

Statewide Events Call for **QUALITYstarsNY**, a Five-Star Rating System for Early Care and Learning Programs

- by [Citizen Action of NY](#)

ALBANY, NY (04/13/2011)(readMedia)-- With the click of a mouse or a tap on a smart phone, it takes seconds to find a five-star restaurant or movie. But New York State has no system for rating the quality of a child's early care and learning program - until now.

QUALITYstarsNY, a Quality Rating and Improvement System, would bring such a system to New York. More than two dozen other states already have such initiatives in place, which create research-based uniform standards for early care and learning programs. New York's would apply to all types of care – in centers, private homes and schools. Piloted by more than 200 early care and learning programs across New York State for the past year, many participants are now inviting state lawmakers, parents and others to learn more about *QUALITYstarsNY*. **They will be unveiling a new video and explaining how *QUALITYstarsNY* helped improve the quality of care in their programs, starting during this year's "Week of the Young Child" (April 11 – 15, 2011).**

"The education that our children receive from birth to age 5 is critically important to their opportunities for success in the future," said **Cadija Tibbs, a working mother from New York City**. "*QUALITYstarsNY* will help New York's parents pick the best early learning program for their child, and ensure that those programs have the information and resources they need to offer quality learning opportunities for our kids."

"Consumers are used to star ratings – and if we can do it for restaurants, hotels and movies, then we can do it for our children," said **Victory Lynn Riedy, Ed.M., executive director of Club Fed Child Care Center in Albany**. "Other states have similar rating systems in place and *QUALITYstarsNY* is modeled on those successful systems. Designed to give parents access to uniform information, it also ensures programs get the tools and support they need to create stronger learning environments."

During this year's national "Week of the Young Child," early care and learning programs will be unveiling a new video about *QUALITYstarsNY*. It features an early care program, parent and business leader explaining why New York State needs a quality rating and improvement system. The parent describes a three-month process of visiting many programs before picking one for her son.

To watch the video, visit: <http://www.winningbeginningny.org/video/qualitystarsny.php>

At each event (listed below), programs will share their experience, being part of a year-long field test of the *QUALITYstarsNY* project. State lawmakers, parents and other community leaders will

view the video and find out how the *QUALITYstarsNY* program helped that particular early care and learning program strengthen the quality of their programs.

Over the past decade, research has determined that 90% of brain development occurs before age five – making the early years a critical learning period. And while *QUALITYstarsNY* is expected to cost several million dollars to implement over a 3-5 year period, every dollar invested in early care and learning in New York State generates \$1.86 in spending in local economies. States with quality rating and improvement systems in place also report a more targeted, cost-effective use of limited education resources.

"New York needs to catch up with other states and give parents and policymakers this critical new tool," said **Nancy Kolben, Executive Director of the Center for Children's Initiatives and a co-convenor of the statewide WinningBeginningNY coalition.** "This system will help the state invest more wisely and effectively."

"Given the significant economic benefits from investment in quality early care and learning programs, it's clear that now is the time to implement *QUALITYstarsNY*," said **Karen Scharff, Executive Director of Citizen Action of New York.** "Our kids need us to make the right choices now so that they'll have every chance at success in the future, by being ready for kindergarten, college, and a career."

QUALITYstarsNY events are planned in the following communities:

- April 14, 12:30pm, BUFFALO, The Belle Center, Erie Regional Housing, 104 Maryland Street
- April 14, 4:30pm, ROCHESTER, Wilson Commencement Park, 251 Joseph Avenue
- April 15, 10:00am, ALBANY, Club Fed Child Care Center, Leo O'Brien Federal Building, 445 Broadway
- April 15, 1:30pm, SUFFERN, Campus Fun and Learn, Rockland Community College, 145 College Road
- April 29, 10:00am, NYC/BROOKLYN, Hanson Place Child Development Center, 55 Hanson Place
- May 13, 10:00am, NASSAU, Great Neck Community School, 225 Schenck Avenue, Great Neck

In addition to the above events, copies of the new video are being sent to state lawmakers, state education officials and Governor Cuomo to build awareness and support for *QUALITYstarsNY*.

The new video and events are sponsored by WinningBeginningNY, the state's early care and learning coalition and Citizen Action of New York, through the support of the Child Care and Early Education Fund.

*** "SCREEN GRAB" PHOTOS FROM VIDEO AVAILABLE***