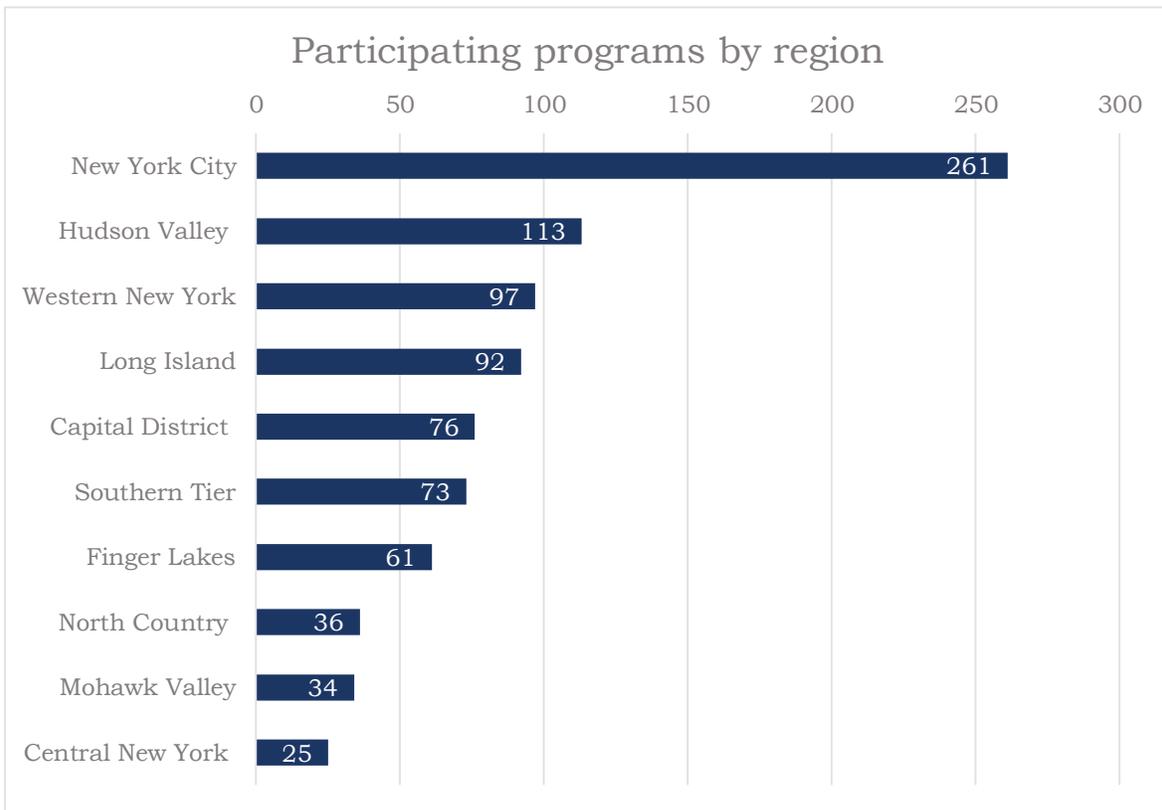


# 2020 QUALITYstarsNY Report

## Managing Through the Pandemic

As of September 2020, QUALITYstarsNY supports nearly 900 programs across New York State serving more than 55,000 young children and their families.

868 Programs currently participating in QUALITYstarsNY	Program Type	Number of Participating Programs	Number of Children Served
	Center-based	607	49,654
	Family Child Care	200	2,874
	School-based	61	3,545
	<b>Total</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>56,073</b>



Rest of New York State: 607 sites | NYC: 261 sites

## QUALITYstarsNY Timeline of Support During COVID-19

### March-April

*Assessment of Participating Program Operations and Immediate Support Needs*

- *Planned and executed transition to provide remote support to participants*
- **97% response rate** to questions about program operation status during pandemic
- **63% remained open** serving children onsite or remotely
- **80% of programs continued to work with their Quality Improvement Specialist** despite the health crisis

