

Because Quality Matters

Video Transcript

[Music]

Maryland EXCELS logo.

Narrator: Maryland EXCELS – Because quality matters.

Children playing in an early childhood classroom.

Narrator: What is Maryland EXCELS?

Ashley Hensley, Quality Assurance Specialist, Baltimore County, narrating from an early childhood classroom. Teacher reading to preschool children. A book displayed on a bookshelf.

Ashley Hensley: Maryland EXCELS means quality. Child care and early education programs that participate in Maryland EXCELS are committed to providing the best possible education and care. High-quality child care and education builds stronger communities, supports family success, and improves student outcomes in school and in life.

Quality Assurance Specialist, Ashley Hensley, narrating from an early childhood classroom. The Maryland EXCELS website.

Ashley Hensley: By participating in Maryland EXCELS, programs are showing a commitment to quality and excellence.

A teacher interacting with a child who is playing dress-up. Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating Badges 1 through 5. Two smiling children going down side-by-side slides. Two children playing with a doll. Quality Assurance Specialist, Ashley Hensley, narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Ashley Hensley: Maryland EXCELS evaluates policies and practices from Child Care Centers, School-Age Child Care Programs, Family Child Care Homes, Head Start programs, and Public Pre-K with the goal of recognizing programs that achieve Quality Ratings 1 to 5.

Urceal Cook, Quality Assurance Specialist, Prince George's County, narrating from an early childhood classroom. A teacher interacting with two children who are playing with play dough.

Urceal Cook: Maryland EXCELS is here to support your child care or early education program in providing high quality services and the best start in life for our youngest learners.

A teacher interacting with two children who are playing with play dough with list of Maryland EXCELS Standards:

- **Licensing and Compliance**
- **Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**
- **Accreditation and Rating Scales**
- **Developmentally Appropriate Learning and Practice**
- **Administrative Policies and Practices**

Urceal Cook: Our Maryland EXCELS Standards are based on nationally recognized best practices and are designed to give you step-by-step support for quality improvements in your program.

A teacher interacting with a child who is playing dress-up.

Narrator: Why participate in Maryland EXCELS?

Quality Assurance Specialist, Urceal Cook, narrating from an early childhood classroom. A child climbing on playground equipment. A teacher interacting with a child who is playing dress-up.

Urceal Cook: I would recommend that every licensed child care program participate in Maryland EXCELS. However, if a child care program provides care for families who use Child Care Scholarship, they must enroll in Maryland EXCELS.

Annie Reyes, Director at Homewood Early Learning Center, Quality Rating 5, narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Annie Reyes: Maryland EXCELS promotes your program by educating families on high-quality practices.

Kimberly Greene-Epps, Tiny Twigs Childcare, Baltimore City, Quality Rating 5, narrating from an early childhood classroom. A Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating 5 badge displayed on a window.

Kimberly Greene-Epps: Quality ratings and additional program details are available to families, allowing them to make informed choices concerning the care of their children.

A father and mother walk in a parking lot holding hands with their child. Annie Reyes, Director at Homewood Early Learning Center, welcomes a family into a child care center with a Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating 5 badge displayed on a window. A child runs into a classroom. A mother and father smile while their child, alongside another child, plays with play dough.

Annie Reyes: I feel proud when I can share my hard work with families this way. My program's quality rating helps my program stand out and gives families peace of mind that their child will get the very best.

Provider Kimberly Greene-Epps narrating from an early childhood classroom. A child walking with parents who are leaving a child care center.

Kimberly Greene-Epps: Maryland EXCELS offers so many great benefits to providers that participate. I would encourage more providers to participate so they can take advantage of these benefits, too!

Maryland EXCELS Toolkit Resources. Maryland EXCELS Website displaying Tutorials page.

Ashley Hensley: Maryland EXCELS offers a variety of resources to support and empower programs to be successful in meeting our standards for high quality.

