



Parent Aware by the Numbers

April 2018

Overview of Parent Aware

Parent Aware is Minnesota's Quality Rating and Improvement System which provides quality ratings to child care and early education programs based on a One- to Four-Star scale. These ratings, shared on ParentAware.org, provide information to families, encouraging them to select higher rated programs when searching for a child care and early education program for their child. Parent Aware also provides a common set of best practices for child care and early education and offers supports to help programs to work toward best practices, allowing them to evaluate the quality of their programs, and make targeted improvements to better support child development and learning.

Programs eligible to be rated include public school prekindergarten sites meeting School Readiness Standards, Head Start/Early Head Start sites, licensed child care centers and family child care programs.

Growth of Parent Aware Rated programs

Some types of child care and early education programs have been participating in Parent Aware statewide since 2012: public school prekindergarten sites meeting School Readiness Standards, Head Start/Early Head Start sites and accredited child care programs. The majority of these programs hold a Parent Aware Rating.

For non-accredited child care programs, Parent Aware was available in eight counties in 2012. In the subsequent years, counties were incrementally added, with all counties eligible to participate in January 2015. Both the staggered start and voluntary nature of Parent Aware has impacted the growth pattern for non-accredited programs.

Since 2012, the number of programs with Parent Aware Ratings has increased from 458 center-based and 71 family child care programs to 1,604 center-based and 1,101 family child care programs as of December 2017. As of December 2017, 25 percent of eligible programs in Minnesota held a Parent Aware Rating.

Table 1: Growth of Parent Aware Rated programs over time: Number of Parent Aware Rated programs at the end of each calendar year

Program Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent
Public school prekindergarten ¹ (n≈754)	126	496	603	680	725	729 ²	97
Head Start/Early Head Start ³ (n=295)	225	258	257	257	264	286 ⁴	97
Accredited child care centers ⁵ (n=455)	91	249	278	330	337	341	75
Accredited family child care ⁵ (n=27)	15	18	15	25	30	23	85
Non-accredited child care centers ⁶ (n=1,068)	16	66	128	197	238	277	26
Non-accredited family child care ⁶ (n=8,354)	56	233	574	907	1040	1049	13
Total (N≈10,953)	529	1320	1855	2396	2635	2705	25

¹Estimate of public school prekindergarten sites is from the Minnesota Department of Education, March 2018.

²These 729 public school prekindergarten sites meeting School Readiness standards represent 318 school districts (including charter schools). Of the 729 rated sites, 19 are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (department) as child care centers.

³The number of Head Start/Early Head Start sites is from the Minnesota Department of Education from the FY18 fiscal year start, July 2017.

⁴ These 286 Head Start/Early Head Start sites represent 31 Head Start grantees. Of the 284 rated sites, 198 are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services as child care centers, 24 are licensed by the department as family child care providers, and nine are tribally licensed.

⁵ The number of accredited child care programs is from NACCRRAware, data system from Child Care Aware of America on Mar. 15, 2018.

⁶ The number of non-accredited child care programs is from the Minnesota Department of Human Services Licensing Look-up on Jan. 3, 2018, minus the number of accredited programs, licensed Head Start/Early Head Start, licensed public school prekindergarten, and adding in known tribally licensed programs by program type (family/center).

Future growth projections

Based on current participation patterns, the Minnesota Department of Human Services expects that the majority of Rated programs will continue to hold a Parent Aware Rating,⁷ while increasing the number of newly rated child care programs by about 300 each year. In 2017, 299 child care programs were rated for the first time, and this continues to be the trend for 2018. New supports for non-accredited child care programs, which started mid-year 2017, are expected to increase these projections, but the state closure rate of licensed family child care programs inversely impacts this trend.

Support to programs

In July 2017, changes occurred for non-accredited child care programs rated through the Full-Rating Pathway.

Building Quality is a coaching model through which each program receives up to 30 hours of support over the course of six months to help increase their quality and prepare to be rated or re-rated. Prior to July 2017, this opportunity was only available to programs once. Programs are now able to join multiple times, including the option of participating in two consecutive six-month coaching periods, or cohorts, prior to being rated.

