



# RATING ONLY GUIDE

State Fiscal Year 2026\*

\* Effective 7.1.2025. Policies are subject to change and may be updated during the fiscal year. Please visit the Quality First extranet's resources page to ensure you have the most up-to-date policy information.

Arizona's children thrive because of you. From snack time to nap time (and all the other moments in the day), you've made it your mission to look out for the youngest learners—creating a brighter tomorrow. Because learning starts from birth, First Things First created Quality First to help early care and education providers improve and maintain the quality of their programs. Your participation shows that you are committed to improving the quality of your program to best serve the children in your care.

## What is Quality First?

Quality First supports child care and preschool providers across Arizona to improve the quality of their early learning programs for children birth to age 5. The goal of this system of support is to help early learning programs help Arizona's children be ready to succeed in school and in life. This includes assessment to find strengths and opportunities, technical assistance, coaching and professional development to expand teaching skills. These supports help you create learning environments that nurture children's healthy development.

## What is Quality First Rating Only?

Rating Only is a way for programs to participate in Quality First without the full system of supports like coaching or funding. As a Rating Only participant, your program will go through the assessment process and receive a Quality First star rating, with help from a Quality First coordinator to guide you along the way. Programs in Rating Only may be selected for full participation in Quality First in the future, depending on funding and other priorities.

## Purpose of the Rating Only Guide

This guide outlines the benefits, policies and procedures of Quality First. The purpose of the guide is to help you understand your role and the services included in Quality First Rating Only.

## How to use the guide

The guide is a tool for you to use while getting started in Rating Only. You can find answers to questions such as:

- Understanding what to expect
- Understanding the assessment process
- Learning about policies and procedures that you need to follow and understand about Rating Only
- Learning about other supports and resources available to you

## Structure of the guide

Each section has information about the different parts of Quality First Rating Only. Policies are included throughout, in gray boxes. Processes are detailed immediately after the policy box if needed. Ideas for success are included in each section.

## What you need to know

The information contained in the Rating Only Guide is updated every year. Policies are subject to change and may be updated during the year. To ensure you have the most updated information, visit the [Quality First extranet's resources page](#) for announcements and updates.



## For assistance and support

If you have any questions related to the policies or procedures, ask your Quality First coordinator or contact the Quality First team at [QualityFirst@FirstThingsFirst.org](mailto:QualityFirst@FirstThingsFirst.org) or 602.771.5000.

To learn more, visit our website at [QualityFirstAZ.com](http://QualityFirstAZ.com) for information, answers to frequently asked questions and a blog with tips and inspiration.

Stay informed by signing up for the Quality First Update newsletter at <https://firstthingsfirst.us17.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=c9dcfd67a053c976593ec16cc&id=3d1cc1f8ab>.



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# What is First Things First?

From birth to age 5, children's brains develop faster than any other time in their lives and set the foundation for future learning. That's why Arizonans created First Things First—a voter-initiated, statewide organization that funds early education and health programs to prepare young children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. Local regional councils, staffed by community volunteers, decide how funds are spent to support the healthy development and learning of Arizona's young children.

## Strategic Plan

In 2022, First Things First published an updated Strategic Plan to guide priorities and investments through state fiscal year 2027. The next Strategic Plan is in development and is led by a subcommittee of the First Things First Board. Access to high-quality, culturally responsive early care and education was identified as the first of six desired outcomes. As First Things First's signature program, Quality First provides a system of support to help meet this goal.

To learn more about First Things First, our regional partnership councils, investments, latest news and more, visit our website at [FirstThingsFirst.org](https://FirstThingsFirst.org). To join the Strategic Planning Subcommittee meetings, visit [FirstThingsFirst.org/governance/board/board-meetings](https://FirstThingsFirst.org/governance/board/board-meetings) and select "Committee Meetings."



### Vision

All Arizona's children are ready to succeed in school and in life.

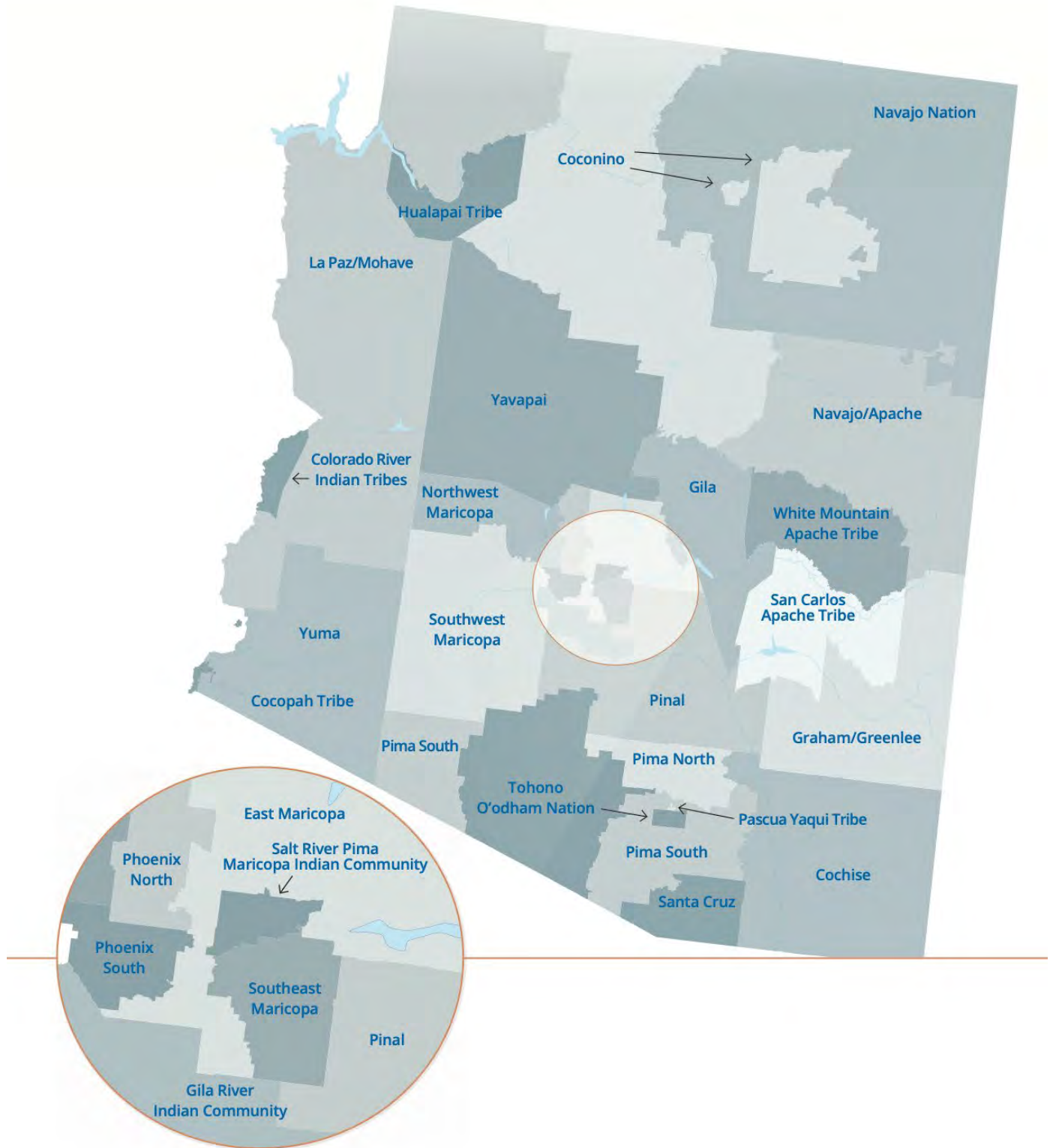
### Mission

First Things First is an essential leader and partner in creating a family-centered, equitable, high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, well-being, health and education of all Arizona's children, birth to age 5.





# First Things First Regions



My Region \_\_\_\_\_

To find your First Things First region, visit [FirstThingsFirst.org](https://www.FirstThingsFirst.org) and select “find your region.”



# What Does a Quality Early Care and Education Program Look Like?

A high-quality child care or preschool setting has teachers and caregivers with expertise in working with young children, includes a learning environment that nurtures children's healthy development and prepares children for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Quality child care and preschool settings build on basic health and safety practices to include:

- Health and safety practices that support children's healthy development
- Skilled teachers who know how to turn everyday experiences into learning moments
- Environments that spark children's curiosity with a variety of learning activities, books and hands-on materials
- Opportunities for active play and exploration throughout the day
- Interactions and conversations that build language, thinking and social skills

## QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

This video describes a high-quality early learning setting and how this supports healthy brain development.



# Star Rating Scale



## STAR RATINGS

| RISING STAR   | PROGRESSING STAR                               | QUALITY   | QUALITY PLUS   | HIGHEST QUALITY  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
|   |  |   |  |  |
| Commitment to quality improvement   | Approaching quality standards                  | Meets quality standards   | Exceeds quality standards  | Far exceeds quality standards  |
| <b>ERS Average Program Score</b><br>1.0 – 1.99  | <b>ERS Average Program Score</b><br>2.0 – 2.99 | <b>ERS Average Program Score</b><br>3.0 – 3.99<br><i>No classroom score below 2.5</i>   | <b>ERS Average Program Score</b><br>4.0 – 4.99<br><i>No classroom score below 3.0</i>  | <b>ERS Average Program Score</b><br>5.0 and above<br><i>No classroom score below 4.0</i>                                     |
| <b>CLASS Average Program Score</b><br>N/A   | <b>CLASS Average Program Score</b><br>N/A      | <b>CLASS Average Program Score</b><br>ES CO IS<br>4.5 4.5 2.0<br><i>No classroom score below</i><br>ES CO IS<br>4.25 4.25 2.0 | <b>CLASS Average Program Score</b><br>ES CO IS<br>5.0 5.0 2.5<br><i>No classroom score below</i><br>ES CO IS<br>4.75 4.75 2.25 | <b>CLASS Average Program Score</b><br>ES CO IS<br>6.0 6.0 3.0<br><i>No classroom score below</i><br>ES CO IS<br>5.0 5.0 2.75 |
| <b>ERS = Environment Rating Scales</b><br>ECERS = Early Childhood Environment<br>ITERS = Infant/Toddler Environment<br>FCCERS = Family Child Care Environment   |  |   |  |  |
| <b>CLASS = Classroom Assessment Scoring System</b><br>ES = Emotional Support (Pre-K), Emotional and Behavioral Support (Toddler), Responsive Caregiving (Infant)<br>CO = Classroom Organization (Pre-K)<br>IS = Instructional Support (Pre-K), Engaged Support for Learning (Toddler) |  |   |  |  |
| ERS is not administered for Head Start/Early Head Start or nationally accredited programs. If the program does not meet the CLASS threshold scores for a 3-star rating, the program receives a 2-star rating.   |  |   |  |  |

Last updated on April 26, 2023





# SECTION ONE

## Quality First Coordination

A Quality First coordinator is a central support for your program. Their role is to assist you in your participation—right from the beginning of your journey. They will be your first contact in Quality First, helping to orient you and help you understand your role in Rating Only. They will complete the rating only agreement process with you, requesting any required forms or documents and assisting you with any questions along the way. They will help identify other programs or professionals who may support your quality efforts. They will also act as an ongoing resource for your program. With their support, you will be able to access additional services, tools or opportunities that could benefit the children and families you serve.

Coordinators have knowledge and experience in early childhood education, and knowledge of Arizona child care regulations, state standards, and community resources. They make it a priority to learn about your program, its needs and priorities.

### **The coordinator will focus on the following:**

- Orientation and onboarding to Quality First
- Agreement paperwork at the beginning of participation
- Extranet (Quality First data system), ongoing paperwork and general assistance throughout participation
- Help finding other resources for your program, staff, children and families
- Ongoing communication to determine how your program is doing and what needs you may have

## Administration of Coordination

Southwest Human Development leads the coaching and coordination administration. If you have questions or feedback about coordination, please contact [QFCoaching@SWHD.org](mailto:QFCoaching@SWHD.org).

