Introduction to Spark: Oregon’s Quality Rating and Improvement System

**Lecture: Understand what a QRIS is and the partners that make it function**

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| TRAINER INFORMATION |
| **Objective:**  2.0 Participants will understand the purpose and function of a Quality Rating and Improvement System and the Spark partners.  **Activities:**  2.1 Discussion of the purposes and functions of a QRIS  2.2 Discussion of Spark partners    **Materials:** PowerPoint  **Amount of Time:** 10 minutes |

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| **ACTIVITY 2.1:** Discussion of the purposes and functions of a QRIS |

Slide #3

1. Objective title slide: We are going to generally define the purpose of a QRIS and how Spark specifically functions as Oregon’s QRIS.

Slide #4

1. Quality
2. Purpose: A QRIS focuses on Quality. Research shows that quality experiences for children lead to better success in life. More high quality programs equal better outcomes for children.
3. Function: Spark functions to help incentivize better education and compensation so providers can deliver higher quality education to Oregon’s children.
4. Rating
5. Purpose: Ratings are a tool that can be used by programs to advertise their quality and by parents to help them understand quality.
6. Function: Rating are one of many ways to increase interest in something. For example, we rate restaurants, hotels, websites, and movies. Spark gives an expert backing (third party) to the rating of early learning and development programs (ELDP). Parents can use rating along with other indicators to make informed decisions about which provider to use to care for their children. A Spark rating is not the only way to for parents to know if they want their child/ren to attend a program.
7. Improvement
8. Purpose: Quality Improvement is the heart of a QRIS. Why is quality improvement important? Use an example of why staying current and continually improving is important. One example might be:
   1. Imagine if your family doctor got her medical degree in 1972 and then never read another article, took another class or learned about new research or technology. Would you want to see a doctor who decided that a medical degree from 1972 and 35 years of experience was good enough? If doctors didn’t do quality improvement, they would miss out on vital information like new vaccines, treatments, and cures for formerly incurable diseases. It is our responsibility to do the same thing, which is to continually improve, and to be the best we can for the children in our care.
9. Function: In Spark a program that continues to improve its practices will be able to deliver relevant and high quality services to their enrolled families.
10. System (this is the segue from what a QRIS is and who the Spark partners are)
11. Purpose: Systems give credibility and support to programs there rating and their quality improvement.
12. Function: Spark is a part of our state’s Early Learning System. Spark can be compared to the Oregon Registry. Spark is the backbone of our state Early Childhood Education system. Spark ratings for example are include in legislation approve by the Oregon House and Senate and signed into law by the governor. The Oregon Registry provides standards, supports, and credibility for the workforce.

Slide #5

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| **ACTIVITY 2.2:** Discussion of Spark partners |

1. Spark Partners
2. This slide shows that Spark was not developed and implemented in isolation. Each agency has an important piece.
   * 1. Child Care Resource and Referral—Provides technical assistance, training, and support to programs for quality improvement.
     2. The Research Institute at Western Oregon University—You will hear us refer to them as TRI or WOU. They are the QRIS implementers, providing technical assistance on portfolios, coordinating portfolio reviews and assigning quality ratings.
     3. Oregon Center for Career Development—Key partner in Personnel Qualifications. They created and administer the Oregon Registry.
     4. Office of Child Care—Funds the program and provides leadership and direction as well as a connection to the Early Learning Council/Early Learning Division.