# Spark Quality Improvement Phase Part 1

Module 3

New Quality Improvement Specialist Training

# Module Series

1. Introduction to Spark: Oregon's QRIS
2. Engaging Early Learning Programs in Spark
3. Spark Quality Improvement Phase, part 1
4. Spark Quality Improvement Phase, part 2: Spark Standards
5. Spark Quality Improvement Phase, part 3: The Portfolio
6. Spark Quality Rating Phase
7. Spark Continuous Quality Improvement Phase

# Module 3 Objectives

- Participants will explore strategies to support programs in completing the Quality Improvement Plan
- Participants will examine the use of Spark supports

# Reflection

- What might early educators be thinking and feeling as they begin their Spark journey?
- What might you do to provide support and guidance at this point?



# Spark Oregon's Quality Rating and Improvement System Participation Phases

| | Commitment to Quality Phase | **Quality Improvement Phase** | Quality Rating Phase | Continuous Quality Improvement Phase |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Enter this phase when: | · Licensed program<br>· Interested in Spark<br>· Meet C2Q compliance requirements | · **Achieved C2Q**<br>· **Program uses QIP/SA to identify areas for CQI**<br>· **Need Spark resources to improve program** | · Achieved C2Q<br>· Best practices implemented | · Have submitted a complete portfolio<br>· Received initial rating and feedback |
| Steps and materials: | · Attend Spark Orientation<br>· Apply for C2Q by submitting:<br>▪ Application<br>▪ MOU<br>· Receive C2Q rating and Welcome Kit<br>· Use Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Self Assessment (SA) to decide next steps in Spark | · **Complete personalized action plan using the QIP**<br>· **Request financial supports by submitting:**<br>▪ **Request for Supports form**<br>▪ **WOU W-9 form**<br>· **Work individually or with Quality Improvement Specialist**<br>· **Implement quality improvements in programs using QIP as a guide** | · Document evidence in Spark portfolio<br>· Clearly label evidence and place in appropriate section of portfolio<br>· Use score sheet and other Spark resources to make sure evidence is well documented and complete<br>· Apply for 3-4-5 star quality rating by submitting complete Spark portfolio for review | · Receive financial incentive at 3-4-5 star levels<br>· Create an action plan using the QIP to address any standards not initially met at desired level<br>· Document updated evidence in portfolio as needed<br>· Resubmit Spark portfolio as needed<br>· Maintain Spark quality and compliance requirements |

# Review of Module 2

- Spark eligibility
- Spark orientation and engagement
- Welcome Kit, Self-Assessment, and Request for Supports

# Quality Improvement Phase

- Complete personalized action plan using the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Request financial supports by submitting a Request for Supports and WOU W-9 form
- Implement quality improvements in programs using the QIP as a guide
- Programs may work individually or with a Quality Improvement Specialist

# Role of Quality Improvement Specialist

- Assist programs in completing the QIP and planning their quality improvements
- Guide programs as they determine how to begin
- Connect program with resources including the QRIS Resources website, Spark website, and Spark helpline
- Support programs as they make improvements
- Understand the Spark standards

# Spark Quality Improvement Plan


Oregon's
Quality Rating and
Improvement System
Quality
Improvement
Plan
for Family Child Care Programs

# Quality Goal: Standard LD3

**The program provides an appropriate indoor environment that supports children's learning and development and is accessible to all children enrolled in the program.**

☐ Increasing quality in this area is the goal of my program.

☐ My current level of quality is satisfactory. I am ready to document this standard.

My goal is to have my program perform at a:

☐ ★★★ ☐ ★★★★ ☐ ★★★★★

Level

To meet this goal, I need to make improvements in the following areas. (Check items that you are currently not doing and want to improve.)

### ★★★

The program uses a basic indoor environmental arrangement that supports children's learning and development, including physical space that:

- ☐ is accessible to all children enrolled in the program
- ☐ is divided or arranged into interest or play areas
- ☐ can be arranged into quiet and active play areas as needed
- ☐ has a place for children to be alone
- ☐ allows children and adults to move around freely
- ☐ has enough room for equipment needed by children with disabilities

### ★★★★

The program's indoor environment includes at least one place to display materials related to learning. Displays:

- ☐ are at child's eye level
- ☐ reflect current activities
- ☐ are age-appropriate
- ☐ reflect a majority of child generated (not commercially- or adult-created materials)
- ☐ contain some three-dimensional items (for example, sculptures, textured collages, popsicle stick art, mobiles, etc.)