# SECTION TWO

## Specialized Assistance

### Types of Specialized Assistance

#### Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (Smart Support)

Funded by First Things First (FTF) regional partnership councils in the following FTF regions: Cochise, Coconino, East Maricopa, Graham/Greenlee, La Paz/Mohave, Navajo Nation, Northwest Maricopa, Phoenix North, Phoenix South, Pima South, Pinal, San Carlos Apache, Southeast Maricopa, Southwest Maricopa, Yavapai and Yuma.

Smart Support is an evidence-based strategy proven to support the social and emotional development of all children in care and help providers appropriately respond to children with behavioral challenges. In regions that offer this support, consultants are available to work directly with teachers to develop strategies to work most effectively with children in early learning settings.

Contact Smart Support at **1.866.330.5520**

*An example of services that might be provided through Smart Support would be training for teachers on helping children to label emotions and creating helpful activities that assist children in learning how to deal with strong feelings.*

#### Inclusion of Children with Special Needs (Inclusion Program)

Funded by First Things First (FTF) regional partnership councils in the following FTF regions: Cochise, Northwest Maricopa, Phoenix North, Phoenix South and Yuma.

Inclusion coaching addresses the need for quality early care and education for young children with special needs ages birth to 5. Specific focus is on improving skills of child care staff and providing training and assistance to support quality inclusive settings. Contact the Inclusion Program via the contact information below:

#### FTF MARICOPA COUNTY REGIONS

[Inclusion@SWHD.org](mailto:Inclusion@SWHD.org)

#### FTF COCHISE REGION

928.248.5112 or email [JSaletan@Blake.EasterSeals.com](mailto:JSaletan@Blake.EasterSeals.com)

#### FTF YUMA REGION

928.248.5112 or email [JSaletan@Blake.EasterSeals.com](mailto:JSaletan@Blake.EasterSeals.com)

*An example of how this specialized assistance could be provided would be to support children who may have difficulty communicating be successful in the classroom by using visual supports or other strategies. The Inclusion Program can also train staff on developmental screenings and provide professional development on a variety of topics related to children who have identified or suspected developmental delays.*

## Other Supports for Arizona's Early Childhood Community

For early care and education programs, having the right resources at your fingertips can make all the difference. That's why we're here—to connect you with additional tools that strengthen your work with children and families and help your program run smoothly. A free digital guide is available to support Arizona's early childhood education providers. The Early Childhood Resource Guide includes tools and information to strengthen your program, support your staff, and engage families.

[View the Early Childhood Resource Guide](#)

Read on to explore additional resources that are available to providers across Arizona.

### Early Childhood Business Solutions

*Free and available statewide to licensed or certified child care programs.*

Early Childhood Business Solutions (ECBS) partners with early care and education providers to help improve their business management practices and ensure financial success and stability. Services include business coaching, training, roundtable discussions, a support line and more.

Contact ECBS at **602.265.4768**

*An example of services that might be provided through Early Childhood Business Solutions would be individualized coaching to help a program director identify the true cost of care and use child care management software to manage budgeting and track operational information.*

### Empower

The Empower program, provided by the Arizona Department of Health Services, provides standards and guidance toward effective health practices in the early care and setting. Empower standards support program health and wellness including nutrition, breastfeeding, physical activity, screen time, tobacco, oral health, sun safety, social and emotional development and staff training.

Learn more at <https://www.azdhs.gov/empower>.

### GoNAPSACC

For even more resources to help children build healthy habits, join GoNAPSACC. Open to all Arizona childcare providers, this program features seven easy-to-use modules to address topics essential to children's health. Each module uses tailored tips and best practices to guide you toward healthy changes.

To join, contact Arizona's GO NAPSACC representative, Adri Koslan at [Adriana.Koslan@azdhs.gov](mailto:Adriana.Koslan@azdhs.gov) for a registration code. After receiving your code, visit the Join Us page to complete your registration and start using the toolkit.

Learn more at <https://gonapsacc.org/>.

# Supporting all Children: Assistance to help you prevent expulsions

Young children grow and thrive within stable relationships with caring adults. Maintaining stability in children's early learning experiences supports their development and their long-term success in kindergarten and beyond. Unfortunately, preschoolers are three times more likely to be expelled than students in kindergarten through grade 12.<sup>1</sup> This is often due to challenging behaviors that educators feel unequipped to handle. Nationwide, early childhood programs are developing policies to reduce and eliminate expulsion.

As a Quality First Rating Only participant, your program has access to resources to help you support all children's success and reduce or eliminate expulsion from your program. Consultation, training and technical assistance helps you and your staff feel more equipped to respond to challenging behaviors in support of all children's success. For support in preventing expulsions in your program, access the resources below:

## Call a Specialist

- **Birth to Five Helpline**

*Available statewide to families, caregivers and professionals*

Contact the helpline:

- By phone at 877-705-KIDS (5437)
- By completing a request at [www.swhd.org/programs/health-and-development/birth-to-five-helpline/](http://www.swhd.org/programs/health-and-development/birth-to-five-helpline/)
- Via the Birth to Five Helpline app available in the App Store or Google Play

- **Expulsion Prevention Resource Consultants**

*Available statewide to all DES certified child care centers and family child care homes*

Reach out for support and resources to promote early intervention to prevent suspensions and expulsions. Contact a resource consultant:

- By completing an Expulsion Support Request form at [www.azccrr.com](http://www.azccrr.com)

## Participate in Training and Technical Assistance

- **AZ Steps Expulsion Prevention Training and Technical Assistance**

*Available statewide to all DES certified child care centers and family child care homes*

Southwest Human Development provides caregivers with skills and strategies they need to respond effectively to challenging behaviors. The training series offers opportunities to learn how understanding child development, attachment, trauma reaction and support of children's developing self-regulation skills can help reduce and prevent expulsion of children from ages birth to 12 years.

- Register online for training through the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry at [azregistry.org](http://azregistry.org). After logging into your account, select "Find Training Event" and select "Name/Description" and type "Expulsion Prevention" in the search bar. Click save and select course.
- Technical assistance is available to provide practical tips and strategies to use in your caregiving environment. For more information regarding technical assistance, please contact 602.633.8730 or [AZSTEPS@swhd.org](mailto:AZSTEPS@swhd.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Gilliam, W.S. 2005. Prekindergarteners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems. New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center. Available from [http://www.ziglercenter.yale.edu/publications/National%20Prek%20Study\\_expulsion\\_tcm350-34774\\_tcm350-284-32.pdf](http://www.ziglercenter.yale.edu/publications/National%20Prek%20Study_expulsion_tcm350-34774_tcm350-284-32.pdf).



## Strategies to Benefit from Specialized Assistance

Here are some ideas to help you make the most of the specialized assistance available to you as a Quality First participant:

**Find Programs** that provide specialized assistance services in your area. Visit [FirstThingsFirst.org](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org) and scroll to the “Find FTF Programs” search tool. You will be able to see results for services available for you, your program and the young children & families in your area.

**Talk** with your Quality First coordinator to discuss your specific needs and areas of focus. Consider your goals and how specialized assistance can help you meet your goals.

**Include** the staff you work with when discussing your program’s needs and areas of focus. What would help them provide the best care to the children they serve? What types of specialized assistance would support their teaching?

**Request** program supports that will assist you in your efforts. Coordinators and other technical assistance professionals are knowledgeable experts in their fields; however, you are the expert on your program. Let your coordinator know if there are areas where you would like assistance.

## SECTION THREE

# Quality First Assessment

The Quality First assessment is a valuable tool that supports your program's continuous improvement. Its purpose is to provide objective, reliable insights into the daily experiences of the children in your care. You will gain a clear picture of your program—what is great about it and the opportunities to do even better.

**Quality First Assessment Policy:** Quality First assessments are a required part of participation. Assessment is designed based on high-quality standards using valid and reliable tools and conducted by highly trained objective observers.

- All Quality First Rating Only participants will receive an initial rating. This initial rating is not public unless the participant achieves a quality level (3, 4 or 5) rating.
- Following the initial assessment, all participants will receive regular assessments every two years to establish a public star rating, as funding is available.

Failure to participate in the assessment process may result in disenrollment.

## The Role of the Quality First Assessor

Quality First assessors are experienced professionals in the field of early childhood and receive extensive training on the assessment tools to ensure they are measuring program practices accurately.

The assessment reports you receive provide important information for you to build upon your strengths and identify where you can do even better.

An assessor will visit your program to complete an assessment at the very beginning of your participation. This assessment provides a baseline of information that is the foundation for you to build upon. During the observation, the assessor will focus on keeping a professional stance at all times. You will see them moving around the learning environment, viewing materials and writing notes in order to gather as much information as possible, according to the tool being used. While the assessor is in your program, they will not start or extend an interaction with a child. At the same time, they will never ignore a child's question, curiosity or request for attention.

Quality First assessors are dedicated to confidentiality. They will always show respect in a professional manner.

Although the assessor will be collecting information during the visit, no feedback will be provided at that time. The written assessment results will be available in the extranet once reports have been completed and approved.

# Quality First Assessment Activities

The Quality First process begins with your initial assessment, which offers objective information to you. The results of the assessment will determine your initial star rating. This initial rating is not public unless the participant achieves a quality level (3, 4 or 5) rating. If a quality level rating is achieved, the rating will be public and shared with DES for the purpose of qualifying for DES tiered reimbursement rates. Renewal ratings occur every two years, as funding is available, and are always public.

**Before all assessment cycles, you will receive a phone call** - It is your responsibility to respond to the assessor within 72 hours of a phone call if they are not successful in connecting with you.

- Initial assessments are scheduled in advance for a mutually agreed-upon date and timeframe.
- For rating renewal assessments, the assessor will call two weeks before your cycle end date. You will be provided a timeframe (typically around three weeks) in which the assessment will be conducted. The assessor can come any day within these three weeks, other than specified blackout dates.

**The following is a list of important things to share with the assessor during the phone call:**

**Languages Spoken in Your Program** - Assessors speak a variety of languages and will be matched with the language most spoken in your program.

## **Children or Staff with Special Needs**

- Prior to assessing a classroom, the assessor will ask you if there are any enrolled children with an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan), IEP (Individualized Education Plan), documented gifted needs and/or medically diagnosed conditions (i.e., asthma, diabetes, severe allergies) to determine if accommodations that are observed need to be taken into account. As this information is confidential, assessors will not need to view the individual children's plans.
- Accommodations for staff with special needs can be made by the assessor, as long as they do not affect the assessor's ability to use the tool as intended.

**Potential Triggers to Children Who Have Experienced Trauma**- In some cases, children who have had traumatic experiences may become triggered by an unexpected visitor in their classroom. Certain parts of the assessor's appearance can be changed to reduce the potential for triggering a trauma response. This could include removing the name tag, removing the clipboard or wearing more casual clothing.

**Programmatic Philosophies or Practices such as Montessori, Parent Cooperatives, Student Teaching or Primary Caregiving**- Programmatic philosophies or practices that you would like the assessment team to be aware of must be identified in your parent/family handbook or in written policies/procedures that you share with families. The assessor may request to view this documentation.

**Recent Staffing Changes**- This information guides the assessor in determining whether or not a classroom is eligible for assessment. (For more information, see the [Quality First Staffing Guide](#).)

**Blackout Dates** - You will have an opportunity to inform the assessor of dates that would hinder an assessment visit. For instance, days your program is closed, planned field trips, special events such as picture day, scheduled emergency drills, and days when you will typically have low attendance or staff absences may all interfere with a proper assessment.

**Extranet Data** - During the call, the assessor will review your information from the extranet to determine how many classrooms/groups of children to assess and which tools to use during the assessment based on the age groups you serve.

**Accreditation** – Active accreditation or affiliation as a Head Start/Early Head Start program impacts the assessment tools used. More information and details are included below.

## Quality First Assessment Tools

A variety of assessment tools are used to collect information about the average experience of the children in your program.

**Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Assessment Policy:** ERS Assessments will be conducted to assess early care and education environments. The ERS assessment will be conducted on-site for approximately three hours by a qualified assessor.