- *Created and facilitated a 3-Part Considerations for Reopening webinar series hosted by QUALITYstarsNY Quality Improvement Specialists*
- *Topics: health and safety, policies and procedures, social emotional development and well-being*

### May-June

*Launch of the Considerations for Reopening Webinar Series for Early Childhood Program Leaders*

### July-August

*Conducted Reopening Webinars for all Early Childhood Leaders Across the State*

- *Invited leaders of licensed programs across the state to attend series webinars*
- *19 Considerations for Reopening webinar series sessions offered in both English and Spanish—open to the public*
- *Thousands of educators joined for the sessions*

- *Three interactive Reopening Q&A Webinars offered in English and Spanish to address specific questions and areas of concern among QUALITYstarsNY participants.*
- *Created Part 4 of the series. Topic: high quality learning environments aligned with COVID-19 regulations and safety requirements.*

### September-October

*New Content Developed for the Reopening Series to Address Evolving Needs*

## QUALITYstarsNY's Considerations for Reopening Series

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### Considerations for Reopening

Webinar Series for Early Childhood  
Administrators & Providers

[qualitystarsny.org/reopening](https://qualitystarsny.org/reopening)



- **25 webinars** in total were facilitated in English and Spanish as part of the multi-part series, **19 of the webinars** were open to the public.
- **2,500+ attendees** joined our Reopening Sessions from July-October, 2020.
- Comprehensive Resource Toolkits were created in English and Spanish for each session with guidance, resources, and sample materials to accompany the series content. These materials have been widely used across New York's early childhood community.
- An additional **20+ Reopening sessions were hosted as Learning Communities** for smaller, regional groups of QUALITYstarsNY participants—enabling program leaders to learn from colleagues in their area and discuss local directives and available resources.

## What We Learned about QUALITYstarsNY Participants During COVID-19

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QUALITYstarsNY was able to provide critical support during the pandemic when many of our participants had to close their doors abruptly. In addition to the Considerations for Reopening Series, QUALITYstarsNY Quality Improvement Specialists (QI

Specialists) have continued to provide one-on-one guidance to help programs overcome the unprecedented challenges they've faced as a result of the pandemic.

A vast majority of QUALITYstarsNY's participating programs have continued to work with their QI Specialist since May, 2020, despite only 64% remaining open and serving children either on-site or remotely at that time. The remaining 20% of programs not currently engaging with their QI Specialist are experiencing dramatic hardships and are unable to work toward quality improvement at this time. These programs continue to receive regular contact from their QI Specialist and QUALITYstarsNY is ready to re-engage them as soon as they are able to resume their participation.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, QI Specialists have exceeded their regular visiting schedule through emails, phone calls, & virtual Zoom sessions. Moreover, QI Specialists held **more than 100 regional Learning Communities** from April through

**80%** of our 850+ participating programs **have continued to work with their Quality Improvement Specialist** since the pandemic began in March.

August, 2020, giving participants crucial opportunities to share and learn from one in addition to the expertise provided by their Specialist.

	Programs serving children on-site or offering remote services	Programs closed due to COVID-19	Percent of Programs that Continued to work with their Quality Improvement Specialists	Percent of Unresponsive Participants
<b>May</b>	63%	34%	79%	3%
<b>November</b>	73%	17%	79%	7%

“I believe during these times of uncertainty is when our QI Specialist is most needed. We need a source of support, to reinforce and remind us to continue our best practices no matter how tough our adjustments may be.”

**Lisa Thomas**

*Family Child Care Provider | Brooklyn*

## COVID-19 Spotlight: Fredonia Remote Learning Support Project

QUALITYstarsNY helped Dunkirk School District in Western New York provide remote learning support to children and families when they had to close their school and pre-k classrooms during the pandemic. Families of 43 children were able to pick up packages of developmentally appropriate, open-ended learning materials provided by QUALITYstarsNY.

The remote learning materials included art supplies, such as play dough, paper, markers, and glue, as well as hands-on activities such as pizza making, planting seeds, and sensory materials. As a result, Fredonia teachers were able to work directly with families on curriculum development and learning using these open-ended resources that families could engage with while at home. This story was also featured in an article by the *Dunkirk Observer*.