### ★★★★★

The program's indoor environment includes displays that:

- ☐ represent various cultures, ethnic groups, and races
- ☐ represent different ages, genders, and abilities
- ☐ show children and adults in non-stereotypical roles

# My Action Plan: Standard LD3

**The program provides an appropriate indoor environment that supports children's learning and development and is accessible to all children enrolled in the program.**

## My Goal:

What I want to change:

Why I want to change this:

## My Plan:

Steps I will take:

When I will complete each step:

## Resources:

☐ I will use support funds for:

☐ I will use help from my QI Specialist. They could help by:

☐ I will use other resources, such as:

# Quality Goal: Standard LD6

**The program uses materials that support children's learning and development.**

[X] Increasing quality in this area is the goal of my program.

**OR**

[ ] My current level of quality is satisfactory. I am ready to document this standard.

My goal is to have my program perform at a: [ ] ★★★ [X] ★★★★ [ ] ★★★★★ Level



To meet this goal, I need to make improvements in the following areas. (Only check the items you want to improve.)

The program uses materials that support children's learning and development. These materials:

- [ ] support children's development (including cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional)
- [ ] are accessible
- [ ] are in sufficient quantity
- [ ] are rotated periodically
- [ ] include a variety of books
- [ ] include writing utensils and materials
- [x] show people of various ethnic groups in non-stereotypical roles
- [x] represent the culture of the community
- [ ] provide opportunities for self-direction and choice
- [ ] represent two or more cultures
- [ ] show similarities in day-to-day routines and activities
- [ ] include some written materials in the children's home language(s)

# My Action Plan: Standard LD6

**The program uses materials that support children's learning and development.**

## My Goal:

What I want to change:

Showing people of various ethnic groups in non-stereotypical roles and respresenting the community with my materials.

Why I want to change this:

To earn 4 stars, but also because I want the children to feel that people like them and their families are welcome and that a lot of different kinds of people do important things in the community.

## My Plan:

| Steps I will take: | When I will complete each step: |
|---|---|
| 1. I will order some of those figurine dolls and posters that show people with different ethnicities doing different jobs. | October |
| 2. I'm not sure I understand about representing the community with my materials. Maybe the children's posters with their family pictures is ok? I will ask my QIS if this is ok or if she has some other ideas. | October |
| 3. I will take pictures of the materials and make captions. | November |
| 4. I will print the pictures and captions and put them in sleeves in my portfolio. | November |

## Resources:

[X] I will use support funds for:

1. Figurine dolls that show people with different ethnicities doing different jobs.
2. Posters showing people of various ethnic groups in non-stereotypical roles.

[X] I will use help from my QI Specialist. They could help by:

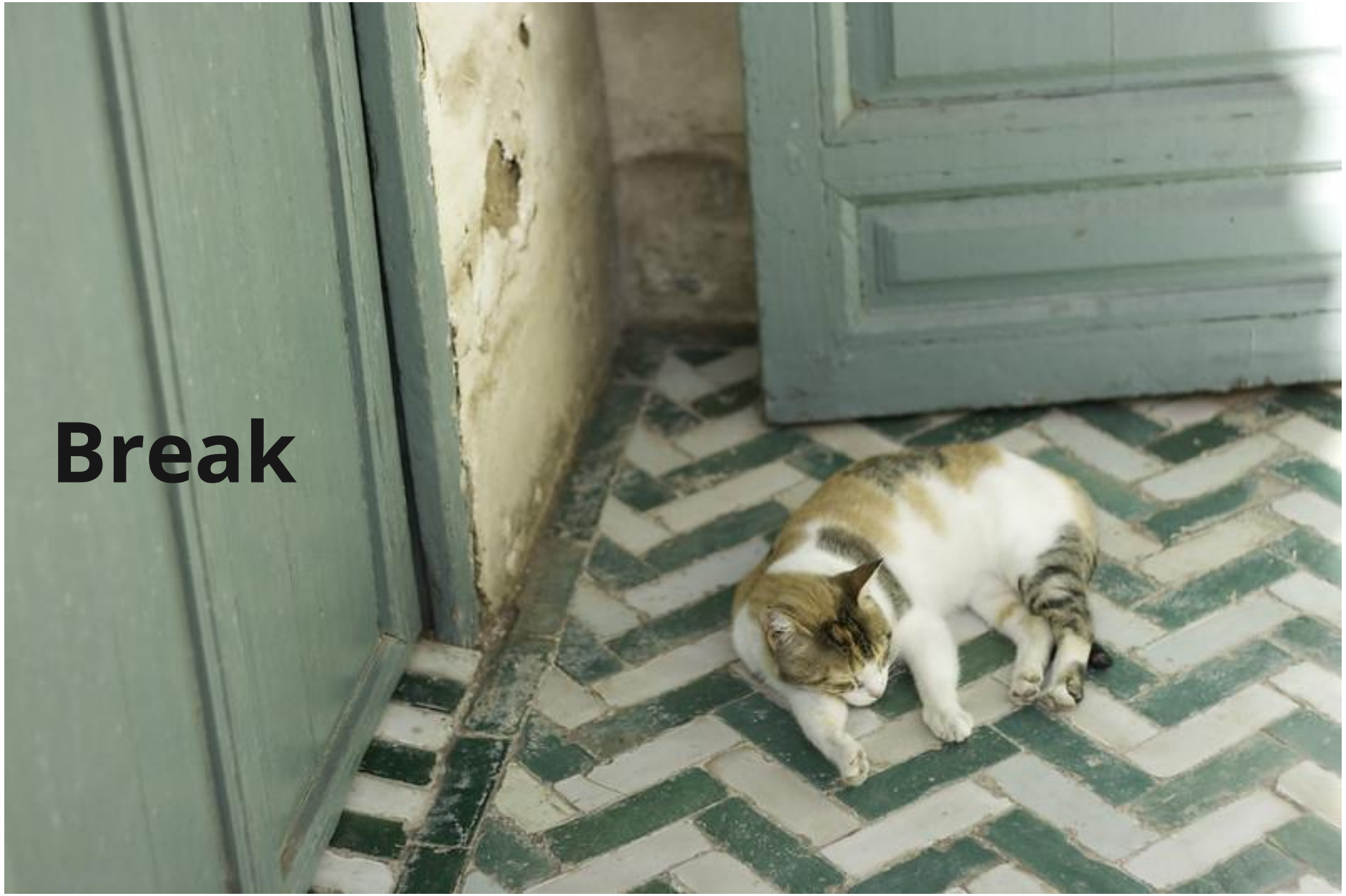
1. Explaining how I can represent the community with my materials.
2. Let me print my pictures in color on her printer.

[ ] I will use other resources, such as:

# Questions and Comments



# Break



Spark

# Spark Supports

# Spark Supports

In addition to the Quality Improvement Specialist…

- Oregon's QRIS Resources Website (oregonqrisresources.org)
- Financial supports
- Spark Helpline (phone and email)

# Oregon QRIS Resources Website

- The Oregon QRIS Resources website provides free resources for programs including policy examples, customizable templates for parent and employee handbooks, customizable forms, and articles on topics including business management, engaging families, child development, curriculum and health and safety practices.
- Early educators and system partners can sign up for a FREE user account: OregonQRISResources.org
- Sign up yourself so you can be familiar with resources and encourage your providers to sign up for their own account.

# Financial Supports

- To support quality improvements
- Support funds = before rating. Incentive funds = after rating
- Most programs are eligible for Spark funds
  - Some programs receiving public funds (e.g. OPK, Head Start) may not be eligible for Spark funds
  - **Preschool Promise and Baby Promise** programs now qualify for Spark funds
- Amount determined by licensed capacity of program
- Certain accredited programs may be eligible for different amounts of supports and incentives



| Check size of program based on licensed capacity | Amount of support funds |
| --- | --- |
| ☐ Small Program (0-20 Licensed Capacity) | $1,000 |
| ☐ Medium Program (21-49 Licensed Capacity) | $1,500 |
| ☐ Large Program (50 + Licensed Capacity) | $2,000 |

# Financial Supports

- Programs request Support Funds through TRI
- Must submit:
  - Request for Supports Form
  - WOU Substitute W-9 Form
- Incentive Funds do not need to be requested. Sent automatically after rating.

# What Can Financial Supports be Spent on?

Quality Improvement!

Quality Improvement!

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT!

Save receipts

# Financial Supports cannot be spent on

- **Capital improvements** (permanent structural changes to property)
- **Sectarian materials** (e.g. religious texts)
- **Operating costs** (electric bill, water, rent, etc.)
- **Anything** that cannot be justified as quality improvement on a Quality Improvement Plan

# QIS Role in Financial Supports

- Support programs working on QIP and considering which items require financial support

- Provide guidance on how to get the most out of the dollars available

# Spark Helpline

- Spark Helpline: 877-768-8290
- Spark Email Help: qrishelp@wou.edu

# Questions and Comments



# Getting Started

# Beginning the Spark Process

- Be prepared for early educators to feel overwhelmed!
- Programs choose how to proceed. There is no right or wrong way.
- Start with the QIP - this will provide a roadmap for the process.
- 30% of programs who apply for Spark never submit a portfolio.