Head Start/Early Head Start and nationally accredited programs undergo additional assessment as part of the accreditation/monitoring process. Because these processes include review of the early care and education environment, participants that are Head Start/Early Head Start or nationally accredited will not have an ERS assessment conducted (a list of national accrediting organizations is included in the Resources section at the end of this guide).

Research shows that to accurately measure a program's quality, it is important to look at the environment and interactions. Assessors will select the appropriate assessment tool(s) to be used in your program's assessment based on Quality First policies and procedures.

### ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALES

**(ERS; Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford and Debby Cryer) - measuring elements of a quality environment.**

Establishing high-quality learning environments has been shown to positively support the development of young children and their early education. The ERS are observational tools used to assess the quality of the environment in early care settings. Observations using the ERS provide a brief snapshot of the learning environment, as well as the children's experiences in that setting. There are three versions of the ERS used by Quality First. Each is designed to assess a specific age group and early care setting.

- **Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (children from 3 to 5 years of age) (ECERS)**  
This scale is designed to assess the quality of preschool environments located in center-based child care settings.
- **Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (children from birth to 36 months of age) (ITERS)**  
This scale is designed to assess the quality of care environments serving infants and toddlers in center-based child care settings.
- **Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (children from birth to 12\* years of age) (FCCERS)**  
This scale is designed to assess the quality of the environment in family child care settings with mixed-age groups.  
\* While Quality First participation is limited to programs serving children from birth to age five, if children older than five are present during the observation they will be included in the assessment data collection, per tool guidelines.

More information can be found at <http://ersinstitute.com>.



## CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM

(CLASS; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2005) - measuring quality interactions

**Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Policy:** CLASS assessments will be conducted to assess adult-child interactions. Programs must achieve a level of 3.0 or higher on the ERS assessment with no individual classroom score below 2.5 to have a CLASS assessment conducted (Head Start and nationally accredited programs will begin with a CLASS assessment). A CLASS assessment will be conducted by a trained assessor who will observe the classroom in four 20-minute observation cycles with designated scoring time in between. Programs that operate four hours or less will have modified observation cycles. In these programs, the assessor will complete four 15-minute observation cycles with designated scoring time in between.

Research shows that positive adult-child interactions in early care and education settings are a vital part of supporting children's learning and development. The CLASS is a system for observing and assessing the quality of interactions between teachers and students in infant, toddler and preschool classrooms. The CLASS measures social-emotional and instructional interactions in center and home-based programs. The CLASS looks at interactions that contribute to children's social skills and academic achievement. There are three versions of the CLASS used by Quality First. Each is designed to assess a specific age group.

- **Pre-K CLASS (children from 3 to 5 years of age)**  
This scale is designed to assess the quality of interactions within preschool environments.
- **Toddler CLASS (children from 15 to 36 months of age)**  
This scale is designed to assess the quality of interactions within toddler environments.
- **Infant CLASS (children from birth to 18 months of age)**  
This scale is designed to assess the quality of interactions within infant environments.

The most appropriate assessment tool for each age range will be determined using classroom rosters of enrolled children. The CLASS assessment will not be conducted during the same visit as the ERS assessment. You will be contacted if a CLASS assessment is required. More information can be found at <https://www.teachstone.com/class/>.

# The Day of an ERS Assessment

When the assessor arrives, they will need to gather some initial information regarding the total number of children enrolled, the number of children in attendance that day, the number of children with special needs, children with allergies or dietary restrictions, the birthdates of the youngest and oldest child enrolled in the classroom selected, the outdoor space used by children and the staff assigned to each classroom/child care group.

At least one third of the classrooms in each age group (infants/toddlers and preschoolers) will be assessed. The assessor will use the guidelines below to determine the number of classrooms/care groups for each age group to be assessed using the ages of the children on the classroom rosters.

- 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom assessment
- 4-6 classrooms = 2 classroom assessments
- 7-9 classrooms = 3 classroom assessments
- 10-12 classrooms = 4 classroom assessments
- 13+ classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

## For family child care homes

All areas of the home used by the children present on the day of the observation will be part of the assessment.

## For center-based programs

If more than one classroom is being assessed, the assessor will ask you to randomly draw which classroom will be assessed that day.

Each assessor will only assess one classroom per day.

- Adjustments to this practice may be needed due to program size, location, or other factors.

To maintain the integrity of the assessment, participants cannot choose which classrooms will be assessed.

## For all program types

The assessor will remain at your program for at least three hours when conducting the ERS assessment. They may stay longer if they need to gather information not collected during the first three hours.

The assessor will introduce themselves to staff upon arrival, but they are unable to answer questions or provide information during the assessment.

If the administrator has questions about the assessment process or activities on the day of the assessment, please ask them before or after the observation is conducted.

Assessors will move around the areas used for child care, collect data on materials, watch interactions and routines and write notes.

Once the observation is complete, the assessor will leave and begin scoring and report writing using the notes collected at your program.

The assessor is not permitted to share any results or information about the assessment with the program, nor are they allowed to provide technical assistance.

If all ERS score requirements identified in the Star Rating Scale are met, you will proceed with CLASS assessments. If no CLASS observations will be completed, you will receive notice via email when your assessment reports and star rating are complete.

# The Day of a CLASS Assessment

## When the assessor arrives

- Head Start/Early Head Start and nationally accredited programs begin their assessment process with CLASS.
- If more than one classroom is being assessed, the assessor will conduct a random draw to determine which classroom(s) will be assessed that day.

## For center-based programs

The assessor will determine the appropriate CLASS tool for each observation using the ages of the children on the classroom roster (Infant CLASS- birth to 18 months, Toddler CLASS- 15 to 36 months, Pre-K CLASS- three to five years). At least one third of the classrooms in each age group will be assessed. The assessor will use the guidelines below to determine the number of classrooms/care groups for each age group to be assessed.

- 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom assessment
- 4-6 classrooms = 2 classroom assessments
- 7-9 classrooms = 3 classroom assessments
- 10-12 classrooms = 4 classroom assessments
- 13+ classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

## For family child care homes

The assessor will look at the ages of the children birth to five to determine which CLASS tool is appropriate in the setting using the following guidelines:

- If the expected attendance at the family child care home on the day of the assessment is made up of children between the ages of 3 to 5, the Pre-K CLASS will be conducted.
- If the expected attendance at the family child care home is made up of children between the ages of 15 to 36 months, the Toddler CLASS will be conducted.
- If the expected attendance at the family child care home is made up of children between the ages of birth to 18 months, the Infant CLASS will be conducted.
- If the expected attendance on the day of the assessment includes multiple age ranges, the Toddler CLASS will be conducted.

## For all program types

Each assessor will only assess one classroom per day.

To maintain the integrity of the assessment, participants cannot choose which classrooms will be assessed.

The assessor will remain at your program for approximately two to three hours, completing four CLASS cycles.

One cycle includes a 20-minute observation period immediately followed by a 10-minute coding period.

The assessor will conduct an additional cycle if any of the four cycles are less than 20 minutes in length, making the observation incomplete.

At the end of the CLASS assessment, the assessor will ask the staff in the classroom if there are any children with an IEP/IFSP present in the classroom just assessed.

Programs that operate four hours or less will have modified observation cycles.

- In these programs, the assessor will complete four back-to-back 15-minute observation cycles with designated scoring time in between.

Once the observation is complete, the assessor will leave and begin report writing using the notes collected at your program.

The assessor is not permitted to share any results or information about the assessment with the program, nor are they allowed to provide technical assistance.

You will receive notice via email when your assessment reports and star rating are complete. Your assessment reports and star rating will be shared with you via the extranet.



**The following are things that are important to know about the assessment process:**

**Prepare Your Staff:** If you employ staff, it is important to prepare them for the assessment. It is important to inform them that an assessment will occur as part of your participation, and remind them that the assessment will help them see strengths and areas of improvement.

**Classroom/Care Groups:** The classrooms/groups identified on the first day of assessment will be used throughout the assessment process.

- Quality First considers a unique roster of children assigned to a specific lead teacher or classroom space as an individual classroom/group.
  - For example, a program may have a single lead teacher with an a.m. class roster and a p.m. class roster. Each of these roster groups is considered an individual classroom/group.
- Assessors will verify this information over the phone and also in person on the first day of assessment at your program.
  - For programs in their initial assessment, the coordinator will assist you with entering this in the extranet.
  - For all assessments that follow, you are responsible for ensuring staff names are included in your program's extranet profile.

A **Staff Verification Form** is required to ensure that the staff observed are the typical staff assigned to the classroom and identified in the extranet. This form may be used to verify staffing numbers for funding for staff recognition. This form will be signed by both the assessor and the site contact.

**Random Draw** - If your program has more than one classroom or grouping of children, the assessor will conduct a random draw with your assistance to determine which classroom/group will be assessed that day. The random draw will be witnessed by a member of your staff to ensure accuracy. The name and signature of everyone participating in the random draw will be collected.

- Random Draw Selection for Teachers in Multiple Groupings- To ensure a fair representation of practices program-wide, assessors will remove a teacher and their additional groupings from the random draw after the teacher is randomly selected once.
  - For example: Teacher Susie teaches two groups of children, one on MWF and one on T TH. Her MWF group is selected as part of the random draw. The T TH group would then be removed from random draw so she does not get selected more than once for assessments using the same tool.
- The total number of classrooms and age ranges would still be used to determine 1/3 of the open classrooms and the other teachers at that site would remain eligible for those additional observations.

**Eligibility for Assessment in 5-Year-Old Classrooms** - In center-based programs, if a majority of children in a classroom (51 percent) were born **on or after** September 1, 2020, the classroom **is** included in the random draw for assessment with one exception;

- Random draws that take place between June 1, 2025 and the start of the 2025-2026 school year **will not** include classrooms where a majority of the children (51%) have turned 5 years old, since those children will be starting kindergarten in a few weeks.

**Assessor Objectivity** - Whenever possible, different assessors will conduct the observations for each of the assessment tools. This is to ensure objectivity for each observation.

**Multiple Assessors** - More than one assessor may attend during an observation visit for the purpose of training, reliability testing and/or to accommodate the size of your program. You will be notified in advance if this applies to your program.

**Summer Closures** - Quality First assessment is automatically deferred until 20 classroom days after the start of the following school year for:

- Participants operating\* on a nine-month, school-year calendar who become due for assessment on or after April 30 but before their summer closure begins, or
- Participants who become due for assessment during their scheduled summer closure.

\*The assessment team uses the information from your program's extranet profile summary to determine your dates of operation.

**Moving/Relocation During Assessment** - If your program moves to a new location in the middle of the assessment process, the assessment team will re-complete all of the assessments at the new location. Rescheduling of the assessments will be done on a case by case basis. If a program moves after the rating is final, the rating will apply until the next assessment cycle.

## Assessment Reports

An assessment report will be available online through the Quality First extranet Assessment Summary tab and can be printed. Each classroom/care group observed will receive an individual report with scores related to each tool's indicators. You will find areas designated as strengths in your program as well as areas of opportunity for growth. The coordinator can help you review the information contained in these reports. Make sure to celebrate the areas that you did well and use the information provided in the reports to inform your improvement planning.

Your program's assessment reports will remain confidential and are only available for review by you and the Quality First team. If you have a question about your report or if you find any information that seems inconsistent based on your program specifics, you may submit an [Assessment Report Clarification Request Form](#). A copy of this form is available in the extranet on the Quality First Dashboard, in the Forms section under Quality First Resources. The form can also be found on the Quality First Website's Program Updates Page by searching "participant forms."

**Assessment Report Clarification Policy:** To clarify content contained in an assessment report, assessment clarification is offered. The Assessment Report Clarification Request must be submitted within 40 days of the assessment results being approved. A response will be provided within 14 days as possible. All Assessment Report Clarification Requests must be sent via Word document to allow for timely response. PDF or scanned documents may require extra time to process. If the clarification warrants a change in scores, this will be noted in the extranet and the assessment report will be updated. Video or audio recordings or photographs will not be considered. The assessment process is conducted using live, on-site observations to capture the entire content of the learning environment and interactions.

## Star Rating

Your star rating will be available for viewing on the extranet's QF Rating Information- Provider tab when you receive the email notification that your star rating is finalized and the assessment reports are available for viewing.

