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**Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and
 National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation**

Currently 18 states are operating *statewide* quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) for early care and education programs. Fifteen of these QRIS link to NAEYC early childhood program accreditation in different ways. Some require accreditation to earn the top level in the rating scale; others allocate a certain number of points for accreditation. At their heart, both NAEYC Accreditation and QRIS share the same charge – to ensure the quality of children's daily experiences in early childhood programs, to promote positive child outcomes, and to support continuous program quality improvement. By providing the tools to guide early childhood programs on the path to higher quality within a QRIS, NAEYC plays a key role in working to strengthen all aspects of the early childhood delivery system – as it has throughout its 80-year history.

Research and evidence-based, NAEYC Accreditation standards and criteria set the national standard of excellence for center- and school-based early childhood programs. The benefits of linking QRIS to NAEYC Accreditation are clear: Using a national standard of high program quality in conjunction with state quality standards ensures that more early childhood programs meet uniform measures of quality that are research and evidence-based, regardless of the state in which the programs are located. Only Louisiana and North Carolina have no linkage to any accreditation.

Must be NAEYC-Accredited to reach the highest level	District of Columbia Indiana New Hampshire
Must be NAEYC-Accredited and meet additional criteria to reach the highest level	Kentucky Maine Maryland Montana New Mexico Oklahoma
Must be NAEYC-Accredited and meet additional criteria or must meet a separate set of criteria to reach the highest level	Pennsylvania Rhode Island
NAEYC Accreditation included in cumulative points scheme	Colorado Iowa Tennessee Vermont
NAEYC Accreditation used as an “alternate pathway” for reaching higher levels, plus additional criteria	Ohio
NAEYC Accreditation not included	Louisiana North Carolina