



Links to Quality

Frequently Asked Questions

OVERVIEW of Links to Quality (L2Q)

What is a Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS)?

A QRIS is a process to observe, assess, improve and recognize the quality of child care programs. A QRIS defines quality indicators and provides a framework for child care programming.

What is the Kansas QRIS called?

The Kansas QRIS is called Links to Quality (CCQIS L2Q). L2Q will make available support services, which will include coaching, mentoring, technical assistance (online or face-to-face), reviewing and assessing, to assist programs as they continuously improve and meet L2Q indicators.

What is L2Q?

Links to Quality is a process that licensed providers can take part in to develop better business and program practices. L2Q recognizes child care programs that are working on the overall improvement of quality of care in the state of Kansas.

What is the L2Q process for participants look like?

<i>STEP 1</i>	Intake and application
<i>STEP 2</i>	Notification of Acceptance Status
<i>STEP 3</i>	Meet with L2Q Consultant
<i>STEP 4</i>	Attend L2Q Orientation
<i>STEP 5</i>	Complete Link Self-Assessment
<i>STEP 6</i>	Review Self-Assessment with Consultant
<i>STEP 7</i>	Complete Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
<i>STEP 8</i>	Complete Link
<i>STEP 9</i>	Link Recognition
<i>STEP 10</i>	Select Next Link and Start New Link at Step 5

What are the eligibility requirements to participate?

- Participant has received their permanent license in the state of Kansas.
- Participant has not received any administrative orders such as: Intent to Deny, Intent to Revoke or Emergency Order of Suspension.
- No current pending complaints or incidents under KDHE investigation.
- If a program is DCF enrolled, it must be in good standing.

Who can participate in L2Q?

All licensed child care programs in the state of Kansas can participate. This includes Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Homes, Group Homes, Head Start, Preschools and School Age programs.

Is L2Q required in Kansas?

L2Q participation is voluntary, and no child care program is required to participate.

Do I need to be a DCF provider to participate?

No, a program does not need to be a DCF (Child Care Subsidy) provider to participate.

How will my program be recognized?

Your program will be recognized with Quality Recognition Links when the Quality Link criteria have been met. This will include recognition on the online Work Life System as well as a visual recognition that can be proudly displayed at your facility. Families will be able to see which links you have earned when looking into your program online, setting you apart from other programs.

What are the areas of quality in L2Q?

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

HEALTH AND SAFETY

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

More links to come in the future

What program changes do I need to report while participating in the L2Q program?

- Site location change
- Change in ownership
- Change in primary care provider or program director
- Change in license/amended license
- Resubmission of evidence or change in evidence other than previously submitted
- Changes in KDHE, DCF, CACFP status

APPLICATION AND PARTICIPATION

How does a program apply for L2Q?

- Interested participants can start the process by filling out an intake online at <https://ks.childcareaware.org/l2q/>. Afterwards they will be provided with a link to complete an application.
- Once a program has submitted its application, the L2Q program staff will process the application and then notify programs of their acceptance.

Is there a cost to participate in L2Q?

There is no cost for programs to participate in L2Q. In fact, L2Q will support programs through support services that will include coaching, mentoring, technical assistance, training (online or face-to-face), reviewing and assessing, to help them get the things they need to improve quality within their programs.

What is the time commitment to participate in L2Q?

L2Q is provider driven. Participants will complete program objectives and meet self-set deadlines as applicable.

Will my participation in other quality initiatives affect my involvement in L2Q?

No, it will assist L2Q program staff to align other quality efforts with L2Q, and can enhance the L2Q experience.

Is it required to attend L2Q orientation?

Yes, participants are required to attend an orientation. Your assigned consultant will contact you with information regarding the orientation. This will be at no cost to you, and you will receive a certificate for 2 hours of KDHE approved training.

What if I have communication challenges with my designated Consultant?

We hope this will not happen, but if it does, please share concerns that you may have with the L2Q Program Manager at Child Care Aware of Kansas. You can email us at L2Q@ks.childcareaware.org or reach us at 785-823-3343, or toll free at 855-750-3343.

INCENTIVES, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & CONSULTATION

What are the incentives for participation in L2Q?

The most important incentive is the opportunity for you to improve your program quality. Other possible benefits available to participants in L2Q are:

- **Coaching and Mentoring with L2Q Consultants:** This may include, but is not limited to: in-person consultation, phone calls, workshops, correspondence through emails, connection to community and national resources and various trainings. Early Childhood Care and Education Programs will have access to support services at any point throughout the process.
- **Award Incentives:** Quality awards to help support the completion and movement of L2Q Quality Indicators.
- **Recognition:** L2Q will recognize participants with each completed link.

What supports and resources are available to assist child care programs to move from one Quality Link to the next?

L2Q will use Consultants to connect participants to community resources, provide coaching, mentoring, training, consultation and technical assistance to meet the criteria in order to move from one Quality Link to the next.

When do I have access to technical assistance?

Participants will have access at any point throughout the process for support services. They will be connected to their assigned Consultant at the beginning of their L2Q journey.

What are Quality Indicators?

Quality Indicators are specific criteria in L2Q Quality Links. It is required that all criteria be met before moving to the next Quality Link.

What is a Quality Improvement Plan?

A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is a tool to assist participants to build a plan to address missing or incomplete pieces of evidence in each Quality Link. Participants will then develop a plan to complete specific goals in their Links to Quality portfolio to be reviewed and recognized for program quality.

Where do I find the required self-assessments?

You will find the self-assessments in the Educator Portal. Your assigned Consultant will provide you access and can also offer assistance.

How will I know when I have met the criteria for each of the Quality Indicators?

You will be notified by your L2Q consultant if you have met all the criteria necessary for each Quality Indicator.

What is a Quality Recognition Link?

A quality recognition link is an earned acknowledgement for completing all the necessary criteria for that Quality Link. This acknowledgement will benefit your program by adding a level of professionalism and inform families of your commitment to quality.

What is a portfolio?

A collection of documentation that demonstrates how you meet each Quality Indicator within a specific L2Q Quality Link.

What type of evidence will I need to provide when I submit my portfolio?

The type of evidence depends on the specific indicator. Some types of evidence in Links to Quality participant include, but are not limited to, copies of policies and procedures, photos of learning environments, flyers promoting events for families, copies of staff training certificates and copies of surveys conducted with families.

ONSITE SERVICES (Technical Consultation and Technical Assessment Tools)

Who are the Consultants and how do I contact them?

Consultants are educated professionals with experience in the early childhood field. Their focus will be to assist L2Q participants through the L2Q processes. They will provide support services, such as coaching, mentoring, technical assistance (online or face-to-face) and reviewing. Contact information can be found in the L2Q Staff section of the L2Q Manual.

L2Q Program

Who developed Links to Quality in Kansas?

DCF led the development of Links to Quality, with assistance from partners across the state, including the University of Kansas, KDHE, Child Care Aware of Kansas (CCAKS), Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities (KCCTO), Kansas Department of Education (KSDE), local child care center directors, family child care providers, parents and more.