- Your program will receive ongoing assessments on a regular basis to update your star rating, as funding is available. Following your initial rating, your program will be contacted for assessment every 24 to 26 months.
- You will find your current assessment cycle end date on your program's extranet profile page.

**Public Rating Policy:** All participants will receive an initial rating. This initial rating is not public unless the participant achieves a quality level (3, 4 or 5) rating or submits the Request for Public Rating Form. If a quality level rating is achieved, the rating will be publicly posted and shared with DES for the purpose of qualifying for DES tiered reimbursement rates.

Following the initial assessment, all participants will receive subsequent regular assessments to establish a public star rating. Regardless of star rating level, these subsequent ratings will be publicly posted and shared with DES for the purpose of qualifying for tiered reimbursement rates.





## ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT POLICIES

**Early Assessment Policy:** Participants may request to have an assessment conducted prior to the regular cycle. The request will be reviewed to determine if this option is available, and you will be notified by the assessment team whether or not your request is approved. A response will be provided within five business days as possible. An early assessment may not be conducted if the assessment cycle is less than 18 months, and participants may not be approved for early assessment two assessment cycles in a row.

**Assessment Deferment Policy:** Participants may request to have an assessment deferred due to unforeseen circumstances. A summer deferment request may be submitted when a program has major programming, administrative or staff changes during Summer operation. School-year-only programs do not need to submit a Request for Summer Deferment Form. All requests for assessment deferment must be submitted to the assessment program manager. Deferment requests will be reviewed to determine eligibility, and notification will be sent by email to the participant whether or not the request is approved. Deferment requests are not guaranteed and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Newly selected programs in the initial assessment cycle may not request deferment.

**Informal Assessment Policy:** Informal assessments are offered to provide feedback outside of the standard assessment cycle. Informal assessment is offered based on the schedule and availability of the assessment team and is not guaranteed. Following the observation, the Main Contact will receive an email notification once the report(s) is complete. The informal assessment report(s) will be available in the extranet's assessment summary tab. The formal Quality First assessment process cannot be delayed or deferred due to a delay in informal assessment. Requests for informal assessment may not be approved within 6 months of a site's cycle end date.

Copies of the [Request for Public Rating](#), [Request for Early Assessment](#), [Request for Assessment Deferment](#), [Summer Deferment Request](#), and [Informal Assessment Request](#) forms are available in the extranet on the Quality First Dashboard, in the Forms section under Quality First Resources. The form can also be found on the Quality First Website's Program Updates Page by searching "participant forms."

# Strategies to Help Prepare for a Successful Assessment

In order to help prepare for a successful Quality First Rating Only assessment, here are some ideas:

**Check out** the [Preparing for Assessment](#) checklist. It provides simple tips and resources to help you feel prepared and confident throughout the process.

**Review** the assessment tools. View online trainings to become oriented to the tools. Visit <https://www.azregistry.org/>, select “find training event” and search “Overview of the Environment Rating Scales” or “Overview of Classroom Assessment Scoring System”.

**Reflect** on daily practices. Teachers and caregivers can benefit from reflecting on their practices through the lenses of the assessment tools. Developed by Quality First assessors, the [Self-Reflection Guides](#) help you dive into the CLASS® and ERS guidelines.

**Share** information about the assessment tools, potentially through staff meetings before the observation. Providing a copy of the assessment tool to your teachers helps build an understanding of what will be looked at during the assessment process.

**Update** your program information to make sure it’s current in the extranet and registry and that all class rosters are accurate. Gathering all the birthdates of the children in each child care group is helpful in planning ahead. Use the [Extranet Update Checklist](#) to help you.

**Talk with staff** about what to expect—how the assessor will be in the classroom, how long they will be there, what they will be observing and how to maintain a natural environment for the children.

**Talk to children** about the role of the assessor to help them feel comfortable with the assessor’s presence. You have the option of introducing the assessor to the children when they are ready to observe.

**Prepare** your families in advance by letting them know an assessor will be visiting your program. This supports their understanding of your commitment to improvement.

**Consider** the unique needs of your program in planning for your assessment. The assessor will ask about your program's specifics, such as language of instruction or a unique population served. Be sure to share this information with the assessor.

**Communicate** children's special needs. Although assessors will not need to look at the individual plans for children with special needs or special health care conditions, it is helpful to let them know so that they can focus on the environment in terms of the child's needs.

**Plan** your time so you are available in case the assessor needs additional information.

**Ask** the assessor if you are unsure about any part of the process before, during or after the assessment. Don't be afraid to speak up at any time. You can also ask your coordinator if you need assistance.

## SECTION FOUR

# Quality First Professional Development

As an early childhood educator, you care about learning and growing in your work. As a Quality First Rating Only participant, you have access to many professional development opportunities. These trainings help you build new skills based on the latest research, so you can better support your program, your staff, and the children in your care.

## Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network

The Arizona Early Childhood Professional Development Network (Network) serves as a resource to build Arizona's early education workforce, promote the early childhood professional development system and share additional information that connects early childhood practitioners and others interested in the field with resources to advance their careers.

### The Network includes the following components:

The Network [website](#) that includes information about professional development and training opportunities, career and higher education resources, and other information to assist early childhood professionals in keeping their skills and knowledge up to date.

The [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry \(Registry\)](#): A web-based system that enables early childhood professionals and those interested in an early education career to find and register for professional development opportunities, as well as keep a record of their experience, education, professional development and credentials in a central location.

[First Things First college scholarships](#) for the early childhood workforce working directly with or on behalf of young children birth to age 5 to provide tuition, books and college/course fees at colleges and universities and/or the fees associated with obtaining a child development associate credential.

The [Arizona Career Lattice](#): A tool that early childhood professionals can use for individualized professional assessment, setting professional development goals and documenting progress in their career development. The Arizona Career Lattice will be replaced with the [Educator Designation](#) in the fall of 2025.

The [Arizona Workforce Knowledge and Competencies \(WFKC\)](#): A uniform set of expectations that identify the basic knowledge, skills and abilities needed for early childhood professionals including child care and preschool staff, early intervention providers and mental health, physical health and social services/child welfare professionals. The WFKC support implementation of quality services for young children and their families.

A [Job Bank](#) for early childhood jobs submitted from employers using the [AZToolkit](#).

**Registry Policy:** Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry membership is required of all staff working with children in Quality First Rating Only participating programs.

- The following staff are required to have a registry account: family child care providers and family child care staff that work with young children, center directors, assistant directors, teachers and assistant teachers.
- Program directors are required to request administrative access to view and manage their early education program and staffing information. Step-by-step instructions for requesting administrative access, submitting education documentation and more are outlined on the website at <https://azearlychildhood.org/about/using-the-registry/>.



# Strategies for Successfully Using Professional Development

To make the most of professional development, here are some suggestions:

**Connect** with a community outreach coordinator that can help you and your staff use the [Network and Registry](#).

**Access** professional development opportunities through the Registry. It is never too late to learn new things!

**Provide opportunities** for staff members to share with colleagues what they learned after attending professional development events or completing college coursework. This will create common learning opportunities for all and skill growth for the person sharing the information.

**Create** an environment that encourages and supports staff in putting new knowledge into practice. Ask staff what materials they may need, what barriers there may be and what other information they may need before putting new practices into place.

**Consider** the vision, philosophy and values of your program when making professional development plans. For instance, if “risk-taking” for children is a part of your program philosophy, send your staff to training on how to create safe play spaces that support these behaviors.

**Identify** a mentor or on-site coach role in your program for a staff member who has specialized knowledge or skills so that others can receive ongoing guidance from within your own team.

**Review** your program's Registry information regularly to ensure your program and staff information is up to date. The reports provide information about your staff's professional development and education and are accepted by ADHS licensing and DES child care certification specialists. Review reports regularly to identify strengths and gaps in core knowledge areas (CKAs) in each staff's records. This helps you create professional development plans to meet these needs.

**Ensure** your program's entire classroom and administrative staff become members of the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. Make enrollment part of your new hire onboarding process, and show new staff how to use the registry to access professional development. They will have access to professional development, possible college scholarship opportunities and a place to document their education and professional development.

# SECTION FIVE

## Administrative Practices

This section explains the policies regarding Quality First Rating Only. It is divided into three parts, based on the type of policy.

- **Basic Program Policies-** These are the policies you will use most often. They include policies about who can join, how to enroll, how funding works, and more.
- **Policies to Help Prevent and Respond to Challenges-** This section includes policies to help prevent and address challenges. They include policies on ethical conduct, confidentiality and reporting.
- **Policies to Address Concerns-** This section explains what to do if you have a question, concern, or disagreement. It includes steps for getting clarification, resolving issues, and filing an appeal if needed.

## Basic Program Policies

(Participation Eligibility, Enrollment, Funding and more)

### PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY

Early care and education providers that care for children ages five and under and are regulated by a monitoring agency are eligible for Quality First or Quality First Rating Only. Participants are required to remain in good standing with their regulatory body. Regulatory bodies in Arizona include the Arizona Department of Health Services Bureau of Child Care Licensing (ADHS BCCL), the Arizona Department of Economic Security Child Care Administration (DES CCA), and tribal or military oversight entities.

Early care and education providers must offer in-person care for children a minimum of 12 hours per week to be eligible.

### RATING ONLY ENROLLMENT

**Rating Only Enrollment Policy:** Enrollment begins after the Rating Only Agreement is signed by the participant, and all required documentation is submitted. Programs must be in good standing with their monitoring agency (ADHS, DES, military or tribal authority) in order to be enrolled.

## EXTRANET (DATA SOURCE)

The extranet is the data system used in Quality First Rating Only. It is where you can find all of your Quality First Rating Only information in one place and track your program data over time. This information is helpful in keeping up to date on staffing trends, enrollment changes and your movement in scores across time. The accuracy of this information is crucial.

**Extranet Update Policy:** To ensure accurate and up-to-date information, the Quality First extranet must be updated monthly by the participant. All Quality First participants are responsible for updating information in the areas of program information, child enrollment, identification of children with special needs, and staffing. Contact information in the extranet will be used for all communication.

You will receive an invitation to the extranet with your own personal login and password. If you have challenges logging in or navigating, help is available at [extranet@FirstThingsFirst.org](mailto:extranet@FirstThingsFirst.org). See section six of this guide for more detailed information on using the extranet.

## LICENSE CAPACITY VERIFICATION

**License Capacity Verification Policy:** First Things First uses the participant's license capacity data in the extranet as of April 1 each year to determine quality improvement benefits. All participants are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the licensing data in their extranet profile. This includes the total license capacity and capacity for children ages birth to 5. Information about license changes, such as a new license number and/or expiration date, must be submitted within two weeks of the previous license expiring. Information about changes in size and/or capacity must be submitted within two weeks of the change with the regulatory agency.

Please submit any license changes, and a copy of an updated license to the Quality First Coordinator.

## PROMOTING YOUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Quality is an extremely important factor for families choosing a child care setting. Participation in Quality First is a clear sign to families that you are committed to improving the quality of your program to best serve the children in your care.

**Promoting Your Commitment to Quality Policy:** To show partnership with Quality First and highlight the current star rating, participants are encouraged to display their current star rating certificate in a location easily visible to families. Participants will receive a new printable certificate via email each time the program's star rating is updated. Participants may request to have a certificate printed and mailed to their program by emailing the Quality First team at [QualityFirst@FirstThingsFirst.org](mailto:QualityFirst@FirstThingsFirst.org). The current star rating and certificate are valid until the program is reassessed and a rating is updated.

## STATE STANDARDS

The Arizona Department of Education offers tools to support you in your efforts to make high-quality opportunities available to all students. The following tools are available free of charge and are excellent sources of information. Trainings are available online. Please visit the Arizona Department of Education website, <https://www.azed.gov/ece/professional-learning>, for more information.

### Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines

Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines are part of a continuum of early learning guidelines that provide a framework for understanding and communicating a common set of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children, presented within a context of shared responsibility and accountability for helping young children meet these expectations. Specifically, these guidelines describe expectations about what infants and toddlers should know and do across multiple domains of development during specific age ranges, as well as what adults can do to support children's optimal learning and development. (Click on the link below to access these guidelines.)

