

Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives. – William A Foster

Background

- Longstanding concerns over the quality of children’s residential care
- Child advocates and residential care providers need to take a proactive approach to defining what comprises quality residential care
- Quality services produce favorable outcomes for youth and their families using the best available practice knowledge
- Measuring quality allows for continuous improvement of services and a means for advocacy and external accountability
- The quality standards were identified by research examining factors related to better outcomes for youth in residential care

Method

- A grey-literature review was conducted for materials outlining quality standards for residential treatment programs for youth
- Seven English-language sources advancing quality standards for residential care were identified and summarized in a cross-walk
 1. Child Welfare League of America (2004). Standards of excellence: CWLA standards of excellence for residential services. Washington, DC: Author.
 2. Community Care Behavioral Health (2012). Performance standards: Individualized residential treatment/community rehabilitation residential host home. State College, PA: Author.
 3. Daly, D. L., & Peter, V. J. (1996). National performance standards for residential care: A policy initiative from Father Flanagan's' Boy's Home. Boys Town, NE: Father Flanagan's Boys' Home.
 4. Department of Communities (2010). A contemporary model of residential care for children and young people in care. Brisbane, AU: Author.
 5. Department of Health and Children (2001). National standards for children's residential centres. Dublin, IRL: The Stationary Office.
 6. Houston, M., Trivedi, H., Axelson, A., Barron-Seabrook, S., Berland, D., Glasser, M., ... Sarvet, B. (2010). Principles of care for treatment of children and adolescents with mental illnesses in residential treatment centers. Washington, DC: American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.
 7. Skinner, A. (1992). Another kind of home: A review of residential child care. Glasgow, SCT: The Scottish Office.

Quality Standards

It is essential that quality standards for residential care are:

- Applicable – directly relevant to the work you are doing
- Practicable – involve practices that can be (and are being) done
- Flexible – have to be adaptable to populations, settings
- Measurable – you cannot manage what you do not measure

Quality Standards Assessment (QSA)

Specific, operational conditions guiding the provision of quality care
A framework of standards that inform the infrastructure, processes, experiences, and outcomes that make up the care environment and guide treatment

- Directly related to the identified Quality Standards
- A measurable, validated set of standards designed for use in continuous quality improvement efforts
- Transportable, adaptable to meet multiple service settings
- Multidimensional
- Multi-informant

Quality is Multidimensional

Practices associated with improved outcomes have been used as the basis for developing quality standards

Research-based approaches to quality standards has shown that no one dimension defines quality care

Quality residential care entails a diverse set of criteria:

- **Assessment and service planning** (e.g., assessment-driven services, individualized service planning, measurable goals)
- **Positive and safe environment** (e.g., no abuse, youth rights respected, effective crisis management, prevention of self-harm)
- **Monitor and report problems** (e.g., staff report problems, grievance process, independent audits, stakeholder satisfaction)
- **Family, culture, and spirituality** (e.g., families involved in treatment decisions, culturally sensitive, reunification focus)
- **Professional and competent staff** (e.g., qualified staff, comprehensive training, criminal screening, supportive supervision)
- **Effective program elements** (e.g., family-like program, normalization activities, collaborative care, evidence-based practices)
- **Education, skills, and outcomes** (e.g., academic testing, special education support, skill development, vocational training)
- **Transition planning and aftercare** (e.g., transition and discharge planning, aftercare services, follow-up outcomes)

