# QUALITY START

### RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Excellence in Early Learning

## Excellence in Early Learning for All Children

When we invest in high quality early learning programs, we are investing in the future of Riverside County's children and the economic and social vitality of our community.

Change lives and change the future of Riverside County. Become a part of Quality Start Riverside County!

**FIRST 5 RIVERSIDE**
Riverside County Children & Families Commission

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION**
JUDY D. WHITE, Ed.D. | County Superintendent of Schools

**CONSORTIUM FOR EARLY LEARNING SERVICES**
"Positively Impacting the Lives of Children"

**Quality Counts California**
Raising the Quality of Early Learning and Care

## Vision of Quality Start Riverside County

Every child in Riverside County has access to a high quality early learning environment that prepares them to succeed in school and life.

To learn more and get involved, visit:

## www.qualitystartrc.org

or call:

### (800) 266-3880

*Help us ensure that Riverside County's children are given a quality start for lifelong learning and success.*

## The quality of a child's early learning experiences makes a difference.

The first five years of a child's life are extremely important. Research shows that the care and education children receive from birth through age five play a major role in their early brain development and prepare them to succeed in kindergarten. Higher quality early learning programs have a lasting effect that goes beyond kindergarten readiness: studies have shown that children who attend high quality early learning programs are more likely to be successful throughout school and in their careers.

## Children who receive a high quality early education:

- Have stronger critical thinking skills and are better at paying attention
- Are better at engaging and cooperating with others
- Perform better in reading and math

## Other important long-term benefits of high quality early learning include:

- Reduced crime rates over time
- Lower unemployment rates
- Decreased public health care, welfare, and child care expenses
- Reduced special education costs
- Increased high school graduation rates

## Achieving Quality with Quality Start

Quality Start Riverside County helps child care and preschool programs provide the highest quality early learning experiences possible. It does this by establishing standards that define what quality means and looks like for early care and education programs, and then supporting programs to meet these standards.

In addition, Quality Start provides parents and caregivers with tools and resources to find and select a quality early learning program for their child, and it gives early educators resources and professional development opportunities to continuously improve and elevate the quality of the care they provide.

Specifically, Quality Start Riverside County supports programs in the following areas:

### Child Development and School Readiness

How programs use child observation tools, create appropriate learning activities, and utilize health and developmental screenings.

### Teachers and Teaching

The teacher or family child care home provider's education and qualifications, and how effectively the teacher interacts with children.

### Program and Environment

The adult-child ratios and group size, how safe and effective the classroom environment is for learning, and qualifications of the program director.

## The Need for Quality Start in Riverside County

Nearly 25% of children in Riverside County live in poverty—and childhood poverty is a consistent predictor for school success. In Riverside County, only 33% of children in third grade meet grade-level standards for reading.

Children need access to high quality early learning experiences in and out of their homes to help close the gap before they enter kindergarten. Quality Start Riverside County is bringing together early educators, families, and community partners for the common purpose of giving every child in Riverside County the chance to reach his or her full potential.

Quality Start Riverside County supports quality improvement in early learning programs such as child care centers, family child care homes, and preschools. It also provides support to other early learning program types and to families.

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