Quality Assurance Specialist, Urceal Cook, narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Urceal Cook: Our team provides free training, one-on-one assistance, peer support and observation and feedback to help you achieve a higher quality rating.

An early childhood provider typing on a laptop. Sonya Odum, Family Child Care Provider, Anne Arundel County, Quality Rating 5 narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Sonya Odum: Training opportunities are available online and my Quality Assurance Specialist provides me with guidance as we discuss required documentation together.

Provider Sonya Odum narrating from an early childhood classroom with a list of what bonuses may be spent on:

- Learning materials
- Furniture
- Technology
- Rewards for staff
- Additional income for your program

Sonya Odum: Another great benefit is that you can earn bonuses when you publish a rating for the first time. Who doesn't love a bonus?

Child kicking a soccer ball outdoors.

Narrator: How does it work?

Provider Annie Reyes narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Annie Reyes: My Child Care Resource Center assisted me in submitting my application. I brought my laptop and applied right there during a class.

Provider Kimberly Greene-Epps sitting at a computer receiving support from Quality Assurance Specialist Urceal Cook. Provider Sonya Odum narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Provider Sonya Odum: I thought it was very easy to register and participate in Maryland EXCELS. It took less than ten minutes! All you need to get started is a Lead Contact and your program's license or School ID number to complete the online application.

The Maryland EXCELS/Maryland Accreditation login screen.

Narrator: Step 1. Access the Maryland EXCELS/Maryland Accreditation system at: excels.marylandexcels.org and select the **Create User Account** tab.

The Maryland EXCELS/Maryland Accreditation application instructions screen.

Narrator: Step 2. Select Create User Account to set up a user account and password.

The Maryland EXCELS Create User Account screen.

Narrator: Step 3. Complete all required information on the form and select **Create User Account**.

Provider Kimberly Greene-Epps narrating from an early childhood classroom. The Find a Program Directory.

Kimberly Greene-Epps: After your program is accepted, your information will be shared with families through our online directory and outreach campaigns.

Provider Kimberly Greene-Epps narrating from an early childhood classroom. A Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating 5 badge displayed on a window.

Provider Kimberly Greene-Epps: A published quality rating and displaying your quality rating badge tell families that your program is committed to providing excellence.

A center director walking with parents on a playground.

Ashley Hensley: Focusing on achieving a quality rating 1 is an excellent place to begin with Maryland EXCELS.

Quality Assurance Specialist, Urceal Cook, narrating from an early childhood classroom.

Urceal Cook: It's important to remember that your program must publish a quality rating within 12 months.

Provider Sonya Odum narrating from an early childhood classroom. Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating Badges 1 through 5. Quality Rating 1 badge is highlighted.

Provider Sonya Odum: Achieving quality rating 1 was very easy for me. The uploading process is similar to uploading photos on social media. I had help from the Maryland EXCELS team when I needed it.

Quality Assurance Specialist Ashley Hensley narrating from an early childhood classroom. Children playing on a playground. Child playing with play dough.

Ashley Hensley: My main focus as a Quality Assurance Specialist is helping providers improve their quality of care. This involves conducting on-site visits, providing suggestions for program improvement, and offering training and one-on-one support.

Provider Annie Reyes narrating from an early childhood classroom. A Maryland EXCELS Rating Checklist for Level 5. Annie Reyes reviewing a classroom and checking off items on a list.

Annie Reyes: In addition to my Quality Assurance Specialist, I was assigned a Program Coordinator who walked me through the necessary steps for uploading the documentation in Maryland EXCELS and showed me my individualized checklist within our program profile. I am grateful to have the support needed to guide our programs toward reaching the next quality rating!

The five Quality Assurance Specialists and child care providers looking at the camera and making a “come join us” gesture with their hands.

All: Come join us!

The Maryland EXCELS logo. The Maryland State Department of Education logo.

Narrator: For more information on Maryland EXCELS and how to participate in Maryland EXCELS, please visit MarylandEXCELS.org today.