Measurement Requires Multi-Perspectives

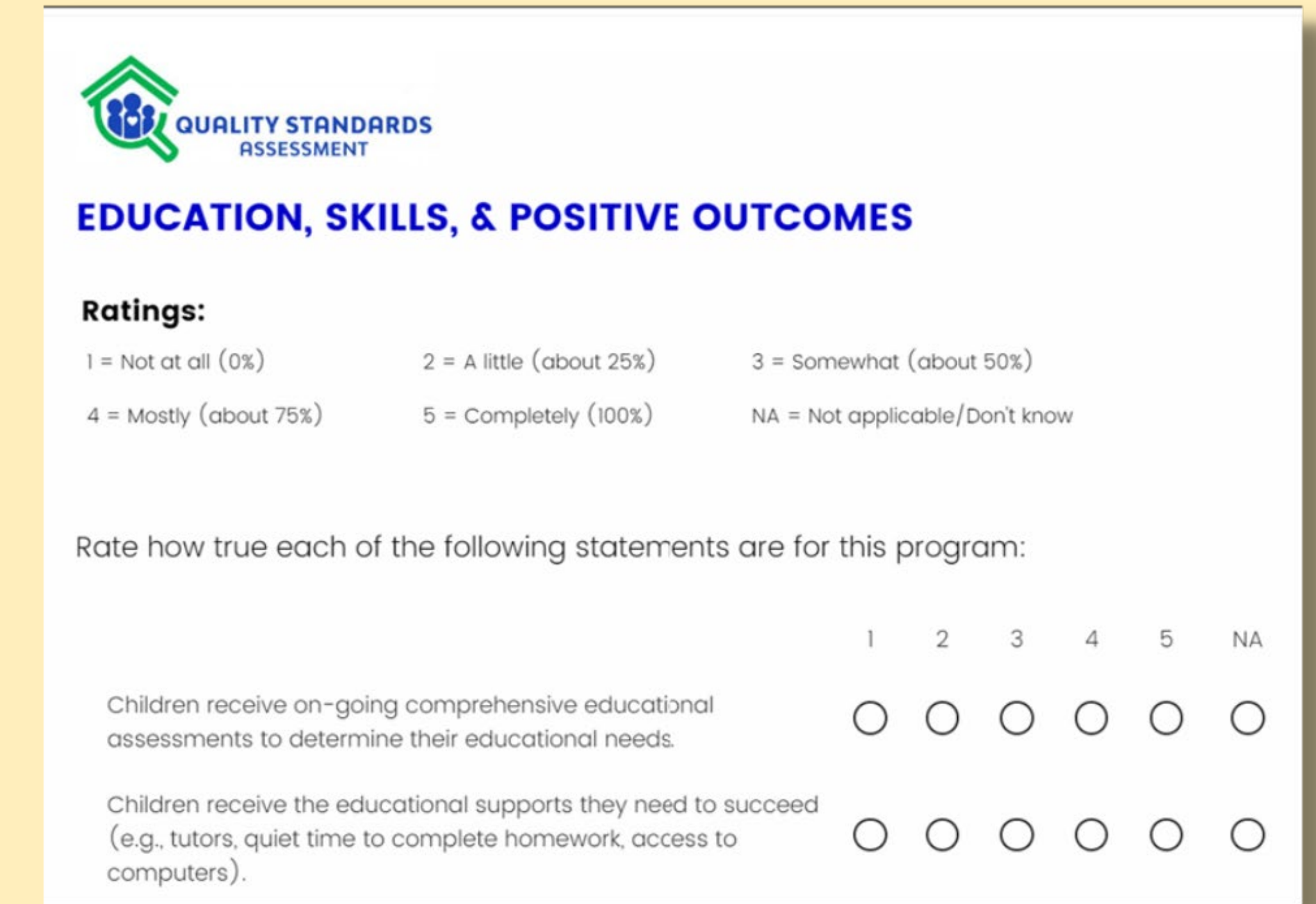
Multi-perspective measurement is necessary to obtain a balanced assessment of residential care quality

There are three types of participants in the residential care process:

- Those receiving care (youth)
- Those providing care (service provider)
- Those providing funding and oversight (external agencies)

QSA Survey

- Online Qualtrics data entry
- Multiple versions – Staff, partner agencies, youth



