

Engaging Early Learning Programs in Spark

Introductory Training for Quality Improvement Specialists

Module 2





Introduction



- Question or comments from Module 1?
- Please type your name in the chat

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

Training Objectives



- Participants will discuss eligibility for Spark, examine the Welcome Kit, and explore the use of the Spark Self-Assessment
- Participants will examine strategies to support programs in planning their next steps in the Spark process

Reflection



- What do you think is most helpful for early educators to know to get started with Spark?

Spark Oregon's Quality Rating and Improvement System Participation Phases



	Commitment to Quality (C2Q) Phase	Quality Improvement Phase	Quality Rating Phase	Continuous Quality Improvement Phase
Enter this phase when:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Licensed program · Interested in Spark · Meet C2Q compliance requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Achieved C2Q · Program uses QIP/SA to identify areas for CQI · Need Spark resources to improve program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Achieved C2Q · Best practices implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Have submitted a complete portfolio · Received initial rating and feedback
Steps and materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Attend Spark Orientation · Apply for C2Q by submitting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application ▪ MOU · Receive C2Q rating and Welcome Kit · Use Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Self Assessment to decide next steps in Spark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Complete personalized action plan using the QIP · Request financial supports by submitting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request for Supports form ▪ WOU W-9 form · Work individually or with Quality Improvement Specialist · Implement quality improvements in programs using QIP as a guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Document evidence in Spark portfolio · Clearly label evidence and place in appropriate section of portfolio · Use score sheet and other Spark resources to make sure evidence is well documented and complete · Apply for 3-4-5 star quality rating by submitting complete Spark portfolio for review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Receive financial incentive at 3-4-5 star levels · Create an action plan using the QIP to address any standards not initially met at desired level · Document updated evidence in portfolio as needed · Resubmit Spark portfolio as needed · Maintain Spark quality and compliance requirements

Getting Started

Spark Eligibility



To be eligible to participate in Spark, programs must:

- Be licensed

OR

- Be operated by a school district and exempt from licensing

AND

- Meet Office of Child Care compliance requirements

Spark Eligibility-Compliance Requirements



- Commitment to Quality (C2Q) No more than 2 valid findings of serious violations* in the past 24 months, AND No civil penalties in the past 12 months
- 3 Star Rating - No valid findings of serious violations* in the past 12 months, AND No civil penalties in the past 12 months
- 4 and 5 Star Rating - No valid findings of serious violations* in the past 24 months, AND No civil penalties in the past 24 months

Welcome to Spark

What is the Spark Orientation?



The Spark Orientation

- Explains the Spark system
- Prepares programs to make a decision about participation
- Tells programs what to expect during the Spark process

Spark Orientation Guidance



- Spark Orientation options (see handout)
 - Introduction to Spark: Oregon's Quality Rating and Improvement System training, formal, ORO approved
 - Spark Orientation, Informal review of information
- Location of Spark Orientation materials
 - oregonspark.org

Introduction to Spark: Oregon's Quality Rating and Improvement System



- This 2 hour, ORO approved session will provide participants with the knowledge and tools needed to participate in Spark including the role of partners, supports and incentives available, Spark documents and processes, the portfolio submission and review process, and the next steps for participating in Spark.
- CKC/Hours: Program Management/2.0 hours
- Training can be found on the Spark website in the QIS Portal under Spark Related Trainings tab

Informal Spark Orientation



- QIS may meet informally with programs to explain Spark and answer questions. QIS are free to use any relevant materials, such as portions of the original IQT or Introduction to Spark, Spark materials, or information from the Spark website. Participants are not eligible to receive training hours.
- If you are choosing to provide informal Spark orientation, programs must receive:
 - Spark application and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
 - Self-Assessment
 - Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)



What are the benefits of Spark Participation?



Benefits of Participation



- Professional recognition
 - Program improvement support (Quality Improvement Specialists, peer cohorts, etc.)
 - Financial supports & incentives
 - [ODHS Enhanced rates](#)
 - Marketing to families and your community
- ... a way to help demonstrate you care about having the best program possible!*

In the words of Spark participants



“The process made me aware of how many things our Center does well and we don’t tell ourselves that enough.”

“Striving to re-write my philosophy to reflect my inner most values I discovered that I am a quality program. It’s one thing to have someone give you that label it’s another to know that yourself.”

“I learned that I can always better my program and that even though I am a very small program that I can make a large impact on my children and families’ lives.”