# Questions to start with

- Does the early educator and program staff (if applicable) have an ORO step?
  - If not, begin by applying for a step.
  - If yes, is their step up to date?
- Does the program have a Parent Handbook?
  - If not, consider beginning with creating one. (templates are on OregonQRISResources.org)

## Quality Improvement Specialist Spark Checklist

We've created this checklist for you to use with providers who express interest in Spark. This checklist is not designed to be distributed to providers. Providers who want a checklist for Spark should be directed to the Spark website.

Questions to ask before they get started:

1. **Are you licensed?**
    a. *Yes*
        i. Are you a CC, CF, or RF? (Whatever the answer, go to question 2)
    b. *No*
        i. Are you affiliated with a school district?
            1. *No*
                a. Not licensed and not affiliated with a school district, they will need to get licensed first before they can participate in Spark
            2. *Yes*
                a. Have them contact us Center on Early Learning and Youth Development (CELYD): grishelp@wou.edu or 877-768-8290
2. **Have you had any serious valid finding in the last 24 months?**
    a. *Yes*
        i. Find out when they got the serious valid. If it's been more than 12 months since the finding they are eligible to apply for 3-star. If they want to want to go for 4- or 5-Star they will need to wait to apply till 24 months after the serious valid finding to apply.
    b. *No*
        i. Go to question 3
3. **Are you familiar with Oregon Registry Online (ORO)?**
    a. *Yes*
        i. What Step are you in ORO? For CC director or RF/CF program leader needs at least a Step 7.0 for 3-Star, 8.0 for 4-Star, and 8.5 for 5-Star
    b. *No*
        i. Have them contact ORO
        ii. https://www.pdx.edu/education-career-development/oregon-registry-educators#resources
        iii. https://www.pdx.edu/education-career-development/contact/contact-occd
4. **What do you know about Spark?**
    a. *Nothing, that's why I'm talking to you.*
        i. Schedule a time to get them into group orientation or individual orientation. If they want ORO credit they will need to attend the formal training.
    b. *I know a little bit.*
        i. Have a conversation with them and find out what they know. If it been more than a year since participating in a Spark Orientation they should get a new one.
    c. I know a lot.
        i. You should still have a conversation with them to find out what they know. There are more answers and scenarios they you need to memorize. Please call us and we can help sort things out if you need help.
        ii. Email us: grishelp@wou.edu or Call: 877-768-8290

Spark

This document is located in the QIS portal under Early Educator Materials tab > Spark Orientation

# Which Star Level to Seek?

- Programs can choose which star rating level to submit for.
- Statistics on passing at each level on their initial submission
    - **57% stay at C2Q**
    - 3 Star 28%
    - 4 Star 8%
    - 5 Star 7%
- Programs can submit evidence for higher star level for some standards if they wish to.

## Standard HS3 Healthy eating habits are supported and encouraged.

★★★

Program personnel encourage healthy eating habits during mealtime by:

- sitting with children during meals and snacks
- engaging in conversations with children
- encouraging conversations between children
- providing appropriate portion sizes

**Evidence:**

☐ Program policy for meals and snacks that demonstrates the criteria above.

★★★★

Program personnel encourage healthy eating habits during mealtime by:

- encouraging children to try foods but not requiring them to eat specified foods or amounts
- providing information about good nutrition and eating habits
- dividing children into small groups
- providing child size serving utensils for children to use
- having children help during meals (setting the table, serving themselves, clearing the table or their place setting)
- offering fresh fruit and vegetables at least twice a week

**Evidence:**

☐ Program policy for meals and snacks that demonstrates the criteria above.