Parent Aware grants increased as well. Programs that participate in a minimum of 20 hours of coaching services during a Building Quality cohort are eligible to receive a grant of \$1000, an increase of \$500. Programs that have earned a One-, Two-, or Three-Star Rating are eligible to receive a grant of \$2,500, an increase of \$1000. Parent Aware grants must be used by child care programs for activities, materials or equipment to improve quality.

Impact of licensed family child care closures

In 2017, 1,206 licensed child care programs closed in Minnesota. Of these, 93 percent were family child care programs. These closures are impacting the number of Parent Aware Rated programs. As of December 2016, 1,435 licensed child care programs held a Parent Aware Rating. Over the course of 2017, 123 these Rated programs closed; 80 percent of these were family child care programs.

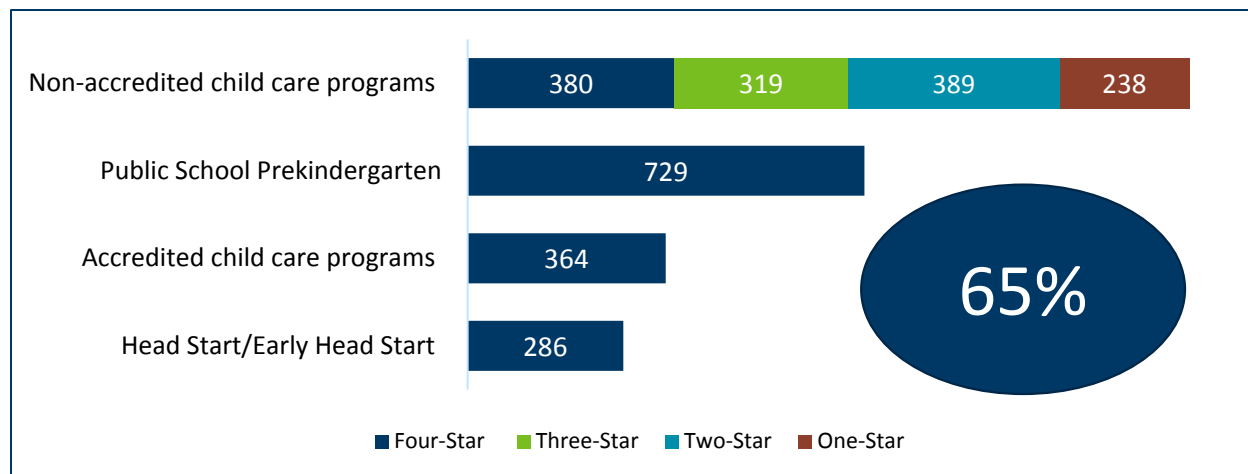
Rated programs by Star-Levels and Pathway

Parent Aware offers four Pathways to earn a Rating: Automatic, Accelerated, Expedited and Full-Rating. Programs using the Automatic or Accelerated Pathways receive a Four-Star Rating. Expedited Pathway programs receive either a Three- or Four-Star Rating. Programs using the Full-Rating Pathway are eligible to earn a One-Star (lowest) to Four-Star (highest) Rating; nearly half (49 percent) of all rated programs

⁷ Parent Aware Ratings are active for two years. At the end of this period, programs need to reapply for a new rating, submitting required information by Pathway type to ensure ongoing quality and renew their rating.

are rated via the Full-Rating Pathway. Overall, 65 percent of all Parent Aware Rated programs hold a Four-Star Rating.

Chart 1: Program Type by Star-Rating Level



Rated programs by Pathways

Prior to 2017, programs could be rated via two Pathways: Accelerated Pathway for Rating (APR) for public school prekindergarten sites meeting School Readiness Standards, Head Start/Early Head Start sites and accredited child care programs and the Full-Rating Pathway for non-accredited child care programs.

