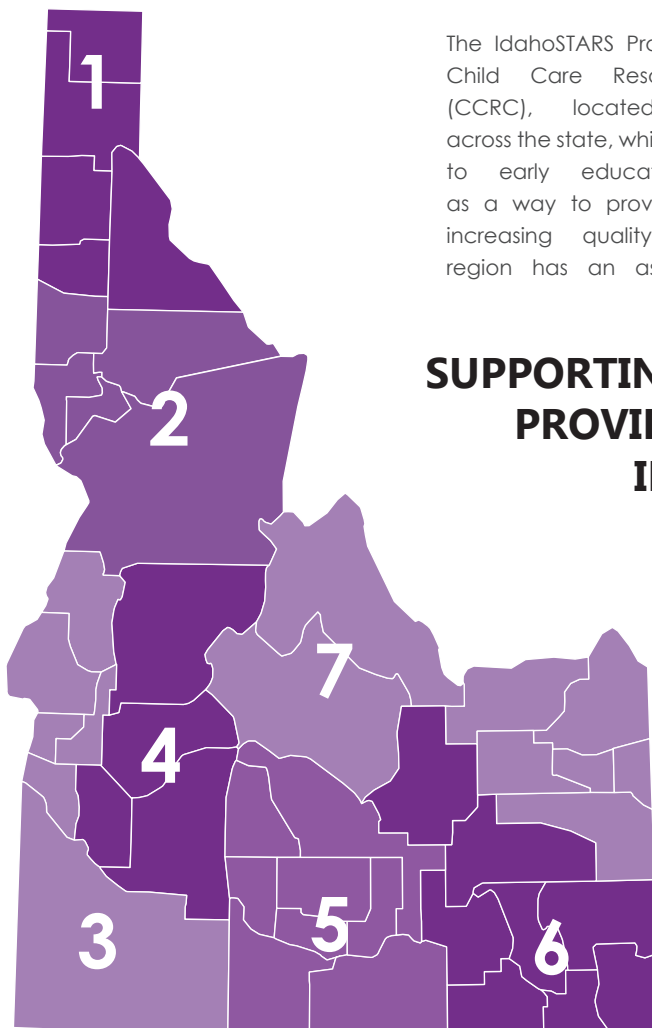
	2022	2023
Number of ASQs Completed	180	549
Number of Participating Child Care Centers	18	51
Number of Times Targetted Activites were sent	59	168
Number of Referrals Sent	14	34
Number of Participating Regions	2	7



REGIONAL OFFICES PROVIDE SUPPORT

The IdahoSTARS Project has seven Child Care Resource Centers (CCRC), located strategically across the state, which offer services to early education programs as a way to provide support for increasing quality care. Each region has an assigned Quality

Child Care Consultant, a Resource Specialist, and a Health Consultant. IdahoSTARS' ability to impact the quality of early education in Idaho is directly connected to the hard work and care of the 65+ staff who provide assistance to child care providers, and program directors.



SUPPORTING EARLY CARE & EDUCATION PROVIDERS ACROSS IDAHO AS THEY INCREASE QUALITY PRACTICES

Contact the Idaho Careline at 2-1-1 and ask for your local Child Care Resource Center (CCRC).

Region 1 - Post Falls

Region 2 - Moscow

Region 3 - Caldwell

Region 4 - Boise

Region 5 - Twin Falls

Region 6 - Pocatello

Region 7 - Idaho Falls

GOAL 3

BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF AND INVESTMENT IN HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Our outreach team and each of our regional office continues to promote the work of IdahoSTARS, informing early care and education professionals the opportunities for grants, professional development, conferences, and supports so that child care programs across the state have the tools and resources to increase the quality of their care.

BENEFICIARY VOICE

The beneficiaries of our work are our most important allies and stakeholders. As people who use our services, their voices need to inform our processes, policies, and procedures. This helps IdahoSTARS learn how systems work and where we can improve for the benefit of our customers, early care, and education professionals.

IdahoSTARS hadn't taken beneficiary voice as a formal part of our decision-making process until August 2022. Since then, we gathered feedback in numerous ways:

- Over 20 listening sessions where staff would meet with multiple providers to hear their conversations about our & their work including Steps to Quality, PDS pathway, Badges, training and more.
- Individual exit interviews with participants that were leaving ICCP,
- Surveys on many topics including the impact of the Idaho Phase 4 grant and the Wage Enhancement Grant. Fifteen Hundred providers took part in two surveys on that topic and more, one for child care business owners and one for early care and

200+

LISTENING SESSION PARTICIPANTS

1,500+

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Find our Workforce Reports, the "We're Listening" Surveys, and all past data reports here:



OUTREACH TO CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS



FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

2,025+



E-MAIL OPEN RATE

46%



INSTAGRAM POSTS

1,200+



GOAL 4

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

IdahoSTARS Regional Offices and Customer Support Team work together towards this goal. With support from both teams, 80% of ICCP providers renewed their ICCP by their renewal date and 78% of renewing state licenses were certified by their renewal date.

→ **80%**

**OF ICCP PROVIDERS
RENEWED ON-TIME**

→ **78%**

**OF STATE LICENSES WERE
RENEWED ON-TIME**

CHILD CARE PROVIDERS BY LICENSING TYPE

ICCP Providers	788
State Licenses Providers	698
City Licenses Providers	438
License Exempt Facilities	251

CHILD CARE REFERRALS

Resource specialists work with families to find child care. Though families can search on their own through IdahoSTARS.org, some families prefer the guidance of our staff to find quality care best suited for their children.

→ **349**

STANDARD REFERRALS

→ **120**

CUSTOMIZED REFERRALS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Regional offices, including resource specialists work in the community in several ways. Here is just a small sample of the work done around the state of Idaho:

- Trainings were offered to parents on six separate occasions.
- Presentations to the community at large were given six times.
- Trainings were given to 188 early care and education professionals.
- Attended 70 community meetings around the state.
- Vision screenings were given to 759 children from 35 different programs.

Additionally, Regional Office and Customer Support Team members attended conferences to answer questions about quality child care and ICCP and state licensing.

IdahoSTARS is a joint project between the University of Idaho - Idaho Center on Disabilities and Human Development and the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children. We are funded by the Child Care Development Block Grant through the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare.



1187 Alturas Dr
Moscow, ID 83843
Phone: 2-1-1 Idaho Care Line
outreach@idahoeyc.org
www.idahostars.org

