



## YoungStar Participation Policy

Programs experience the greatest success with their YoungStar quality improvement efforts when they are actively engaged in the process and supported by a responsive and resourceful Consultant. This policy addresses participation expectations for those who are participating in YoungStar services. Following these expectations will lead to the most productive and beneficial use of consultation and rating time.

### 1.) YoungStar Contract completion:

- To be eligible for Wisconsin Shares payments from families, program must be participating in YoungStar. To participate for the first time, programs must complete a YoungStar Contract. To continue participating in YoungStar, programs must complete YoungStar Renewal Contracts every other year. While there are choices about which free YoungStar services a program takes, Wisconsin Shares authorizations can be jeopardized by failure to apply or reapply to YoungStar within the provided timelines.
  - For newly regulated programs, completing the YoungStar Contract should happen as soon as a program opens if they intend to serve families participating in the Wisconsin Shares program.
  - For programs that are currently participating in YoungStar, all future YoungStar Renewal Contracts will automatically be sent by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) every two years following a program's initial rating.

Programs who would like to participate in coaching, consultation, and/or rating must first complete a YoungStar Contract or Renewal Contract. We encourage programs to review all YoungStar Policies (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/policy>) and then sign the YoungStar Participation Agreement, which will be provided by the local YoungStar office.

### 2.) Responding to YoungStar Communications:

- Failure to respond to YoungStar communications from your local YoungStar office and/or the DCF, regularly cancelling appointments, and/or not showing up for scheduled YoungStar meeting times prevents the progress of quality improvements efforts, as well as delays the completion of ratings within a timely manner. Failure to respond to communications can result in YoungStar services ending and ratings being moved to an Automated 2 Star Rating status.
- **Prior Notification:**
  - Provide notice of at least one business day if an appointment needs to be rescheduled for non-emergency reasons.
  - Give at minimum two hours' notice in the case of a documentable emergency.

- The program must contact their Consultant within 24 hours to reschedule the missed appointment.
- **Cancellations/No Shows:**
  - Failing to give notice within a two-hour timeframe for a documentable emergency can result in the program losing consultation or coaching time.
  - Failing to re-schedule a cancelled visit within one week after a request has been made by the local YoungStar office may result in the following consequences:
    - Loss of eligibility for consulting/coaching services until the next YoungStar Renewal Contract or Request for Off-Year Services application is received
    - Movement to an Automated 2 Star Rating
  - A program can re-schedule two times within the guidelines provided, however additional re-scheduling can result in the loss of consultation/coaching time.
  - If there is a pattern of cancellation or not showing up for scheduled appointments, the Consultant and/or ERS Observer may contact local certifiers and/or licensors for follow-up.
  - A rating must be completed within a 24-week rating window. If a program comes to the end of the 24-week window and has three or more cancelled visits, the program will have the option to schedule and complete the onsite rating within the following four weeks or be changed to an Automated Rating. No additional consultation or coaching services will be available to the program prior to the rating.

### 3.) No Children Present:

- Consultants must meet with a program when children are present, at least one time. If no children are present throughout consultation time, the Consultant may report this information to the fraud hot line (1-877-302-FRAUD). The program will be moved to an Automated Rating and will not be eligible for consultation/coaching, and/or a new rating until the next YoungStar Renewal Contract or Request for Off-Year Services application is received.

### 4.) YoungStar Staff Cancellation or Re-scheduling:

- YoungStar staff will make every effort to keep every appointment scheduled with a program.
  - If, in case of an emergency, the YoungStar staff member needs to cancel an appointment they will call the program at least two hours prior to the scheduled visit to notify the program and reschedule at that time.
  - If a YoungStar staff member needs to reschedule an appointment for any other non-emergency reason, they will make every effort to reschedule the appointment as soon as they become aware of the conflict and at the program's earliest convenience. The

notification of the need to reschedule will occur at least two working days before the scheduled appointment.

### 5.) Formal Rating:

- Programs applying for a YoungStar formal rating must abide by an additional set of participation policies. These policies are only in effect during the window of time that they could potentially receive an ERS Observation.
  - If an ERS Observer arrives at the program on a non-blackout date, and the provider refuses an ERS observation, the Provider/program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating until the next rating cycle. The provider will be eligible for an Automated or Technical Rating at this point.
  - If an ERS Observer arrives at the program and the provider is not at home, the program is closed, or the program is leaving for a field trip on a non-blackout date, the provider/program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating until the next rating cycle. The provider would be eligible for an Automated or Technical Rating at this point.
  - If a program experiences an emergency on a non-blackout date, the Director/Provider should notify the assigned YoungStar ERS Observer as soon as possible after the emergency is under control. In this situation, the ERS Observer will return on another non-blackout date to complete the rating. After one allowance for an emergency, the provider or program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating. The program would be eligible for an Automated or Technical Rating at this point.
  - If an ERS Observer arrives and the Director/Provider indicates that 50% or more of the children will not be in attendance for the selected classroom or family program, the ERS observation cannot occur in that classroom or program on that day. If possible, the ERS Observer will then observe another selected classroom in a group program. If this is not possible, or if it occurs in a family program, the ERS observation will occur on another non-blackout day. After one allowance for absence, the program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating. The program would be eligible for an Automated or Technical Rating at this point.

### 6.) Inclement Weather or Weather Emergencies:

- In the event of inclement weather, YoungStar staff will be in contact with programs and there will be no negative impacts to programs as a result.

#### Definitions

**Anniversary Month** means the month that the program was given their initial rating in YoungStar. Programs receive a YoungStar Renewal Contract **or** Request for Off-Year Services Application to be completed and returned to their local YoungStar office in advance of their Anniversary Month each year.



**Cancellation** means the YoungStar appointment does not occur for one or more reasons, including but not limited to:

- Program staffing levels and absenteeism
- Lack of readiness for appointment
- Lack of progress on QIP
- Illness or medical emergencies

**No-shows** occur when a YoungStar staff member arrives for a scheduled appointment and is not let into the program (for any reason), or the program is closed, or programming is occurring at another location.