In planning for this project in Dunkirk, QUALITYstarsNY expanded this support beyond Western New York and provided many of our participants across the state, in all program settings, with open-ended learning materials for the families they’ve supported remotely.

“I view my work with early childhood programs as more important than ever. Since the pandemic began, directors have been struggling to stay current on so much information and have had to make critical decisions that can affect the future of their program. I am able to be a support to directors—to help them navigate the information, find resources, or simply just to listen to them about what they’re experiencing. *It’s important that they know they are not alone in this challenging time.*”

**JoAnn Toth**

*QUALITYstarsNY QI Specialist | Capital District*

# Program Ratings

<b>Of the 868 participating programs, 637 have been rated</b>	Program Ratings	Number of Programs
	5 Star	15
	4 Star	250
	3 Star	78
	2 Star	158
	1 Star	136
	Not Yet Rated	231
	<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>868</b>

Of the 868 participating programs, 637 programs have been rated. Programs receive a rating of 1-5 Stars with 3-5 Stars indicating high quality. The 231 programs not currently rated include new programs that are in the process of receiving their first rating. Ratings have been delayed for most programs due to the extenuating circumstances presented by COVID-19.

## Re-Ratings

Programs participating in QUALITYstarsNY are rated every 18 months to three years. Re-rating gives programs an opportunity to reflect on the progress they’ve made through their continuous quality improvement work—both in terms of any changes to their Star level or the points they earn in their rating.

Of the 637 currently rated programs, 200 programs have been through re-rating at least once. An additional 30 programs are in the re-rating process but have not yet received their new rating. There are a significant number of QUALITYstarsNY participants that would have gone through re-rating in 2020 or early 2021 but have received extensions due to COVID-19. Among the 437 programs that have only been rated once to date, 139 programs would have been re-rated in 2020 and 121 in the first half of 2021, however, their current rating has been extended in light of the extreme challenges presented by the pandemic. We are poised to re-rate these 260 programs once the pandemic has subsided, in addition to new programs that will be joining QUALITYstarsNY next year.

Of the 200 recently re-rated programs, **70% increased their Star Rating or sustained a high quality rating** of 3-5 Stars.

In their most recent re-rating, 70% of the 200 re-rated programs increased their rating by one or more Star levels or sustained a high quality 3-5 Star Rating. There are also many programs that demonstrate progress by increasing their points earned in the re-rating process, even if they do not increase a full Star level.

# The Anatomy of Quality Improvement

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## Rebuilding the Quality Improvement Plan – 2019-2020

As part of our rating process, in collaboration with the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute's Web and Database Administrator, we re-designed the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) tool to more accurately collect critical data for the continuous quality improvement process that our participants engage in to meet or exceed Quality Standards. Focus groups, redesign teams, and testing cycles, followed by intensive training of QUALITYstarsNY staff contributed to a successful launch. The functionalities of the QIP tool enable detailed recording of steps and progress for each participant and allow leadership and administrative teams to monitor processes and analyze project data. Data analysis is underway and a project report will be developed after the first full year of implementation.

### Continuous Quality Improvement

After receiving their Active Rating, QUALITYstarsNY participants work toward continuous quality improvement to better serve their children and families. Programs receive a rating report detailing their points earned for each of the 75 Standards, which provides critical insights into opportunities for improvement in each of the four Standards areas: Learning Environment, Family Engagement, Management & Leadership, and Qualifications & Experience.

Programs consult with their QI Specialist to develop their QIP, which generates resources and technical assistance to move through the continuous quality improvement process. As part of their QIP, programs set and achieve quality improvement goals, with access to a range of supports and resources to enhance their classroom environment, staff professional development, family engagement, and business and leadership practices. The data system tracks progress to ensure accountability of public and private funding.

## What Our Participants are Saying about QUALITYstarsNY

“QUALITYstarsNY is a comprehensive, supportive strength! While the tenet behind which I opened a day care was to ultimately reduce the risk of adverse childhood experiences and give each child the nurturing, healthy and supportive foundation they are deserving of, I realized I could not do it alone. I needed support and QUALITYstarsNY was there. They joined hands with our program and provided needed professional development and appropriate furnishings and related supplies. This has enriched the lives of the children in our care, fostering independence and creativity.”