[https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/media/Arizonas Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines\\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.pdf](https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/media/Arizonas%20Infant%20Toddler%20Developmental%20Guidelines%202nd%20Edition.pdf)

### Arizona Early Learning Standards

The Arizona Early Learning Standards have been developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality learning experiences for all children three to five years of age. The standards cover a broad range of skill development and provide a useful instructional foundation for children from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities. The standards are intended for use by all those who work with young children in any early care and education setting in urban, rural and tribal communities. (Click on the link below to access these standards.)

[https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2023/04/Arizona Early Learning Standards 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.pdf](https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2023/04/Arizona%20Early%20Learning%20Standards%204th%20Edition.pdf)

### Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Care and Education: Birth Through Kindergarten

The Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Care and Education: Birth through Kindergarten does not contain a list of requirements, but rather a set of recommended practices for programs to use as they strive for excellence in the care and education of young children throughout Arizona. This document is intended to provide guidance by delineating quality and providing a set of indicators that concretely describe what a program will look like when providing high quality early care and education for children birth through age six. (Click on the link below to access these guidelines.)

[https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/media/Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education 3rd Edition.pdf](https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/media/Program%20Guidelines%20for%20High%20Quality%20Early%20Education%203rd%20Edition.pdf)

## OWNERSHIP CHANGE

**Ownership Change Policy:** To ensure accurate information about participant location and ownership, ownership changes must be communicated to the Quality First coordinator. Participants are required to notify Quality First of changes in licensing and/or ownership immediately and a new rating only agreement must be signed by the new owner to ensure understanding of Quality First guidelines and responsibilities. E-Verify and Lawful Presence documentation will be re-gathered for the new owner.

All programs must remain in good standing and work with their regulatory agency to ensure that the proper paperwork has been filed and approved. Any change in information, including the issuance of a new license or modifications to program size or licensed capacity, must be communicated to the Quality First coordinator.



## RELOCATION/MOVING

If your program is moving to a new location, please contact your Quality First coordinator. They will work with First Things First to ensure your program's information is updated accurately in the extranet. This is important since your program's location information is posted on First Things First's website for families seeking care.

## EXTERNAL FUNDING

**External Funding Policy:** External partners may provide funding to support Quality First participation in addition to the programs supported by regional funding plans. Externally funded participants have a finite period of funding determined at the time of enrollment. External funders pay for Quality First Rating Only participation through a contract detailing the funding period, the terms of participation and the participating early childhood program(s). The external funder may choose to extend the funding period according to the terms of the contract. Early childhood programs that have participated through external funding are eligible to participate through regional funding after their external funding period is complete. Interested programs must reapply at [QualityFirstAZ.com](https://QualityFirstAZ.com).

## REGIONAL FUNDING

### **Regional Funding Policy:**

Arizona is divided into 28 [First Things First regions](#), each with its own FTF Regional Partnership Council. The regional councils fund programs and services for children birth to five based on the unique needs and assets of their communities. Quality First is one such program that councils fund. Some regions may choose to prioritize selecting programs in high-need areas. For more information about First Things First's regional governance and structure, [visit our website](#). First Things First reserves the right to alter or eliminate benefits at any time in whole or in part for any reason, including available funding, the availability of third-party service partners, the cost of services, the effectiveness of the benefits or changes in funding priorities.

For more information on First Things First (FTF) regional partnership councils and to find your local FTF region, visit: [FirstThingsFirst.org/regions/find-your-region](https://FirstThingsFirst.org/regions/find-your-region). Participants are encouraged to attend their local regional council meetings and become active in the process.

## TEMPORARY CLOSURE

**Temporary Closure Policy\*:** In the event of a short-term program closure or not serving children birth to age 5 on-site, temporary closure status may be requested to place a hold on Quality First assessment.

\*This policy applies to enrolled participants only. Newly selected participants must be open, serving children up to age 5 on-site and ready to participate in services at the time of selection.

Some examples of a temporary program closure include:

- Facility/property damage due to events such as natural disasters, fire, or flooding
- Health epidemic/personal medical conditions
- Lack of enrollment of children birth to age 5

In the event your program has an unexpected closure, you must complete a Request for Temporary Closure Form and submit it to your coordinator. Requests for temporary closure will be reviewed by First Things First. The Quality First coordinator will notify you whether or not the request is approved.

## PARTICIPANT DISENROLLMENT

**Participant Disenrollment Policy:** To end Quality First Rating Only participation and related services, a disenrollment process must be completed.

- Programs may voluntarily disenroll by submitting a Disenrollment Form to the coordinator.
- Involuntary disenrollment will be at the discretion of First Things First based on compliance with program requirements or in the event your program is funded by external sources and that funding ends.

# Policies to Help Prevent and Respond to Challenges

(Ethical Conduct, Confidentiality, Reporting and more)

## CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT (NAEYC)

The Code of Ethical Conduct provides guidance for the early childhood professional in working with families and young children. This code can help in making ethical decisions and in developing sound policy for your program. As a participant, you agree to use the principles and ideals of the Code of Ethical Conduct in your work with children, families, colleagues, and the community. The Code of Ethical Conduct can be found online at: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct>.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

**Confidentiality Policy:** All Quality First partners are expected to maintain confidentiality about their work with the assigned participant. Program records, staff information and individual ERS and CLASS scores are not made public, nor are they shared with individuals outside of First Things First, its contracted parties, and state agency partners, except as required by law and state regulatory agencies.

If you feel your confidentiality has not been maintained, please discuss this with the technical assistance professional or their supervisor to address the issue.

## CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING

**Critical Incident Report Policy:** For the purpose of documenting critical incidents, the Critical Incident Report is required for all Quality First technical assistance professionals. This policy applies to incidents that cause concern, including when a technical assistance professional witnesses an emergency, serious health or safety violations, or reasonably believes that abuse, neglect or child endangerment has occurred.

In the event of a critical incident, the technical assistance professional will notify the on-site administrator or supervisor that a report will be made. If applicable, the appropriate authorities will be contacted (i.e. Department of Child Safety, ADHS, DES, or tribal authority) and a Critical Incident Report will be completed. A copy of the completed Critical Incident Report will be provided to you upon request.

## MANDATED REPORTING

As an early childhood provider, you are a designated mandated reporter by law (as outlined in A.R.S. § 13-3620). Mandated reporters are individuals who are obligated by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. In general, any person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of a child is a mandated reporter. Under Quality First policy, Quality First technical assistance professionals, are required to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect as well. Mandated reporter laws are designed to catch child abuse in its early stages so that children are protected from physical or emotional trauma. If you reasonably believe a child in your program is a victim of abuse or neglect, you are required to report this information to the Department of Child Safety or your local law enforcement authority, though a tribal social services agency may be contacted instead for a child who is a tribal member and who lives on a reservation. If you have an incidence of child abuse in your program, it is your responsibility to contact local law enforcement and your regulatory agency to make a report.

## REGULATORY STATUS

**Regulatory Status Policy:** To ensure all participants are in good standing with their regulatory agency, regulatory status is reviewed monthly. All participants are required to maintain regulatory status and remain in good standing to ensure compliance with state regulatory standards (ADHS, DES and/or tribal or military authority). If a program experiences an event that causes it to be placed in enforcement action with ADHS or on probation or suspension with DES, the program will not be eligible for selection for Quality First's full system of supports. While the program is not in good standing, its star rating will not be publicly visible on the First Things First website.

After First Things First is notified by the regulatory agency that the program is returned to good standing, eligibility for selection for Quality First's full system of supports will be restored. Due to reporting timeframes between FTF and state regulatory agencies, there may be a delay in the time a program's regulatory status is updated by the regulatory agency and when First Things First is notified.

Your program's regulatory status will be monitored on a monthly basis. Your licensing compliance officer or certification specialists are available to support you in the process of creating a plan of improvement for your success.

## STAR RATING MASKING

**Star Rating Masking Policy:** In order to provide accurate information about quality levels of participating programs, First Things First may temporarily mask a participating program's rating from the extranet and [FirstThingsFirst.org](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org). Star ratings may be temporarily masked due to the following reasons:

- A participant is not in good standing with their regulatory agency
- A critical incident has occurred at the program and is under investigation by law enforcement or a state agency
- A participant is contesting their star rating through the Complaint or Appeals process
- After the rating was finalized and posted, a participant is granted a reassessment

In these instances, the star rating will only be masked until the situation has been rectified.

In limited situations, a star rating may be masked for other reasons as First Things First deems appropriate. During the masking, the rating will show as "Rating Unavailable" on the public website.

# Policies to Address Concerns

## (Clarification, Concern Resolution and Appeals)

### CLARIFICATION AND CONCERN RESOLUTION

The process for clarification, concern resolution, and appeal is outlined on pages 41–43. If you have questions about your assessment results and/or star rating, review your assessment reports with your coordinator, using the ERS tools, All About books and CLASS manuals to answer questions. If questions remain, you may initiate the clarification process by submitting an assessment report clarification request. The Assessment Report Clarification Request Form is available in the extranet on the Quality First Dashboard, in the Forms section under Quality First Resources.

If you have other concerns related to your Quality First experience, begin by speaking directly with the coordinator working with your program. If your concerns persist after speaking with the coordinator, contact a supervisor or program manager for support.

### INFORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

**Informal Dispute Resolution Policy:** Informal Dispute Resolution is available to resolve concerns related to a participant's experience. If informal methods of resolving the issue have not successfully addressed the participant's concerns, a Quality First Complaint Form may be submitted to the Quality First Team at First Things First.

The Complaint Form is available in the extranet on the Quality First Dashboard, in the Forms section under Quality First Resources. In the Complaint Form, you will provide a description of your concern and any attempts made to resolve the issue as well as recommendations of possible solutions.

A representative of the First Things First Quality First team will contact you to determine next steps to address your concern either over the phone or by scheduling a meeting with all involved parties, ideally within 14 calendar days of receiving the complaint. After the meeting, First Things First will make a decision and notify you within 14 days.

This informal dispute resolution process does not apply in the case of an enrollment termination.



## APPEALS

**Appeals Policy:** A participant may only submit a request for appeal within 60 days of being notified of a star rating or enrollment termination. The request for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Quality First Director at First Things First using the Request for Appeal Form. Once received, the Quality First team and the senior director for early learning, the chief program officer (CPO), and/or the chief executive officer (CEO) will review the request for appeal and provide a written response, which includes a scheduled meeting date, to you within 14 days of the receipt of the request. A copy of the Request for Appeal Form is available in the extranet on the Quality First Dashboard, in the Forms Section under Quality First Resources. The form can also be found on the Quality First Website's Program Updates Page by searching "participant forms."

The Appeals Process only applies when a participant appeals a star rating or an enrollment termination. A participant must go through the Assessment Report Clarification Process before appealing a star rating. If you would like to discuss any other specific challenge that you are having, the clarification and concern resolution process is the appropriate route.

While an appeal about a star rating is being considered, the participant's star rating will be masked from public view on the Quality First website.

If you are unsatisfied with the result of your request for appeal, you may request a formal hearing conducted by an administrative law judge with the Office of Administrative Hearings. First Things First will notify you in writing when the opportunity to request a formal hearing is available. After receipt of that notice, you will have 30 days to file a request for a hearing in writing. Refer to "Administrative Hearing" in the charts on pages 41 for more details.

## CLARIFICATION, CONCERN RESOLUTION AND APPEALS PROCESS

If you have questions or concerns about your participation in Quality First, options are available to you to have these concerns addressed. The processes for clarification, concern resolution, and appeal are outlined in the charts on the following pages.

If you have questions or concerns about

## Your Assessment Results or Star Rating

### Step 1:

#### **CLARIFICATION**

If you have questions about your assessment results and/or star rating, review your assessment reports with your coordinator, using the ERS tools, All About books, and CLASS manuals to answer questions.