In 2017, two new Pathways were added: Automatic Pathway, which is only available for Head Start/Early Head Start programs meeting federal Head Start requirements; and the Expedited Pathway, for newly opened centers that have an owner who is legally responsible for multiple licensed child care centers, and employ an experienced director of a highly rated program. The affiliated programs must hold a Three- or Four-Star Rating which then transfers to the newly opened program. Within six months, the program on the Expedited Pathway must meet certain requirements or the Rating expires. As this is a new Pathway, relatively few programs have utilized it.

Full-Rating Pathway

Star-Levels of One-, Two-, or Three-Star Rated programs

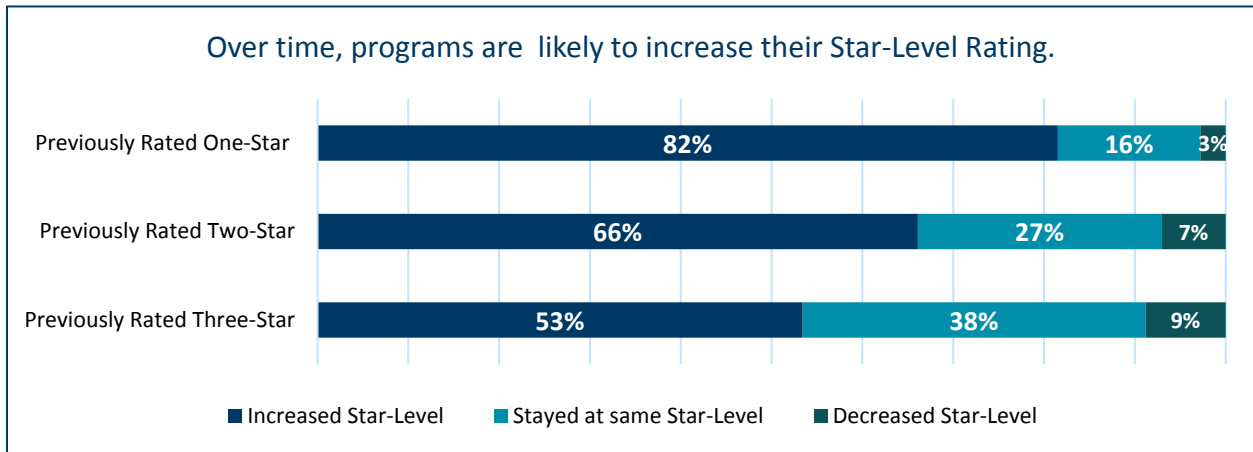
Of programs that held a previous Rating⁸ of One-, Two-, or Three-Star Levels:

- 70 percent increased their previous Star-Level
- 25 percent maintained their previous Star-Level

⁸Data set included any programs with two or more ratings since the July 2013 Cohort.

