



For Immediate Release
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Rhodes State College Earns State's Highest Award for Excellence in Early Care and Education

LIMA, Ohio – In recognition of its excellent child care program and its ongoing commitment to children, the Rhodes State College Childcare Center has received a Three-Star Step Up To Quality Award from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services - Bureau of Child Care and Development, the state agency responsible for licensing and promoting high standards among Ohio's child care centers.

“We applaud Rhodes State for its commitment to children. By going above and beyond Ohio's minimum licensing standards, Rhodes gives its young children the opportunity to grow and develop in a stimulating, nurturing environment,” said Terrie Hare, Chief, Ohio Bureau of Child Care and Development.

Step Up to Quality is a voluntary rating system for early care and education centers. Participating centers can earn a one-, two- or three-star rating by meeting an extensive list of quality benchmarks. Experts say these benchmarks improve the growth and development potential of children. The rating system also gives parents a useful tool for selecting quality early childhood programs.

“We are pleased to receive this award. It shows parents that we are serious about the quality of our program. We have highly qualified teachers at our center and a strong curriculum that is both age and developmentally appropriate. We appreciate Rhodes State College's commitment to our young children and making this award possible. We value early learning and this shows a higher degree of professionalism all around,” said Susan Hord, Chair, Early Childhood Education program at Rhodes State.

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Three-Star Step Up To Quality Fast Facts:

Three-Star Step Up To Quality programs meet the following criteria:

- A ratio of one teacher for every four infants (ages birth-12 months), or 2:8 or 3:10, one teacher for every five infants (ages 12-18 months), one teacher for every six toddlers (ages 18-36 months), one teacher for every nine preschoolers (ages 36-48 months), one teacher for every ten preschoolers (ages 48-60 months) and one teacher for every 15 school-aged children (ages 5-15 years).
- Staff/child ratios in all classrooms meet national high-quality early care and education standards.
- All lead teachers have a degree in early childhood education, specialized training on Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards, Infant and Toddler Guidelines and receive 15 hours of child development training per year, above licensing requirements.
- Program employees receive at least three employee benefits. This policy results in a lower turnover rate.

Ohio's Children:

- Achieving these benchmarks is crucial for the future of Ohio's children. This as more parents join the workforce and more children are cared for outside of the home. In Ohio, 65% of children under the age of six have both parents in the workforce. At the same time 90% of brain development occurs before the age of five.
- Children enrolled in high quality early learning programs, particularly low income children, are more likely to stay in school, attend college, earn more money and be employed in high-skilled jobs than their peers.
- In Ohio, 65 percent of children 6 and younger have both parents in the work force, according to the Ohio Bureau of Child Care and Development.
- Research shows children enrolled in high-quality early learning programs, particularly low-income children, are more likely to stay in school, attend college, earn more money, and be employed in high-skilled jobs than their peers.