If questions remain, you may submit a Quality First Assessment Report Clarification Request. The request must be submitted within 40 days of the assessment results being approved. A written response will be provided to you within 14 days of receipt of the request, as possible. (See Assessment Report Clarification Policy on page 23.)

If concerns persist after completing the assessment clarification process, you may proceed to Step 2, Request for Appeal.

**If you are unsatisfied with the results of Step 1, you may move to Step 2**

### Step 2:

#### **REQUEST FOR APPEAL**

The Request for Appeal Form must be submitted within 60 days of being notified of the star rating.

Once your request for appeal is received, a representative of the Quality First team will contact you to offer the option of an informal dispute resolution meeting or an appeal meeting, within 14 days of the receipt of the request.

If you participate in an informal dispute resolution meeting as a first step in response to your appeal, and you are unsatisfied with the result, you may proceed with an Appeal meeting. You will be contacted by First Things First to proceed.

To proceed with an Appeal meeting, the Quality First Team, the senior director for early learning, the chief program officer (CPO), and/or the chief executive officer (CEO) will review the Request for Appeal and provide a written response, which includes a scheduled meeting date. A Quality First representative, senior director for early learning, chief program officer, and/or the CEO will meet with you and provide a decision on the request for appeal. (See Appeals Policy on page 40.)

**If you are unsatisfied with the results of Step 2, you may move to Step 3**

### Step 3:

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING**

If you are unsatisfied with the result of your Request for Appeal, you may request a formal hearing conducted by an administrative law judge with the Office of Administrative Hearings.

First Things First will notify you in writing when the opportunity to request a formal hearing is available. After receipt of that notice, you will have 30 days to file a request for a hearing in writing. The request must include the name and address of the program seeking the hearing, the decision being appealed and a concise statement of the reasons for the appeal. The request must be provided to First Things First's main office in care of the general counsel.

Once a recommendation decision is made by the Office of Administrative Hearings, the First Things First Board will review the decision and take action to accept, reject or modify the recommendation. First Things First will notify you of the final Board decision in writing.

If you are

## Appealing Termination from Quality First

### Step 1:

#### **REQUEST FOR APPEAL**

You may submit a Request for Appeal of your termination from Quality First. The Request for Appeal Form must be submitted within 60 days of being notified of the termination.

Once received, the Quality First team, the senior director for early learning, the chief program officer (CPO), and/or the chief executive officer (CEO) will review the Request for Appeal and provide a written response, which includes a scheduled meeting date, to you within 14 days of the receipt of the request. A Quality First team member, senior director for early learning, chief program officer, and/or the CEO will meet with you and provide a decision on the request for appeal.

**If you are unsatisfied with the results of Step 1,  
you may move to Step 2**

### Step 2:

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING**

If you are unsatisfied with the result of your request for appeal, you may request a formal hearing conducted by an administrative law judge with the Office of Administrative Hearings.

First Things First will notify you in writing when the opportunity to request a formal hearing is available. After receipt of that notice, you will have 30 days to file a request for a hearing in writing. The request must include the name and address of the program seeking the hearing, the decision being appealed and a concise statement of the reasons for the appeal. The request must be provided to First Things First's main office in care of the general counsel.

Once a recommendation decision is made by the Office of Administrative Hearings, the First Things First Board will review the decision and take action to accept, reject or modify the recommendation. First Things First will notify you of the final Board decision in writing.

If you have other

## Concerns about Your Quality First Experience

### Step 1:

#### **DISCUSSION**

If you have concerns about your Quality First experience, begin by speaking directly with the coordinator supporting your program.

If your concerns persist after speaking with the coordinator, contact a supervisor or program manager for support. Program contact information is available on the Quality First Extranet under Resources.

If concerns persist after discussing the issue with a program contact, you may proceed to Step 2, Informal Dispute Resolution.

### Step 2:

#### **INFORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

You may submit a Quality First Complaint Form to the Quality First team at First Things First. In the Complaint Form, you will provide a description of your concern and any attempts made to resolve the issue as well as recommendations of possible solutions.

A representative of the First Things First Quality First team will contact you to determine next steps to address your concern either over the phone or by scheduling a meeting with all involved parties, ideally within 14 calendar days of receiving the complaint. After the meeting, First Things First will make a decision and notify you within 14 days. (See Informal Dispute Resolution Policy on page 39.)

**If you are unsatisfied with the results of Step 1,  
you may move to Step 2**

# SECTION SIX

## Extranet Guide

### Getting Started

As a participant, you will be invited to the Quality First extranet. You will receive an invitation email generated by your coordinator. Follow the link in the email to set up your extranet username and password.

#### Logging On

Once you have created a username and password, access the extranet using this link:

<https://extranet.azftf.gov/extranet/Pages/default.aspx>

- Click “Log In”

Log In



#### Reset Password and Retrieve Forgotten Username

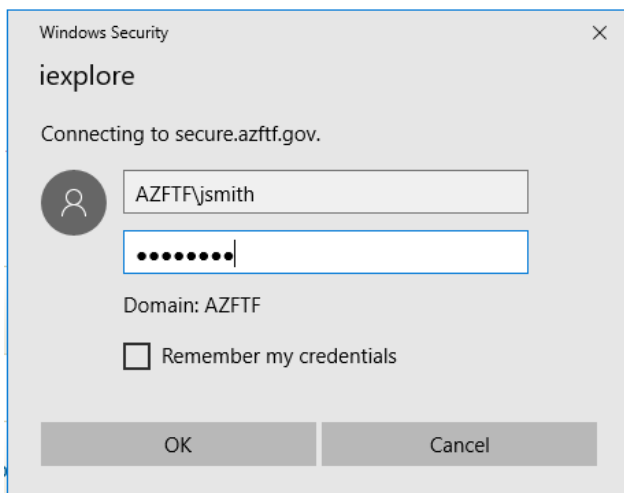
Please use the links below to Reset Password or to Retrieve Username.

To Reset your password, click on the link below and enter your USERNAME (AZFTF\jsmith)

[Reset forgotten password](#)

2. Log in window will pop up to enter Username and Password.

- Username must include backslash (\); not a forward slash.
  - This is typically the first initial of first name and last name.
- Password is case sensitive
  - You will be sent a temporary password, which you can change once logged in. Passwords must be minimum eight characters and include at least one capital letter and one number.

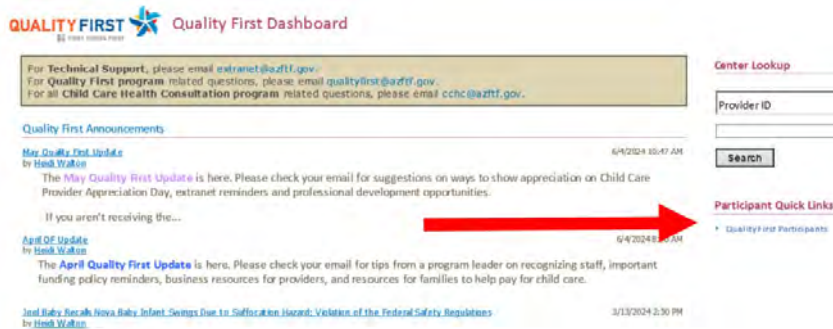




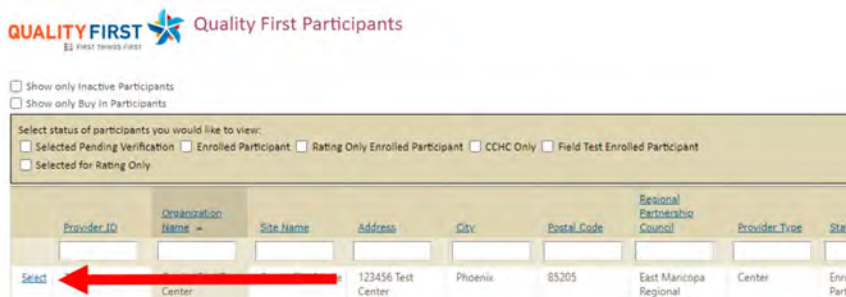
3. Select "OK". You will be on the main dashboard. Select the Quality First logo.



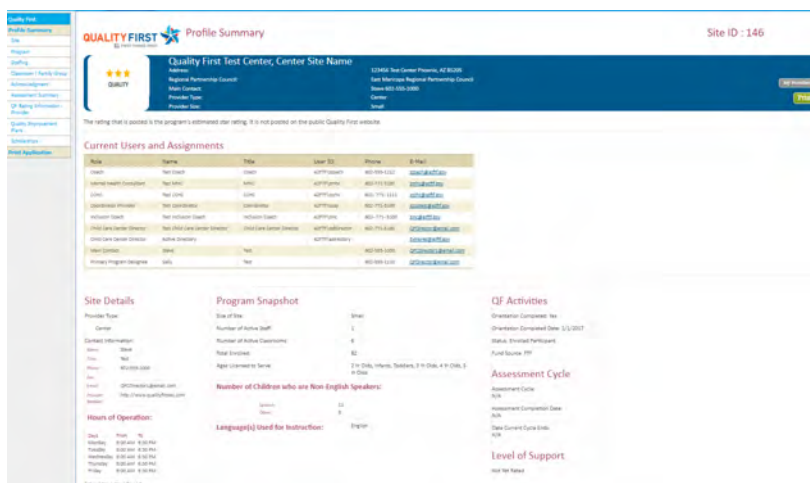
4. Select the "Quality First Participants" link.



5. Click "Select" to access your profile.



6. You are now viewing your extranet profile. The first page is the profile summary.



# Profile Summary

The profile summary contains helpful data about your participation in Quality First. Let's take a look at what you can review on this page.

Quality First  
Profile Summary  
Site  
Program  
Staffing  
Classroom / Family Group  
Acknowledgment  
Assessment Summary  
QF Rating Information - Provider  
Quality Improvement Plans  
Scholarships  
Print Application

**QUALITY FIRST**

**Profile Summary**

**QUALITY**

**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**  
Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85205  
Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council  
Main Contact: Steve 602-555-1000  
Provider Type: Center  
Provider Size: Small

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

**1 Current Users and Assignments**

| Role                       | Name                            | Title                      | User ID         | Phone        | E-Mail   |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| Coach                      | Test Coach                      | Coach                      | A2FTFcoach      | 602-555-1212 | <a href="mailto:coach@aqf.gov">coach@aqf.gov</a>                   |
| Mental Health Consultant   | Test MHC                        | MHC                        | A2FTFmhc        | 602-771-5100 | <a href="mailto:mhc@aqf.gov">mhc@aqf.gov</a>                       |
| COHC                       | Test COHC                       | COHC                       | A2FTFcohc       | 602-771-1111 | <a href="mailto:cohc@aqf.gov">cohc@aqf.gov</a>                     |
| Coordinator Provider       | Test Coordinator                | Coordinator                | A2FTFucop       | 602-771-5100 | <a href="mailto:ucop@aqf.gov">ucop@aqf.gov</a>                     |
| Inclusion Coach            | Test Inclusion Coach            | Inclusion Coach            | A2FTFinc        | 602-771-5100 | <a href="mailto:inc@aqf.gov">inc@aqf.gov</a>                       |
| Child Care Center Director | Test Child Care Center Director | Child Care Center Director | A2FTFccdirector | 602-771-5100 | <a href="mailto:ccdirector@email.com">ccdirector@email.com</a>     |
| Child Care Center Director | Active Directory                |                            | A2FTFadirectory |              | <a href="mailto:adirectory@aqf.gov">adirectory@aqf.gov</a>         |
| Main Contact               | Steve                           | Test                       |                 | 602-555-1000 | <a href="mailto:QFCDirector1@email.com">QFCDirector1@email.com</a> |
| Primary Program Designee   | Sally                           | Test                       |                 | 602-555-1110 | <a href="mailto:QFCDirector@email.com">QFCDirector@email.com</a>   |

**Site Details**

Provider Type: Center  
Contact Information:  
Name: Steve  
Title: Test  
Phone: 602-555-1000  
Fax:  
Email: [QFCDirector1@email.com](mailto:QFCDirector1@email.com)  
Provider Website: <http://www.qualityfirstaz.com>  
Hours of Operation:  

| Days      | From    | To      |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Monday    | 8:00 AM | 5:30 PM |
| Tuesday   | 8:00 AM | 5:30 PM |
| Wednesday | 8:00 AM | 5:30 PM |
| Thursday  | 8:00 AM | 5:30 PM |
| Friday    | 8:00 AM | 5:30 PM |

