

# Aspire to Inspire

*Reaching Higher to Achieve STAR 2*



# Table of Contents

**1 Background & Mission**

**4 Success Stories**

**7 What We Provide**

**8 Raving Reviews**

**9 Your Turn to Take Action**

**12 Priceless Partnerships**



# BACKGROUND & MISSION

Keystone STARS is an early childhood initiative managed through partnership of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and the four Pennsylvania Keys. Its primary goal is to promote quality improvement in early learning and development programs and school-age child care.

Inspire to Inspire STARS Initiative was birthed to address an underserved group of ECE Programs. Mrs. Sherilynn Kimble, Founder of the Kimble Group, expressed concern about the number of programs that have never taken advantage of Keystone STARS.

She listened as she traveled throughout Philadelphia, meeting with owner/operators and center directors. Some were emerging while others were more experienced. But a common theme amongst those who were stuck at STAR 1 was "FRUSTRATION".

They expressed the need for a more consistent and relationship-based support system to help them beyond their STAR 1 status.

The Kimble Group, LLC received funding from The William Penn Foundation to design and implement a Pilot Quality Improvement Initiative.



*Sherilynn Kimble*

**ASPIRE TO INSPIRE STARS INITIATIVE** provides:

- **Personalized Coaching/Mentoring**
- **Monthly Support via Networking Webinars**
- **Professional Development**
- **Technical Assistance**

The Inspire to Inspire STARS initiative successfully provided 28 STAR 1 programs with mentors, group support and networking opportunities, training and resources in order to propel them to STAR 2 and beyond.

We are just as committed to supporting our current and future cohorts using virtual training and coaching. The goal is to continue to raise the quality of care, promote program satisfaction and impact positive child outcomes in the Philadelphia Region.

# 35

Number of Programs  
who began Aspire to  
Inspire Initiative

# 80%

Program Retention  
Rate

# 28

Number of Programs  
who completed Aspire  
to Inspire Initiative

In 2016 the Keystone STARS system underwent a statewide revisioning process. Numerous programs that had never engaged in quality improvement within the STARS system were encouraged to begin the process.

Aspire to Inspire matched Mentors with Directors of STAR 1 programs. The goal was to assist a minimum of 80% of the programs to advance to STAR 2.



*Professional Development for participants*

- In 2017 Aspire to Inspire recruited various early childhood professionals who would serve as Mentors. Their backgrounds ranged from current & former directors and owner/directors, PQAS certified trainers & technical assistants, college professors and early intervention specialists.
- Mentees (Directors of STAR 1 centers, group and family providers) were recruited via the Mentors, recommendations from other Quality Improvement Programs (Success by Six, First Up, AFEL) and advertisement.
- Initially eighteen STAR 1 Centers were accepted, representing a cross-section of centers throughout Philadelphia, PA
- Mentors and Mentees began meeting monthly as a group at a central location. Through these meetings built trust, rapport and exchanged valuable information, which led to onsite visits, email, phone calls, and shared information.
- Using the Keystone STARS performance standards as a guide, Mentors tailored their support based on the individual needs of their Mentees and their programs to build an ongoing Quality Improvement Plan. They reported progress to Aspire to Inspire every 6 - 8 weeks.



# 89%

Percentage of Aspire to Inspire Program Participants who advanced to STAR 2

# 2

Number of Programs that advanced to STAR 3

- In 2018 The first two programs achieved STAR 2 designation, several programs stopped the process while additional programs were added to the cohort.
- Mentees received a binder to guide their progress, over 16 hours of PQAS training for themselves and their staff including the newly designed STAR 1 & STAR 2 trainings as well as an opportunity for staff to enter CDA programs
- By the end of 2018, out of 22 programs more than half had advanced to STAR 2
- In 2019, 28 participants completed the Pilot Program
- A total of 25 programs successfully advanced to STAR 2 and 2 programs advanced to STAR 3 as a result of their participation in Aspire to Inspire.