- 5 percent decreased their previous Star-Level

Chart 2: Previously Rated One-, Two-, or Three-Star patterns of growth

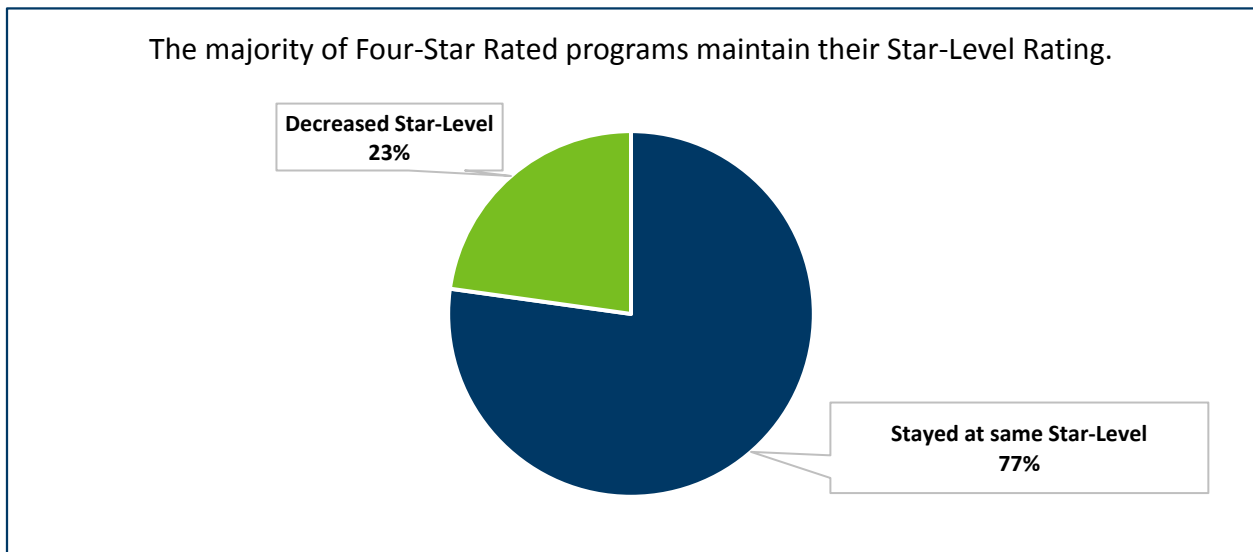


Star-Level of Four-Star Rated programs

Of programs that held a previous Rating⁹ of Four-Star Level:

- 77 percent stayed at their previous Four-Star Level
- 23 percent decreased from their previous Four-Star Level.

Chart 3: Previously Rated Four-Star programs

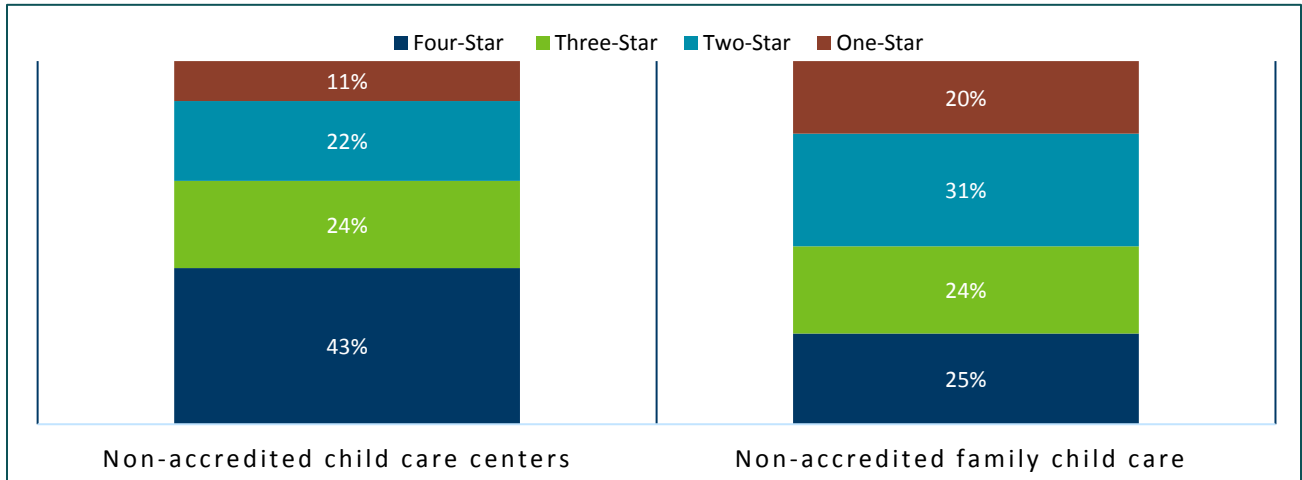


⁹Data set included any programs with two or more ratings since the July 2013 Cohort.

Full-Rating Pathway by program type

Programs participating in the Full-Rating Pathway have different patterns of Ratings. Currently, the most common rating for a non-accredited child care program is either a Four-Star or Two-Star (both at 29 percent). The least common rating is a One-Star, at 18 percent. However, this changes by program types. Child care centers are more likely to have a Four-Star Rating, (43 percent), while family child care programs are more likely to have a Two-Star Rating (31 percent).