School Year: Year Round

**Program Snapshot**

Size of Site: Small  
Number of Active Staff: 1  
Number of Active Classrooms: 6  
Total Enrolled: 82  
Ages Licensed to Serve: 2 Yr Olds, Infants, Toddlers, 3 Yr Olds, 4 Yr Olds, 5 Yr Olds  
Number of Children who are Non-English Speakers:  

| Language | Count |
|----------|-------|
| Spanish  | 11    |
| Other    | 0     |

Language(s) Used for Instruction: English

**2 QF Activities**

Orientation Completed: Yes  
Orientation Completed Date: 1/1/2017  
Status: Enrolled Participant  
Fund Source: FTF

**3 Assessment Cycle**

Assessment Cycle: N/A  
Assessment Completion Date: N/A  
Date Current Cycle Ends: N/A

**4 Level of Support**

Achieving Quality

- 1. Current Users and Assignments-** This grid shows the staff you have identified as the contacts for Quality First, and contact information for the technical assistance professionals supporting your program.
- 2. QF Activities-** This section shows participation information, included whether your program has completed the orientation and enrollment process, as well as the source of funding for your participation.
- 3. Assessment Cycle-** This section tells what assessment cycle your program is in, when your last assessment was completed, and the time when your assessment cycle ends. The assessor will contact you to open your next assessment window within 2 months of the date current cycle ends.
- 4. Level of Support-** Your program's level of support is displayed here. Your level of support is based on your star rating. Pursuing Quality (1-star, 2-star), Achieving Quality (3-star), Continuing Quality (4-star, 5-star).

# Updating Your Data

Monthly extranet data updates are a requirement of participation. Follow the steps below to keep your data up-to-date.

1. Use the left navigation links to access each area of your profile.

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| Quality First                    |
| <b>Profile Summary</b>           |
| Site                             |
| Program                          |
| Staffing                         |
| Classroom / Family Group         |
| Acknowledgment                   |
| Assessment Summary               |
| QF Rating Information - Provider |
| Quality Improvement Plans        |
| Scholarships                     |
| <b>Print Application</b>         |

2. Site tab

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name  |  |
| Address:   | 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85205       |
| Regional Partnership Council:  | East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council |
| Main Contact:  | Stewer Test 802-555-1000                   |
| Provider Type:   | Center                                     |
| Provider Size:   | Small                                      |
| <a href="#">Save</a> <a href="#">Cancel</a> <a href="#">Print</a> <a href="#">Go to Provider</a> |  |

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

Data was successfully saved

## Site Details

### Organization Name

Quality First Test Center

### Provider Website

<http://www.qualityfirstaz.com>

☐ No Website Available

### Provider Type

☒ Center

☐ Home

### Site Name

Center Site Name

Please notify the Quality First Administrator ([qualityfirst@adit.gov](mailto:qualityfirst@adit.gov)) if the Organization Name or Site Name has changed.

Is your program part of a larger organization/corporation? \*

☐ Yes ☒ No

What is the name of your organization/corporation? \*

Update your site's details, including your main contact and primary designee, scholarship contact, contact information, school year dates, hours of operation, and more.

### 3. Program tab



**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**  
 Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85205  
 Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council  
 Main Contact: Steve Test 602-555-1000  
 Provider Type: Center  
 Provider Size: Small

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

#### Program Details

\* = Required Field

**Is the Program Regulated?** ☒ Yes ☐ No

Please notify the Quality First Administrator (qualfirst@azdhs.gov) if the Program Regulation information for this site has changed:

If yes, please list all license and/or certification number that apply to your program.

DHS License #: DHS001010  
 DHS License Expiration Date: 1/1/2020

ULS Certification #: P00010100  
 ULS Certification Expiration Date: 1/1/2020

Tribal #: 000  
 Certified or Regulated by a Tribal Entity: ☐

Military #: ☐


**Age Group(s) LICENSED to serve**

☒ Infants  
☒ Toddlers  
☒ 2 Yr Olds  
☒ 3 Yr Olds  
☒ 4 Yr Olds  
☒ 5 Yr Olds

Please check ALL age groups your site is LICENSED to serve regardless of whether you have this age group enrolled.

Update your program details, including the target population(s) your program serves, curriculum, participation in other programs, and cost information.

### 4. Staffing tab



**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**  
 Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85205  
 Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council  
 Main Contact: Steve Test 602-555-1000  
 Provider Type: Center  
 Provider Size: Small

[My Providers](#)  
[Save](#) [Cancel](#) [Print](#)

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

#### Staff Members

Click on "Add New Row" to enter staff information. Changes must be saved for each row before saving the entire page.  
 Active is for Staff members who are currently Employed. Upon termination or resignation, please uncheck Active.  
 Default view is only Active Staff. Please click "Display Inactive Staff" to view or edit staff marked inactive.

☐ Display Inactive Staff

| First Name | Last Name | Maiden / Other Names | Position / Title                 | Months Employed | Active?                             | Create Date           | Modified Date         | Staff Details                |
|------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Steve      | Test      |                      | Director                         |                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 4/17/2024 9:12:43 PM  | 6/26/2024 10:48:11 AM | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> |
| Sally      | Test      | Smith                | Assistant Director               |                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6/26/2024 10:47:04 AM |                       | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> |
| Jerry      | Garcia    |                      | Lead Teacher                     |                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6/26/2024 10:49:10 AM |                       | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> |
| Xuanxia    | Garcia    |                      | Lead Teacher                     |                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6/26/2024 10:49:31 AM |                       | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> |
| Jaylene    | Smith     |                      | Assistant Teacher/Classroom Aide |                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6/26/2024 10:50:09 AM |                       | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> |
| Sonia      | Test      |                      | Other Support Staff              |                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6/26/2024 10:48:57 AM |                       | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> |

[Add New Row](#)

Review and update your staffing data as changes occur. Add new staff and indicate staff who are no longer at your program. Update wage and benefit information.

## 5. Classroom/ family group tab



**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**

Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85205

Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

Main Contact: Steve Test 602-555-1000

Provider Type: Center

Provider Size: Small

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

### Classroom/Family Groups

Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

| Classroom                       | Infants | Toddlers | 2year-olds | 3year-olds | 4year-olds | 5year-olds | Active |                              |                             |
|---------------------------------|---------|----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 - Infant Room                 | 1       | 1        | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          |        | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> | <a href="#">Assessments</a> |
| 2 - Toddlers                    | 0       | 16       | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          |        | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> | <a href="#">Assessments</a> |
| 3 - Two's Room                  | 0       | 1        | 15         | 0          | 0          | 0          |        | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> | <a href="#">Assessments</a> |
| 4 - Three's Room                | 0       | 0        | 0          | 18         | 0          | 0          |        | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> | <a href="#">Assessments</a> |
| 5 - Four's Room                 | 0       | 0        | 0          | 0          | 15         | 0          |        | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> | <a href="#">Assessments</a> |
| 6 - Five's Room                 | 0       | 0        | 0          | 0          | 0          | 15         |        | <a href="#">Edit Details</a> | <a href="#">Assessments</a> |
| + <a href="#">Add Classroom</a> |         |          |            |            |            |            |        |                              |                             |

Select "edit details" to update your classroom information, including language for instruction, group size, ratios, number of children enrolled, and more.



# How to View Your Assessment Reports

Once you receive the email notification that your star rating or informal assessment is complete, you may view your assessment reports. Follow the steps below to access the reports.

1. Log into the extranet and go to your site profile.

**Quality First Profile Summary** Site ID: 146

**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**  
Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ  
Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council  
Main Contact: Steve Test 602-555-1000  
Provider Size: Small

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

**Current Users and Assignments**

| Role                       | Name                            | Title                      | User ID         | Phone | Email |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| Coach                      | Test Coach                      | Coach                      | AZTF1coach      |       |       |
| Mental Health Consultant   | Test MHC                        | MHC                        | AZTF1mhc        |       |       |
| COHC                       | Test COHC                       | COHC                       | AZTF1cchc       |       |       |
| Coordinator Provider       | Test Coordinator                | Coordinator                | AZTF1cosp       |       |       |
| Inclusion Coach            | Test Inclusion Coach            | Inclusion Coach            | AZTF1inc        |       |       |
| Child Care Center Director | Test Child Care Center Director | Child Care Center Director | AZTF1ccdirector |       |       |

**Site Details**

Provider Type: Center  
Number of Inclusion Staff: 1  
Number of Inclusion Consultants: 1  
Type: Informal  
Open to the Public: No  
Number of Children who are Non-English Speakers: 0  
Language(s) Used for Instruction: English

**Program Snapshot**

Site of Site: Small  
Number of Inclusion Staff: 1  
Number of Inclusion Consultants: 1  
Type: Informal  
Open to the Public: No  
Number of Children who are Non-English Speakers: 0  
Language(s) Used for Instruction: English

**QF Activities**

Program Snapshot No  
Program Snapshot Date: 1/1/2021  
Main Contact: Steve Test  
Provider Size: Small

**Assessment Cycle**

Assessment Cycle: Full  
Assessment Completed Date: 1/1/2021  
Data Collection Date: 1/1/2021  
Level of Support: Achieving Quality

2. From the profile summary page, select Assessment Summary.

**Quality First Profile Summary** Site ID: 146

**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**  
Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ  
Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council  
Main Contact: Steve Test 602-555-1000  
Provider Size: Small

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

**Current Users and Assignments**

| Role                       | Name                            | Title                      | User ID         |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Coach                      | Test Coach                      | Coach                      | AZTF1coach      |
| Mental Health Consultant   | Test MHC                        | MHC                        | AZTF1mhc        |
| COHC                       | Test COHC                       | COHC                       | AZTF1cchc       |
| Coordinator Provider       | Test Coordinator                | Coordinator                | AZTF1cosp       |
| Inclusion Coach            | Test Inclusion Coach            | Inclusion Coach            | AZTF1inc        |
| Child Care Center Director | Test Child Care Center Director | Child Care Center Director | AZTF1ccdirector |

3. You will see a list of all the assessment reports for the most recent assessment cycle. Select "Full" to view each report.

**Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name**  
Address: 123456 Test Center Phoenix, AZ  
Regional Partnership Council: East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council  
Main Contact: Steve Test 602-555-1000  
Provider Size: Small

The rating that is posted is the program's estimated star rating. It is not posted on the public Quality First website.

☐ Display older cycles

| Assessment Type | Assessment Cycle | Observer      | Date Of Observation | Classroom          | Self-Contained Classroom | Status        |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| CLASS           | Rating (R)       | Karla Agarwal | 1/1/2021            | 1 - Inclusion Room | Yes                      | Approved Full |

**Print**



4. To read sections of the report, select the section you wish to review. This will open the notes and scoring details of the section.

The screenshot shows the top header of the CLASS report for 'Quality First Test Center, Center'. Below the header, four sections are listed: 'Cycle Observation Information', 'Emotional Support', 'Classroom Organization', and 'Instructional Support'. Each section has a 'Complete' status icon. A red arrow points to the 'Instructional Support' section. Below these sections is a form titled 'Select the Item(s) you would like to print:' with checkboxes for 'Cycle Observation Information', 'Emotional Support', 'Classroom Organization', and 'Instructional Support'. A note below the checkboxes states: 'Note: You may have to adjust your printer settings to fit to the page.' and a green button labeled 'Print Selected Item(s)' is present.

Quality First Test Center, Center  
Site Name  
Classroom: 1 - Infant Room  
Observation Date: 4/1/2024  
My Providers Exit to classroom View Score Edit Master

Cycle Observation Information Complete  
Emotional Support Complete  
Classroom Organization Complete  
Instructional Support Complete

Select the Item(s) you would like to print:  
☐ Cycle Observation Information ☐ Emotional Support ☐ Classroom Organization  
☐ Instructional Support

Note: You may have to adjust your printer settings to fit to the page.  
Print Selected Item(s)

Additional Assessment Notes

5. To view or print the entire report, select the checkboxes in the middle of the page. This will create a file that you may print or save.