*"Aspire to Inspire STARS was a success because the most important elements to develop healthy relationships are trust and open communication. I'm so excited that my first Raising Quality Together Mentoring group has been very successful moving from STAR 1 to STAR 2 ~ Ms. Tiff, Mentee*





# SUCCESS STORY

## Career Advancement

Jacqueline Hinnant is the Director of Sugar Bears Developmental Center. Her program was one of two that advanced from STAR 1 to STAR 3. As a result of Jacqueline's interactions with her mentor, she gained a broader vision for her center and her role as Director. Jacqueline participated in the Community College Power Up Program for small business owners.

Jacqueline and her mentor established a career plan which included successfully acquiring her CDA. She came full circle as she was asked to join the ranks as a mentor for new Aspire to Inspire participants. Jacqueline, is also serving as an apprentice to Sherilynn Kimble to teach CDA content to new ECE practitioners.



*"Aspire to Inspire, worked hand and hand with me to provide me with the tools I needed, such as, providing trainings and materials. Last year after I accomplished my goal of becoming a Keystone STAR 2 center, Aspire to Inspire invited me to a professional development training to help me become a mentor to others. I was assigned two family childcare centers, one who just received their Keystone Star 2 and the other working towards Keystone Star 3. I'm excited and very thankful for the opportunity to help others. Thank you so much for your support and opportunities. I look forward to future engagements with Aspire to Inspire." ~Jacqueline Hinnant (from Mentee to Mentor)*



# 5

Number of Aspire to Inspire Programs that enrolled new CDA students



## SUCCESS STORY

### Training & Educational Opportunities

***"I work at a Crisis Nursery childcare program. Although I have a Masters Degree in Human Services, I found myself in this unique academic crossroads of life. Through the supportive mentoring relationship with Aspire to Inspire, I was encouraged and supported to attend the Child Development Associate Certification training to give me foundational learning in this field. I am eternally grateful for the work and support extended to me by the Aspire to Inspire team."***  
~Angelique Maury



# 140

Number of ECE  
professionals employed  
in Aspire to Inspire  
Programs



*"Mentoring is a facilitated process involving two or more people that have a shared interest in professional learning and development. Mentoring is also seen as a leadership development strategy."*  
~Kimrennee Patterson, Mentor

## SUCCESS STORY

### Mentorship



Mentors developed a close working relationship with Mentees, enabling them to overcome challenges and experience success personally and within their ECE programs.



# ASPIRE TO INSPIRE

## PROVIDES...

### **ASSISTANCE**

Assistance to Keystone STAR 1 family and center-based childcare providers to successfully move to Keystone STAR 2 or higher

### **DEVELOPMENT**

High quality customized professional development opportunities, including coursework leading to the Child Development Associate Certificate

### **MENTORING**

Customized mentoring, coaching, networking and technical assistance

### **STRATEGY**

Strategic planning using the Program Assessment Scale and Early Childhood Work Environment Scale

### **EXPERIENCE**

More than 40 years proven experience and expertise in Early Childhood, Program Development, Staff and Professional Development and more

# RAVING REVIEWS

***"Aspire to Inspire STARS was a success because the most important elements to develop healthy relationships are trust and open communications these elements are also critical to encourage the surfacing of problems or concerns before they lead to failures. I'm so excited that my first RAISING QUALITY TOGETHER MENTORING group has been very successful moving from STAR1 TO STAR 2."***

***Ms. Tiff, L&M Early Learning Center***

## Relationships Matter

***Relationships are the basis of our work. Identifying a mentor/coach to walk through this journey of continuous quality improvement benefits program directors, their staff, their program and ultimately.... the children and families that they serve.***



***"I thank the Aspire to Inspire team for accepting me in this great improvement quality initiative. While in the planning state of opening my center, my vision was to have a program that provides quality childcare to young children with the goal of achieving STAR 4. I'm committed to this goal to continue to work with the Aspire to Inspire team. Thank you..."***

***Unis Bey, Exec Director Dar Al-Huda (Place of Guidance) Early Learning Academy***

# YOUR TURN TO TAKE ACTION

## Advancing from STAR 1 to STAR 2

**The Keystone STARS Performance Standards were revised in**

**2016 to help support ECE programs in developing a meaningful, individualized Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQI Plan).**