EDUCATION, SKILLS, & POSITIVE OUTCOMES

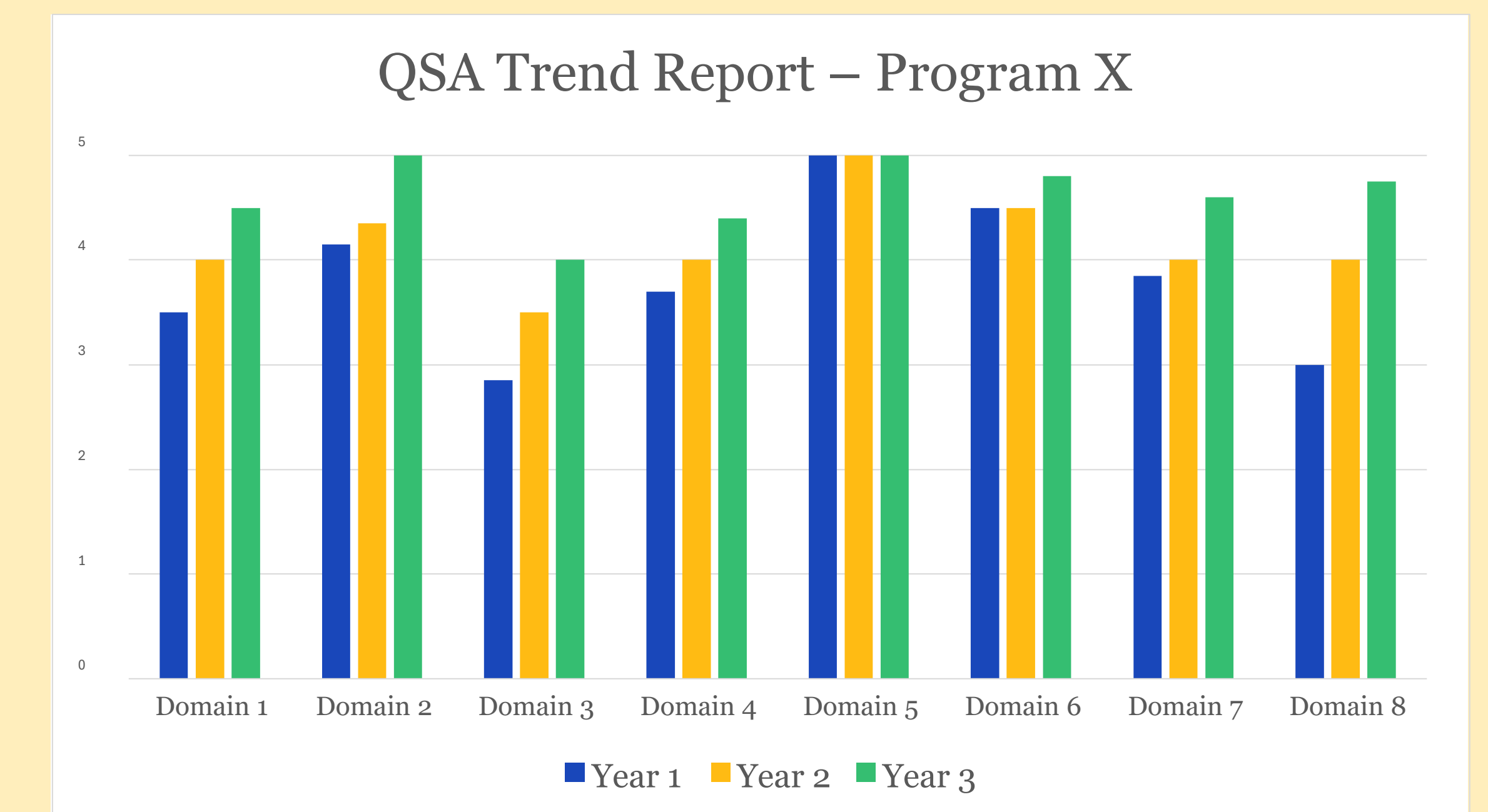
Ratings:
 1 = Not at all (0%) 2 = A little (about 25%) 3 = Somewhat (about 50%)
 4 = Mostly (about 75%) 5 = Completely (100%) NA = Not applicable/Don't know

Rate how true each of the following statements are for this program:

	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Children receive on-going comprehensive educational assessments to determine their educational needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children receive the educational supports they need to succeed (e.g. tutors, quiet time to complete homework, access to computers).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

QSA Reporting Example

- Track performance trends to evaluate practice and quality improvement initiatives



Quality Standards

- Quality encompasses a comprehensive set of criteria with no one dimension defining quality care
- By emphasizing that which is vital, quality standards simplify service provision and facilitate improved outcomes
- The quality standards are an exemplary case of using research evidence to inform program design and daily clinical practice (i.e., evidence-based practice)

Poster PDF

Quality Standards

Related Articles

IQCS Website

