

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, December 14th, 2017
Contact: Andrei Vasilescu
[**\(718\) 254-7706**](tel:7182547706) | [**\(631\) 332-2481**](tel:6313322481)

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Staten Island Foundation Grants \$150,000 to QUALITYstarsNY to improve Pre-K & Early Childhood Care in SI

QUALITYstarsNY to Allocate Child Care Coach to Staten Island Early Learning Programs

Staten Island, New York - Today, Staten Island Foundation Executive Director Betsy Dubovsky announced the foundation will be awarding QUALITYstarsNY with a \$150,000 grant to build the quality of early child care programs on the northern shore of Staten Island. QUALITYstarsNY is New York's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for early learning programs, an initiative launched out of New York's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC).

The \$150,000 grant will allow QUALITYstarsNY to field a dedicated early childhood specialist for Staten Island's early childhood education programs on the North Shore. Quality Improvement Specialists work alongside program directors and educators as they undergo QUALITYstarsNY's 5-star rating process and help identify areas of opportunity for improvement of their work.

After receiving a star rating, programs gain access to resources as they work toward accomplishing their quality improvement goals. That support comes in the form of professional development, materials, and other tailored supports and resources to help each participating program provide high quality care and education.

Studies have shown that programs which offer a high quality learning environment have dramatic impacts on children, leading to better performance not only in school, but throughout adulthood. High quality early child care has proven to close the achievement gap, has led to higher lifetime earnings, and has reduced the likeliness of incarceration and high lifetime medical costs. QUALITYstarsNY works to identify ways in which programs can achieve these results for their students, and its most recent report found a 65% increase in programs earning a four and five-star rating, a 44% increase in star rating across the board, and a quality increase in 84% of all programs.

“The Staten Island Foundation is delighted to support the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute in bringing QUALITYstarsNY to 20 licensed early childhood programs in the North Shore. This will enable programs reaching 600 children to achieve high levels of quality care and proudly make that known to parents and caregivers in the community,” **said Betsy Dubovsky Executive Director of the Staten Island Foundation.**

Currently, Staten Island's north shore has 231 licensed early childhood programs, including 31 early childhood centers, 158 family or group family child care homes, and 42 school-based early childhood programs, serving an estimated 7,500 young children. The grant will allow QUALITYstarsNY to service at least 20 of these programs, benefiting approximately 600 children. For programs to be eligible, they must be licensed, serve children from birth to age five, and at least 25% of their enrolled children must qualify for a child care subsidy.

“QUALITYstarsNY is incredibly grateful for Staten Island Foundation's generosity and the opportunities this grant brings to early child care programs throughout Staten Island's north shore. Every child deserves an educational foundation that nurtures them to realizing their fullest potential. We're thrilled to bring an expert Quality Improvement Specialist who can coach early childhood programs to build this foundation for children. I commend the Staten Island Foundation for making quality child care a priority. It is public-private partnerships like this that allow QUALITYstarsNY to ensure every child receives a quality early education. We look forward to bringing real results to Staten Island's north shore,” **said QUALITYstarsNY Director Helga Yuan-Larsen.**

The over 700 programs currently enrolled in QUALITYstarsNY account for only 5% of all eligible child care programs in New York. Though QUALITYstarsNY is primarily funded through the State, private-public partnerships like the Staten Island Foundation's grant allows QUALITYstarsNY to have a higher concentration of program enrollment in a community to impact change.

“We are delighted to have this opportunity to work more extensively on Staten Island. The people of the North Shore have collaborated on a comprehensive agenda to ensure the best for their youngest children and we are honored to be a part of it. QUALITYstarsNY will support the goals that early childhood leadership and teachers have for the young children they serve,” **said Executive Director of New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute Sherry M. Cleary.**

"Study after study has shown the impact that early childhood education has throughout life. I am so happy that the Staten Island Foundation provided a grant to help QUALITYstarsNY bring their services to roughly 600 students in 20 different early childhood education programs across the North Shore. Partnering expanded access with quality is the key to giving children the education that they deserve," **said State Senator Diane Savino (D23)**

“The quality of an infant or toddler's education has a remarkable impact on their preparedness for kindergarten and their success throughout their academic career. New York must make it a priority to not only make pre-k and early child care available, but also ensure these programs are providing the best possible educational experiences. I look forward to having early childhood programs within my district enroll with QUALITYstarsNY and I commend the Staten Island Foundation for their donation. Their generosity goes a long way towards providing all of my youngest constituents a foundation for success,” **said Assembly Member Matthew Titone (D61).**

“Studies and anecdotal evidence alike have shown time and again that quality early childhood education helps children succeed as they grow into adulthood. As our city continues to expand educational opportunities for young children, it is critical that we provide all students with the best educational experiences. This generous grant from the Staten Island Foundation will help QUALITYstarsNY do just that as they expand their services to include the North Shore of Staten Island, benefiting approximately 600 students in 20 early childhood education programs,” **said City Council Member Deborah Rose (D49).**

QUALITYstarsNY is New York’s voluntary early childhood Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), overseeing early learning programs across New York State. Using a 5-star system, QUALITYstarsNY rates early-learning programs in their ability to meet high quality standards, as developed by leading experts. Partnering programs are assigned Quality Improvement Specialists and gain access to resources and materials for improving the quality of their early child care and education.