**Aspire to Inspire used the Performance Standards to take STAR 1 programs that from having a certification of compliance to the STAR 2 level. At STAR 2, each program was required to reflect quality standards in several areas including:**

- **Staff qualifications and professional development**
- **The Early Care and Education program**
- **Family & Community Partnerships**
- **Leadership and Management**

**Read on to discover how your program how advance from STAR 1 to STAR 2**

## Staff Qualifications & Professional Development



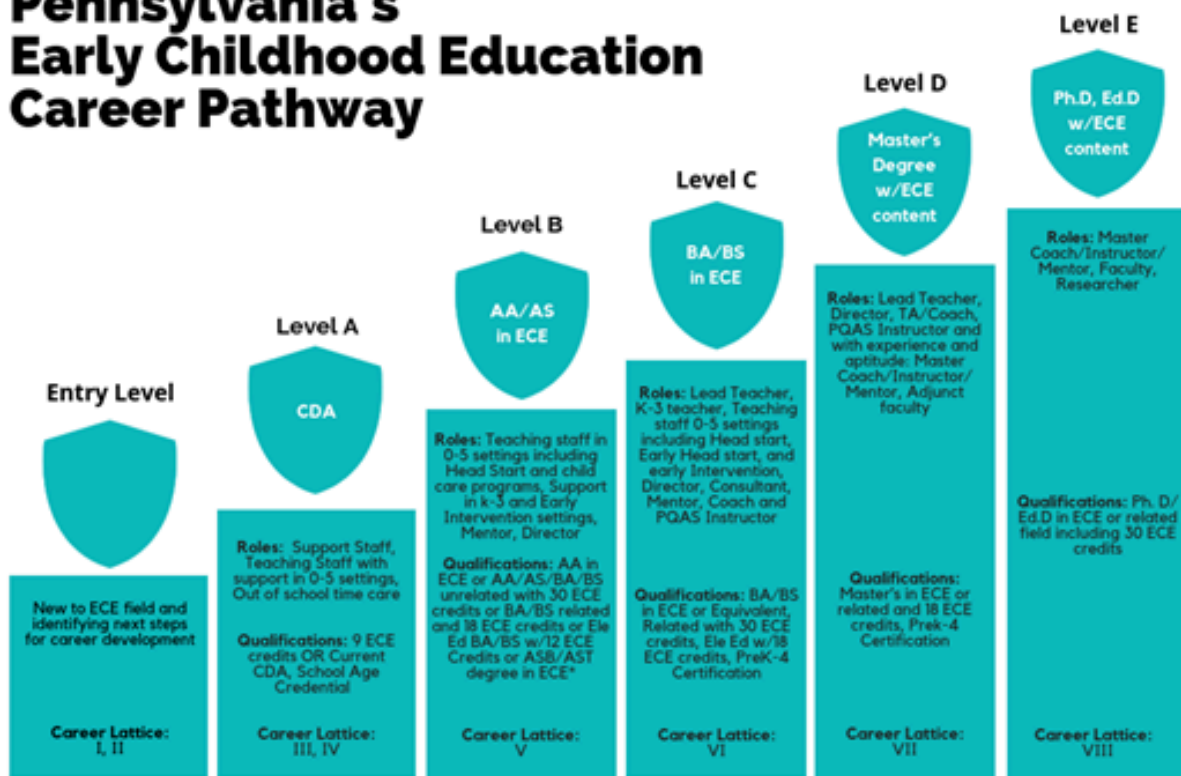
**SQ.2.1 On-site Program Leadership Team and all Staff complete Keystone STARS Orientation Part 1 - Overview of STARS System and CQI Principles (STARS 101) AND Part 2 - Elements of Assessing and Building Quality (STARS 102) (within 90 days of hire)**

**SQ.2.2 On-site Program Leadership Team and Staff are registered in the Professional Development Registry (within 60 days of hire)**