Chart 4: Full-Rating by Program Type



Children in care

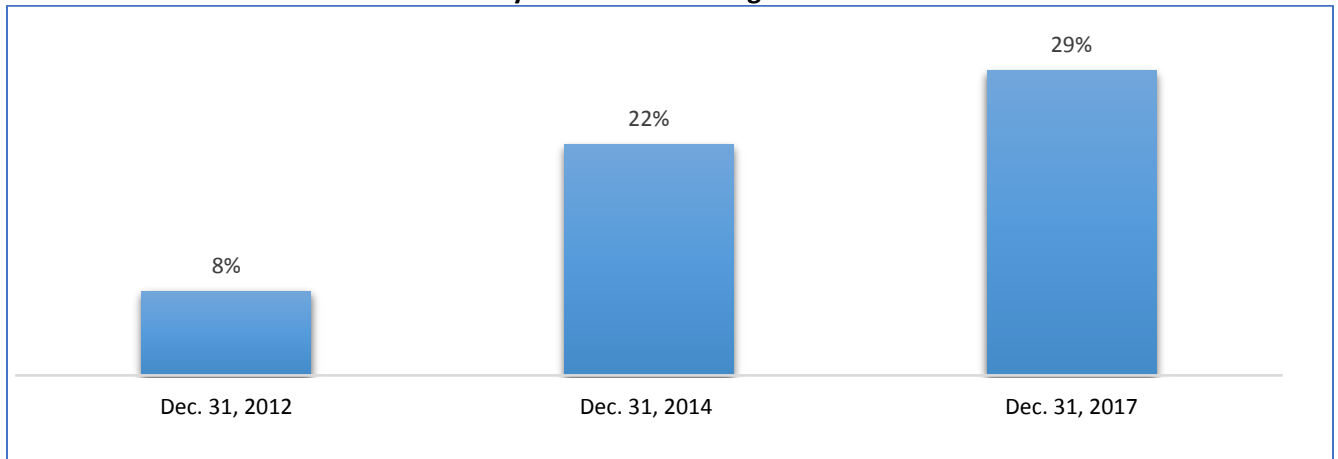
To reach their full potential, all young children should have access to quality early learning opportunities. Parent Aware has increased quality of programs and on [ParentAware.org](https://parentaware.org) families are able to search for Rated programs, helping to increase access. The department estimates there are 319,454¹⁰ children birth to 5 years old regularly cared for in some form of non-parental care. In 2017, an estimated 29 percent of all young children in Minnesota were attending a Rated program, with 26 percent of young children attending a highly Rated program (programs with either a Three- or Four-Star Rating). This is likely an underestimate of children served since the number served is unknown for some types of Rated programs.

¹⁰ The number of young children in Minnesota in child care was 423,100 in December 2017, according to the ACS Report, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Single Year of Age and Sex for the United States, States, Counties and Puerto Rico: December 2017, from July 1, 2017. Population estimates of children birth to 5 years old are combined with the percentages described in the 2009 child care use study, Child Care Use in Minnesota: Report of the 2009 Statewide Household Child Care Survey, November 2010, Richard Chase and Jennifer Valorose, Wilder Research, to determine the number of children needing care.

Chart 5: Children in Parent Aware Rated programs (all Rating levels) and High Quality programs (Three- or Four-Star level) as of Dec. 31, 2017

Population	Quality Programs (all Rating levels)	High Quality Programs (Three- or Four-Star level)
Young children attending Rated programs ¹¹	91,280 29% ¹²	82,802 26% ⁹
Young children attending a Rated licensed child care program	49,203 15% ¹³	40,725 13% ¹²
Young children attending a Rated program receiving CCAP funds ¹⁴	8,700 50% ¹³	7,600 43% ¹³

Chart 6: The number of children served by Parent Aware Programs have increased over time



¹¹ All program types: tribally or department Licensed child care programs, Head Start/Early Head Start and public school prekindergarten

¹²Data compiled from the Minnesota Department of Education most recent report data available (2016 Race to the Top), and licensed program data as reported in Develop on Dec. 18, 2017.

¹³ Data on the number of children served in each age setting/classroom of licensed programs, excludes any licensed Head Start/Early Head Start or public school prekindergarten sites as of Dec. 18, 2017 as reported in Develop.

¹⁴ Data is from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Child Care Assistance Program, July 2017. N value is 17,536