★★★★★

Program personnel provide instruction about healthy nutrition, including instruction on eating from the USDA guidelines, how foods help bodies grow (preschool), and how good nutrition helps keep bodies healthy (school-age). Instruction is delivered:

- in a positive manner
- using naturally occurring opportunities
- on an individual basis
- during group activities

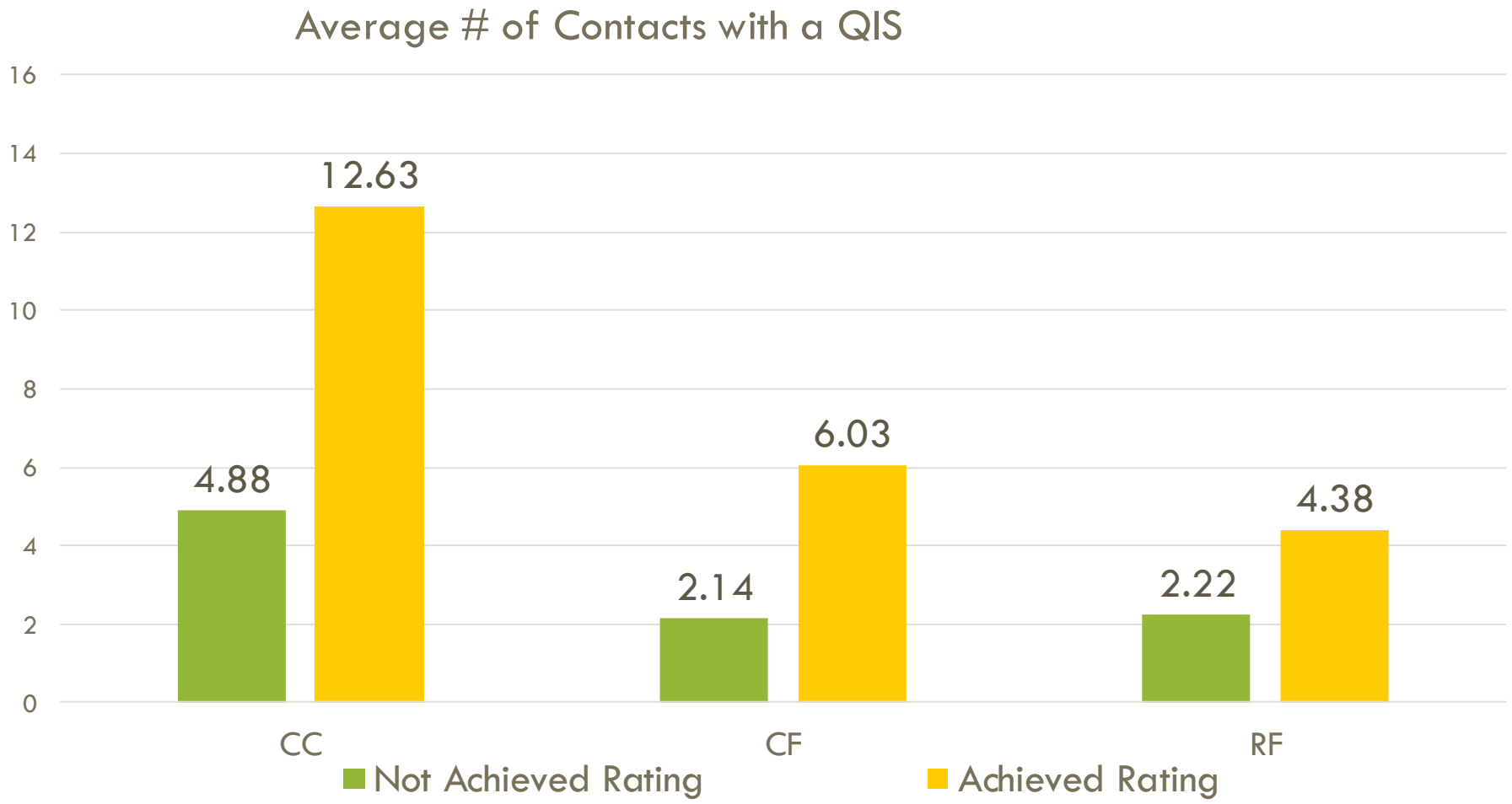
**Evidence:**

☐ Written description of how and when instruction is provided on nutrition that demonstrates the criteria above.

# The role of the QIS during this phase

- The QIS can provide support during the beginning stages of Spark by:
  - Checking in with programs periodically
  - Assisting with professional development planning
  - Encouraging programs to take advantage of supports
  - Connecting programs with each other

# You make a difference!



# Questions and Comments



# Professional Action

- To prepare for Module 4, thoroughly read through the Spark standards in Children's Learning and Development.
- Consider:
  - Which standards you believe may be most challenging for the programs you work with?
  - Which standards did you find to be confusing?

# Preview Module 4

- Review of Spark *Children's Learning and Development* domain and standards

# Closing and Final Thoughts

- Evaluation
- Please type your name in the chat