This screenshot is similar to the previous one, but the checkboxes in the 'Select the Item(s) you would like to print:' section are now checked for 'Cycle Observation Information', 'Emotional Support', 'Classroom Organization', and 'Instructional Support'. A red arrow points to the 'Classroom Organization' checkbox.

Quality First Test Center, Center  
Site Name  
Classroom: 1 - Infant Room  
Observation Date: 4/1/2024  
My Providers Exit to classroom View Score Edit Master

Cycle Observation Information Complete  
Emotional Support Complete  
Classroom Organization Complete  
Instructional Support Complete

Select the Item(s) you would like to print:  
☒ Cycle Observation Information ☒ Emotional Support ☒ Classroom Organization  
☒ Instructional Support

Note: You may have to adjust your printer settings to fit to the page.  
Print Selected Item(s)

# How to View Your Star Rating Information

To view your star rating, log into your site's extranet profile. You will see your star rating at the top of your profile summary page.

| Role                       | Name                            | Title                      | User ID          | Phone        | E-Mail                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Coach                      | Test Coach                      | Coach                      | ADPFPastcoach    | 602-559-1212 | testcoach@qf1st.org    |
| Mental Health Consultant   | Test MHC                        | MHC                        | ADPFPamhc        | 602-775-5100 | testmhc@qf1st.org      |
| COHC                       | Test COHC                       | COHC                       | ADPFPastcohc     | 602-775-1111 | testcohc@qf1st.org     |
| Coordinator                | Test Coordinator                | Coordinator                | ADPFPastcoord    | 602-775-5100 | testcoord@qf1st.org    |
| Inclusion Coach            | Test Inclusion Coach            | Inclusion Coach            | ADPFPastinc      | 602-775-5100 | testinc@qf1st.org      |
| Child Care Center Director | Test Child Care Center Director | Child Care Center Director | ADPFPastdirector | 602-775-5100 | testdirector@qf1st.org |
| Child Care Center Director | Active Directory                | Active Directory           | ADPFPastdirector | 602-775-5100 | testdirector@qf1st.org |
| Main Contact               | Test                            | Test                       | ADPFPastmain     | 602-559-1000 | testmain@qf1st.org     |
| Primary Program Designer   | Test                            | Test                       | ADPFPastmain     | 602-559-1100 | testmain@qf1st.org     |

To see your assessment scoring information, select QF Rating Information-Provider. This tab shows your site's average program scores as well as whether your program met the individual classroom score thresholds for each of the quality level ratings.

Cycle: Rating Renewal 6

Completed Date: 11/6/2022

Cycle End Date: 11/6/2024

ERS Average Program Score: 3.64

☐ All individual classroom scores at or above 2.5 (3 Star requirement)

☒ All individual classroom scores at or above 3.0 (4 Star requirement)

☐ All individual classroom scores at or above 4.0 (5 Star requirement)

CLASS Average Program Score

Emotional Support: 5.7

Classroom Organization: 5

Instructional Support: 2.63

☒ All individual classroom scores at or above ES 4.25/CO 4.25/IS 2.0 (3 Star requirement)

☐ All individual classroom scores at or above ES 4.75/CO 4.75/IS 2.25 (4 Star requirement)

☐ All individual classroom scores at or above ES 5.0/CO 5.0/IS 2.75 (5 Star requirement)

Star Rating: 3

You can view each individual classroom's assessment scores by opening each assessment report and selecting View Score.

Quality First Test Center, Center Site Name

Classroom: 1 Infant Room

Observation Date: 4/1/2024

View Assessment View Assessment View Assessment View Assessment

Cycle Observation Information Emotional Support Classroom Organization Instructional Support

Complete Complete Complete Complete

Select the item(s) you would like to print:

☐ Cycle Observation Information ☐ Emotional Support ☐ Classroom Organization

☐ Instructional Support

When you have to select your print(s) please click on the page.

Print Selected Item(s)

# Troubleshooting Username and Password Issues

## Username and Password Error

Check that your username is being entered correctly.

The back slash is a “\” and must be entered as AZFTF\username.

A common error is for users to put in their username with the forward slash AZFTF/username. This will cause an error.

## Forgot Your Username

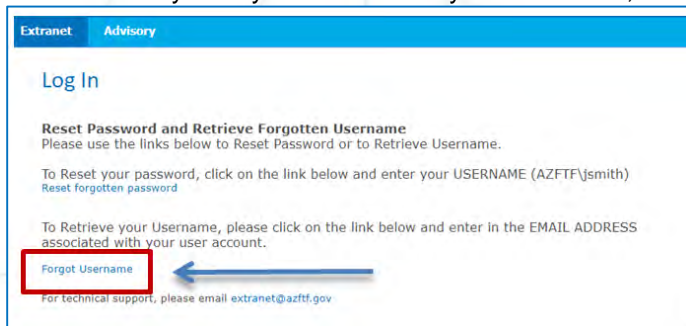
You can request to have your username sent to you via email by accessing the main extranet dashboard and selecting the [Forgot Username](#) link:

You will be asked to enter the email address that was used to provide your original username and password. Your username will be emailed to you.

## Reset Forgotten Password

You can reset a forgotten password by selecting the [Reset Forgotten Password](#) link.

You will be asked to enter your username (AZFTF\username) that was provided to you. A temporary new password will be emailed to you. If you do not have your username, first follow the steps above to have your username emailed to you.

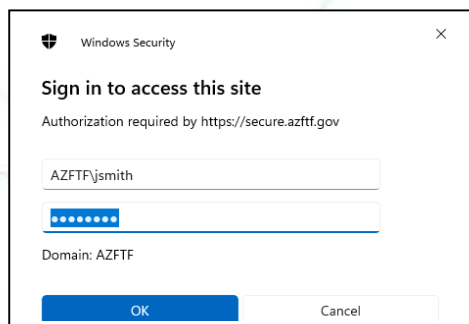


The screenshot shows a web page titled 'Extranet Advisory'. It has a 'Log In' link at the top. Below it, there are two sections: 'Reset Password and Retrieve Forgotten Username' and 'Reset forgotten password'. The 'Reset forgotten password' section has a link that is highlighted with a red box and an arrow pointing to it. The text on the page includes: 'Please use the links below to Reset Password or to Retrieve Username.', 'To Reset your password, click on the link below and enter your USERNAME (AZFTF\jsmith)', 'Reset forgotten password', 'To Retrieve your Username, please click on the link below and enter in the EMAIL ADDRESS associated with your user account.', 'Forgot Username', and 'For technical support, please email extranet@azftf.gov'.

## To Change a Password (not forgot password)

You can change your password by logging into the extranet with your AZFTF\username and password. Once logged in, you will be at the main welcome page of the extranet. Select the Change Password link. You will be prompted to enter your current password and set a new password.

A new pop-up window will appear after you select “Change Password.” You will need to enter your username and your NEW password.



The screenshot shows a Windows Security dialog box titled 'Sign in to access this site'. It says 'Authorization required by https://secure.azftf.gov'. There are two input fields: the first contains 'AZFTF\jsmith' and the second contains a masked password. Below the fields, it says 'Domain: AZFTF'. At the bottom, there are 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons.

# How to Bypass the Security Warning Message

Below are steps for handling a securing warning some extranet users are experiencing.

Google pushed out an updates securing patch that is showing the unsecure message. Our system uses an older protocol, but our site is still secure and accessible. You may receive the secured protocol message two to three times and will need to repeat this process.

The first warning will display. Select “Advanced”



## Your connection is not fully secure

This site uses an outdated security configuration, which may expose your information (for example, passwords, messages, or credit cards) when it is sent to this site.

NET::ERR\_SSL\_OBSOLETE\_VERSION



The next screen will display. Select “Proceed to extranet.aztf.gov”



## Your connection is not fully secure

This site uses an outdated security configuration, which may expose your information (for example, passwords, messages, or credit cards) when it is sent to this site.

NET::ERR\_SSL\_OBSOLETE\_VERSION



The extranet homepage will display. Select “Log In”

## # FIRST THINGS FIRST

Extranet Advisory

Log In

### Reset Password and Retrieve Forgotten Username

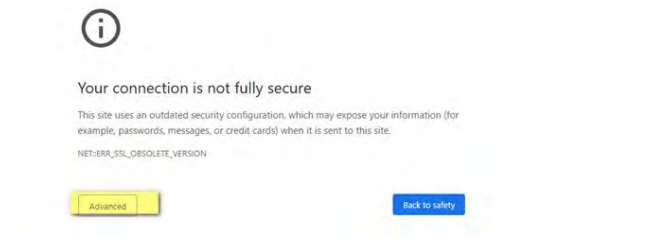
Please use the links below to Reset Password or to Retrieve Username.

To Reset your password, click on the link below and enter your USERNAME (AZFTF\jsn)  
[Reset forgotten password](#)

To Retrieve your Username, please click on the link below and enter in the EMAIL ADD  
[Forgot Username](#)

For technical support, please email [extranet@aztf.gov](mailto:extranet@aztf.gov)

The warning page will display again. Repeat the same steps.



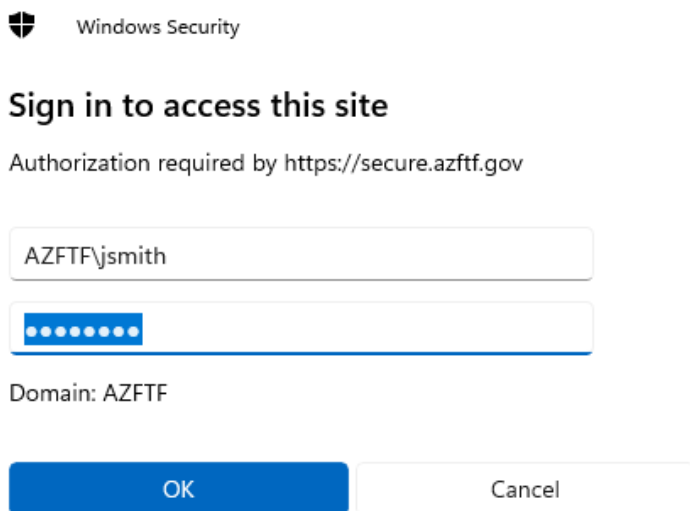
### Your connection is not fully secure

This site uses an outdated security configuration, which may expose your information (for example, passwords, messages, or credit cards) when it is sent to this site.

NET::ERR\_SSL\_OBSOLETE\_VERSION



The sign in screen will display. Enter your login information to access the extranet.



## Need help? Contact us.

If you have questions or need assistance, contact the extranet support team:

- By phone at 602.771.5100
- By email at [Extranet@FirstThingsFirst.org](mailto:Extranet@FirstThingsFirst.org)



## Participant Guide Resources

| Contact Page   |      |        |                   |       |
|--|------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| Contact  | Name | Agency | Phone Number      | Email |
| Quality First Coordinator                                  |      |        |                   |       |
| Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC)                        |      |        |                   |       |
| Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant                   |      |        |                   |       |
| Inclusion Coach  |      |        |                   |       |
| AZ Early Childhood Workforce Registry Outreach Coordinator |      |        |                   |       |
| ADE Early Childhood Program Specialist                     |      |        |                   |       |
| ADHS Licensing Compliance Officer or DES Surveyor          |      |        |                   |       |
| Other  |      |        |                   |       |
| Extranet User Name   |      |        | Extranet Password |       |

# National Accrediting Organizations

Transcripts must be received from an accredited institution. “Accredited” means approved by the:

New England Association of Schools and Colleges,  
Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools,  
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools,  
Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges,  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or  
Western Association of Colleges and Schools

## National Early Childhood Education Accrediting Organizations

Association Montessori International (AMI)  
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission (NECPA)  
Association for Christian Schools International  
American Montessori Society (AMS)  
National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education (NAC)  
National Family Child Care Accreditation (NAFCC)  
Cognia

\*Head Start/Early Head Start programs also follow the same assessment process as an accredited program.