**SQ.2.3 Individualized annual professional development plans are developed for on-site Program Leadership and Staff to support educational achievement and professional growth. Annual written professional development plans are based on needs identified in the Big Ideas and Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). Plan includes goals to support further education.**



## Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Education Career Pathway



## Early Care & Education Program

**EC.2.1 Program conducts self-assessments using evidence-based tools and creates a CQI Plan with goals and action items to support improvement**

<https://www.elrc4kids.com/PDFS/03-CQI-Plan-Option-1.pdf>

**EC.2.2 PA's Early Learning Standards are used as a resource for staff to support planning and documentation of children's learning. Lessons plans reflect a balance of activities that support developmentally appropriate learning through play.**

<https://www.pakeys.org/pa-early-learning-initiatives/early-learning-standards>

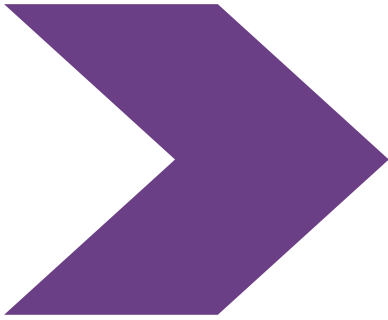
**EC.2.3 A research-based developmental screening tool is used within 45 days of enrollment to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies. Additional screening is provided as needed and per protocol with the chosen screener. Results of screening are communicated with families, support for referrals are offered as needed.**

<https://agesandstages.com/>

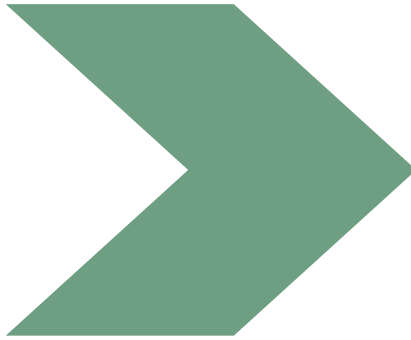


# Take Action

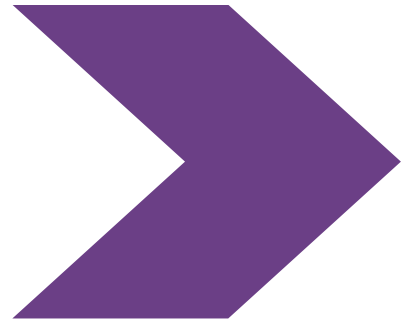
## TAKE ACTION TO REFLECT QUALITY STANDARDS BY COMPLETING THE FOLLOWING:



- **Complete self-assessment & CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) Plan**



- **Choose an approved curriculum and assessment tool for your program.**



- **Collect a lesson plan for each age group for coaching visit. Make sure teachers have completed observations or notes about progress.**



## Contact Us

If your center holds a PA DHS Certificate of Compliance and you're interested in being considered for admission into the Aspire to Inspire STARS Initiative Program, contact us via email or using our website.

Email: [aspiretoinspirestars@gmail.com](mailto:aspiretoinspirestars@gmail.com)

Website: [www.kimblegrp.com](http://www.kimblegrp.com)





**The William Penn Foundation is committed to expanding access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education through quality improvement and expansion to benefit more children.**

**We proudly support The Kimble Group, which operated under the auspices of Urban Affairs Coalition, for their work with early learning centers. Aspire to Inspire sought centers that were not engaged in Keystone STARS, helping them understand the value of utilizing the STARS guidelines.**

**Through Aspire to Inspire's initial work, 28 centers became part of the STARS system and improved the quality of their center to reach STARS 2. They are now poised to take the next leap into the upper echelons of quality.**

**Phase 2 of this initiative began in March 2020 in the early stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Using technology and virtual coaching, the goal is to support a brand new cohort of early learning centers to move from STAR 1 to STAR 2.**

**Centers that achieve STAR 2 through Aspire to Inspire will be prepared to pursue STAR 3 or 4 with the support of First Up's EQUIP program.**

**This vital work is made possible through A Quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centers grant, which was awarded to First Up to work in partnership with The Kimble Group.**