



"An exceptionally nice part of YoungStar is the ability to track the progress of the room and the center."



— Stacey Beyer, Teacher  
Sandbox Child Care & Preschool  
Medford

## 4 Stars and Still Rising

### Being Proactive & Positive

When Kelly Jensen, program director and administrator of Sand Box Child Care & Preschool, first learned of Wisconsin's quality rating and improvement system, YoungStar, she immediately knew what her approach would be: proactivity and positivity. And her approach proved effective, resulting in the program's 4 star rating.

"I felt it was my obligation to sift through all of the YoungStar information," says Kelly. She adds that a key to their success was collecting and presenting the information in a way that brought the most relevant points to her team.

### "A New Set of Eyes"

The team of staff at Sand Box Child Care & Preschool met YoungStar with the same positive attitude, channeling energy into the program's quality improvement cycle. "When the YoungStar staff came into evaluate, it brought a new set of eyes to how we do things. When you are in the same environment every day, you see things one way and they see it a different way," says Sand Box Child Care & Preschool team member, Mary Gerstberger.

But the team didn't stop there. The program used innovative strategies to sustain change efforts, including monthly classroom reviews and tri-annual peer reviews using the environmental rating scales. The information gathered in these reviews was used to inform quality improvement plans of each of the six classrooms.

### Next Steps Already in Motion

Sand Box Child Care & Preschool understands that quality improvement is truly a journey and they have big plans for continuing down their path. Staff members are dedicating hours of time preparing themselves for continuing their education. While they admit at times it seems long and hard, they know that it is worth it and will ensure their educational success.

And as team members support program quality improvements, the program is committed to supporting the team, as well. Kelly states that the bonus payments for quality will be reinvested in the program, with staff compensation being a high priority. With four stars under their belt, Sandbox Child Care & Preschool aspires for continued quality improvement and has set concrete, specific goals for the future.

### Wisconsin's Stars are Shining

YoungStar informs parents, recognizes quality providers and brings resources and support to programs committed to improving quality. But what it's really all about is helping Wisconsin children shine bright.