Spark Supports



Spark Supports

- Quality Improvement Specialists (QIS)
- Spark Website
- Oregon's QRIS Resources Website
<https://www.oregonqrisresources.org/utility-pages/login/?redirectUrl=/>
- Spark Helpline phone and email
- Financial supports

Financial Supports

- Most C2Q programs are eligible for support funds
- Amount determined by licensed capacity of program
- Designed to support quality improvements
- Some programs receiving public funds (Preschool and Baby Promise, Head Start/Early Head Start **partnerships**) may be eligible for Spark funds***



Discussion and Questions



Small Group Discussion



- Consider the RF and CC programs we discussed last week. After they express interest in learning more about Spark, how would you engage each of them?
- If they are eligible and in compliance, what will the next steps be?



Break



Spark Self Assessment

Self-Assessment



- Encourage programs to take their time with this! It is a tool for reflection, rather than just checking boxes
- Allows programs to become familiar with the standards
- Prepares for Quality Improvement Plan






Instructions:

The Self-Assessment is a tool for you to reflect on your program. The Self-Assessment will not be considered as part of your rating. This tool is for you and is designed to help you evaluate where your program is now and identify areas you can improve in the future.


After reading each statement, reflect on your program and mark “yes,” “no,” or “partial.”

- Select “yes” if you have fully implemented this item in your program.
- Select “no” if you have not implemented this item in your program.
- Select “partial” if you have somewhat implemented this item in your program or are having a hard time deciding.

Standard LD1 The program is guided by a written statement of philosophy.

Yes No Partial  The program has a written philosophy that is available to staff, families, and visitors that states the program's values, beliefs, and program goals for:


- children
- families

Yes No Partial  The program's philosophy explicitly ensures the inclusion of all children.

Yes No Partial  The program's philosophy is used to guide decisions, including decisions related to:

- curricular activities
- activities to promote partnerships with families
- professional development
- hiring of staff, if applicable

Standard LD2 The program uses a curriculum that supports all children's learning and development.


Yes No Partial  The program uses a curriculum that supports all children's learning and development and that:

- is based on theory and research
- produces positive child outcomes
- specifies outcomes for key areas of development
- specifies instructional details for care and education provider/teacher to follow
- specifies adult-child interaction details for care and education provider/teacher to follow
- balances adult-directed and child-initiated activities

None 

None 


Standard HS5 Program personnel collaborate with health and related service professionals to address the individual health needs of children, as applicable.

Yes No Partial  The program's policy indicates willingness to include children with special health needs (temporary or ongoing) and to make the necessary exceptions and accommodations.

Yes No Partial  Program personnel consult and collaborate with health care and related service professionals to meet children's special health care needs, as applicable.


None 

Standard HS6 Program uses screen time appropriately. Screen time includes all electronic media, such as television, video/DVD, electronic games, computers, tablets, smart phones, or any other screened electronic devices. This does not include augmentative communication or other electronic devices that are used by children with disabilities as part of their educational program.

Yes No Partial  Appropriate screen time use means:

- parents are informed if electronic media are used in the program
- screen content is appropriate for ages of children, nonviolent, and culturally sensitive
- at least one alternative activity is available while electronic media is used
- program's use of screen viewing encourages active child involvement
- electronic media is not on during non-viewing time and is not allowed during meals or snack time
- no screen time is allowed for children younger than two years of age
- adults do not use electronic media for personal use during the care day

None 

Yes No Partial  Appropriate screen time use means:

- program uses screen time intentionally
- screen time is related to instructional goals (i.e., supports and extends children's current interests and experiences, is discussed with children, etc.)
- screen media is free of advertisement and brand placement
- screen time is limited to no more than one hour per day



Discussion and Questions



- How will you encourage early learning professionals to use the Self-Assessment?
- Do you have experience completing self-assessments? What has your experience been like?
- What will you do to make the Self-Assessment a meaningful experience for the early learning professionals?



Explore the Welcome Kit

Spark Welcome Kit



- Sent when program achieves Commitment to Quality (C2Q) rating
- The Welcome Kit Includes:
 - C2Q designation materials
 - Portfolio
 - Portfolio Submission Checklist
 - Parent Flyer (in process)
 - Request for Support form and W9



Commitment to Quality Designation



- Program will receive their Commitment to Quality (C2Q) designation after:
 - Being oriented to Spark
 - Submitting this document
 - Application with Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Passing compliance check
- The C2Q Designation is the first step towards achieving a star rating!

Supporting programs as they
begin the Spark process

Role of Quality Improvement Specialist



- Initial engagement and follow up
- Focused Network participation, where applicable
- Professional development planning
- Being available to answer questions and provide support and encouragement
- Assist in accessing resources, including:
 - Support funds
 - Websites (QRIS Resources and oregonspark.org)
 - Spark Helpline

Questions and Comments



Professional Action Plan



- Go to the QIS portal on the Spark website and locate the following:
 - The Introduction to Spark training and materials
 - The Welcome Kit materials
- Go to the Early Educator tab on the Spark website and review the “Getting Started” section

Preview Module 3



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

Closing and Final Thoughts



- Questions
- Evaluation
- Please type your name in the chat