**Sabine Dalce**

*On-site Provider, Philippians 2:5 Day Care, Inc. | Long Island, NY*

“I must confess that this program has empowered me beyond my expectations. As a home-based day care operator, I had no kind of support from anyone. QUALITYstarsNY has given me the leverage to see myself not only as a professional who is knowledgeable in providing care to children while parents are at work, but as a competitive educator with well-trained employees through the numerous resources they offer. Without this support system, I would be lost with all the children in my care.”

**Getty Njoku**

*Family Child Care Provider, Island Sunshines | Long Island, NY*

“I am proud to have participated in Start with Stars and transitioned into QUALITYstarsNY. The support of my Quality Improvement Specialist and access to high quality materials helped me to create my beautiful infant center/area! Through QUALITYstarsNY, my program has also worked with a coaching team that provides professional support and educational tools that will continue to benefit the children I serve both now and in the future. I'm grateful to continue my participation in this wonderful program.”

**Lisa Chambers**

*Family Child Care Provider, Lisa's Learn And Play, Inc | Buffalo, NY*

“QUALITYstarsNY has provided me with education and tools that have greatly improved the way I teach and provide daily care to my daycare children. I live in an area with few resources. QUALITYstarsNY has empowered my daycare staff to provide children with education and life skills that I would not have been able to obtain otherwise. I cannot adequately express how grateful I am to QUALITYstarsNY for what they have provided for myself and the children that attend my daycare.”

**Christine Shantie**

*Owner, Chris' Group Family Daycare | Dickenson Center, NY*

“We have always shared the vision of QUALITYstarsNY for providing the highest quality programming for young children, but we initially lacked the resources to provide a fully-equipped learning environment and more focused training topics for our program. Through our participation in QUALITYstarsNY over the past few years, we have been able to create a more intuitive classroom learning environment and extensively-trained, long-standing teaching staff, which have significantly improved our ability to provide the highest quality care and programming for our community.”

**Rose Blanchard**

*Director, Lil Early Childhood and Enrichment Program | Saranac Lake, NY*

“We have been part of QUALITYstarsNY for three fantastic years. The support we receive from our Quality Improvement Specialist is nothing short of spectacular! She is our mentor and sometimes it feels like our biggest cheerleader. We are so thankful to be a part of this phenomenal program!”

**Sherry Phillips**

*President, A Leap In Learning | Hamburg, NY*

“QUALITYstarsNY is just amazing! In 2012 we were so excited to be participants in this program that was designed to offer resources to enhance early childhood programs. It then became our ‘everything’, in the way we conduct our program. QUALITYstarsNY is our culture for early learning programs because it provides us with Standards and opportunities to maintain a quality facility. The impact on our program is tremendous...

I could go on and on about QUALITYstarsNY and how important it is to early childhood programs, but please allow me to say the Quality Improvement Specialists are so amazing! Their knowledge, patience, empathy and love for early childhood and QUALITYstarsNY definitely makes the agency a success. QUALITYstarsNY, thank you for all that you do!”

**Jackie Prather**

*Director, Plattsburgh YMCA Bright Beginnings | Plattsburgh, NY*

“We’ve been fortunate to be part of QUALITYstarsNY since 2017. QUALITYstarsNY helps our program with funding for training opportunities, including funding for one of our teaching assistants to get her CDA. We have also been able to get a beautiful sandbox, height appropriate chairs for the variety of preschooler sizes, and a ‘cozy nook’ for our classroom through QUALITYstarsNY. These items have helped to enrich the education and experiences that we provide to the children in our care. The Quality Improvement Specialists are knowledgeable resources who not only answer questions and give insight when it is needed, but have been able to offer new suggestions and approaches, and help to ensure our program not only meets the quality Standards, but exceeds them.”

**Kendra Miller**

*Director, Chazy Afterschool Program Preschool | Chazy, NY*