FAQ with PQA

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VIRTUAL PLATFORM GUIDELINES

- Mute your microphone
- Sign-in using the chat box
- Type your questions in the chat box
- Open participant pane to select icons
  - raise hand
  - yes
  - no
  - more
- Change your view to full screen (top-right)
- Minimize the participant videos (top-right)

Outcomes

- Explain questions commonly asked by programs
- Answer additional questions and provide clarification
Will my program have external assessments conducted by a program quality assessor this year?

**July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021**
- External assessments will not be conducted by PQA
- Replace external assessments with internal assessments
  - Keystone STARS Standard EC 3.4.5 and EC 3.4.6

How do I conduct an internal assessment during COVID-19?
- Conduct an internal assessment using the POI of your choice.
- Take notes
- Be honest
- Be objective
- Use the results to develop a continuous quality improvement plan
  - Look at lower scoring areas and prioritize
  - Create goals that allow

Why are my scores lower and what does that mean about my STAR level?
How many assessments will be conducted at my program and which classrooms will be assessed?

Fiscal year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

Keystone STARS Standard EC 3.4.5
- Minimum of one assessment conducted for each age group served (classroom selected by site's internal assessment team)
- Age groups served depends on POI selected

Keystone STARS Standard EC 3.4.6
- Depends on the needs of the program

How it would be decided what tool is used in a mixed classroom?

In classrooms of mixed ages, the assessment tool will be determined by the age level that represents the highest number of enrolled children in the group: Infant; Toddler; Preschool; or School-age*.

4 infants + 2 toddlers = ITERS-R or CLASS Infant and CLASS Toddler
5 Kindergarten + 8 1st-3rd grade children = SACERS-U or CLASS K-3
20 Kindergarten children = ECERS-R, ECERS 3, or CLASS K-3

*Young school-age, older school-age, and preschool age ranges as defined by DHS Certification Regulations.

What is the difference between sanitizing and disinfecting?

Sanitizing
- Sanitizer is a product that reduces germs on inanimate surfaces to levels considered safe by public health codes or regulations.
- Eating surfaces (tables, highchairs, trays)

Disinfecting
- Disinfectant is a product that destroys or inactivates germs on an inanimate object.
- Diaper changing surfaces, contaminated bathroom surfaces “same sink” prior to food-related handwashing

Please use DISINFECTANTS, rather than SANITIZERS during the COVID-19 pandemic.
How long do I have to leave the sanitizer/disinfectant on the surface?

- If using a premixed commercial product, follow the manufacturer’s instructions on the label.
- It is no longer possible to provide a generic bleach recipe for sanitizing in early care and education programs. Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered bleach.
- [https://nrckids.org/Files/Appendix/Appendix2020.pdf](https://nrckids.org/Files/Appendix/Appendix2020.pdf)

What needs to be listed on my sanitizer or disinfectant bottle?

- All containers/spray bottles used for sanitizing or disinfecting must be inaccessible to children when not in use and labeled with the following:
  - Name of the product
  - The product's intended use (sanitizer or disinfectant)
  - Product EPA registration number
  - Dilution recipe
  - Contact time required to effectively sanitize
  - Other directions relevant to proper usage

Information on bottle labeling can be found on the PA Position Statements.

Do I have to disinfect the sink between each child?

- If same sink is used, it must be disinfected prior to handwashing for meals/snacks.
- If children use the toilet, wash hands, and then immediately sit down for meal/snack, disinfection does not need to occur between each child.
- Contamination of children’s hands at the toileting sink must be minimized by having children/adults turn off the faucet with a paper towel (or leave it running between children).
When do I have to wash the children’s hands and my hands?

**When to wash**
- Upon arrival or after being outdoors
- Before & after meals/snacks and meal/snack prep
- After toileting routines
- When hands are visibly soiled
- After dealing with bodily fluids
- After sand play
- Before and after shared water and shared moist or wet materials

**How to wash**
- Wash: Wash hands with water and use soap or hand sanitizer
- Rub: Rub hands together with soap for at least 20 seconds
- Rinse: Rinse hands free of soap under running water
- Dry: Dry hands thoroughly with a clean paper towel or an air blower
- Turn off: Turn off faucet using paper towel and throw the used paper towel into a hands-free trash can

Can I give a child water instead of milk at lunch?  

- Grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Protein
- Dairy

*USDA Meal Guidelines

My preschoolers don’t nap, so I can just N/A nap/rest, right?

- Score NA only if no nap is offered in a part day program (four hours or less)
- The Nap item will be scored for programs that offer care over four hours.
- Offering a quiet time, providing an option for children to nap, and providing the necessary provisions (mat, blanket, etc.), are good practices even if children do not choose to nap.
If I use crib dividers or shelves, do I still need 36” on three sides of cribs/cots/mats?

• Only natural corners can be used to separate cribs/maps/cots on two sides.
• 36” on three sides is best practice and expected to ensure supervision and address health practices.

I have a fence, why do I need bollards?

A discrete barrier, such as structural bollards, trees, or posts, should be placed along any side of the playground which is within 30 feet of streets or parking lots, to prevent a vehicle from accidentally entering the space.

Do SMART boards/tablets count as screen time?

• Any animation on a screen that children can view is considered screen time.
• Using a SMART board for calendar or weather without animation is not considered screen time.
• The American Academy of Pediatrics states that children under the age of two should not be allowed to view television.
How do I limit wait times? What can I do if children must wait?

- Review your schedule and limit the number of transitions.
- Plan small groups
- Prepare engaging activities

Using the chat box, share some of your transition ideas/activities you use.

Resources

- The Pennsylvania Key [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org)
  - Keystone STARS
  - Program Quality Assessment
  - COVID-19 resources and links
  - Professional Development Registry
- Environment Rating Scales Institute (ERSI)
  [https://www.ersi.info/index.html](https://www.ersi.info/index.html)

I NEVER LEARN ANYTHING TALKING. I ONLY LEARN THINGS WHEN I ASK QUESTIONS.

~Lou Holtz