



ATTACHMENT C

**QUALITY CRITERIA FOR CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS
(IN ADDITION TO STEP UP TO QUALITY STANDARDS & INDICATORS)**

Participants in endowment grants must work in partnership with other community entities to maintain the highest quality required by any entity in the partnership (i.e., Head Start/Early Head Start Performance Standards, Child Care Licensing.)

QUALITY CRITERIA	Minimum Criteria to Apply	Additional Requirements & Implementation Timeline
Staff Qualifications	<p><u>Program Coordinator (PC)</u>- Sixpence Child Care Partnerships require a PC to be a certified teacher with 9 college credit hours in Early Childhood Education, recognized by NDE Rule 11. The PC must be employed by or contracted (directly or indirectly) with the school district, with salary and benefits commensurate with the district. The PC shall possess the experience and skills to provide grant management and mentoring/coaching opportunities with the child care provider(s) and demonstrate a connectedness to the district's resources.</p> <p>If PC and Coach are not the same person, Coaches should have a degree in early childhood education or a related field, have excellent oral and written communication skills, strong interpersonal skills and the ability to develop reports and track data. Ideally, Coaches have at least five years of experience working in early childhood or a related field in a leadership role or as a coach or mentor.</p>	<p><u>Child Care Partners (CCPs)</u> must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be enrolled in Step Up To Quality (SU2Q); prior to entering into a formal partnership, via Letter of Agreement with grantee, prior to the beginning of the initial grant period; ○ participate in coaching; ○ achieve a Step 3 within 3 years; ○ maintain at least a Step 3 in order to continue partnering beyond the initial three-year grant term; ○ if lost, CCPs must re-attain at least a Step 3 to enter into a formal partnership beyond the initial three-year grant term. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Step Up to Quality Program Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnerships for further guidance. • As determined by the CCP, the PC/coach is preferred to be, but is not required to be, the SU2Q coach.
Professional Development	<p>PC must have training/ knowledge/ experience in reflective supervision, infant-toddler development, family engagement, and management of an early childhood program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC/Coach shall be cross trained as, and adhere to the requirements of, a SU2Q coach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2-day NE EC Coach Training ○ 1-day SU2Q Training ○ Coach Booster Trainings • PC/Coach shall attend the Introduction to Environment Rating Scale and Practice Using the ERS trainings, and Introduction to CLASS. • PCs/Coaches will participate in required meetings and trainings facilitated by Sixpence TA and/or SU2Q • See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.

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Consultation/Coaching	It is recommended that one dedicated full time PC should partner with at least 5, but no more than 7 groups (classrooms/family child care homes) of infants/toddlers. Fewer groups of children should be included in the partnership if the PC will not be a full time employee, or if they will have other non-Sixpence grant responsibilities. This recommended ratio can be applied to communities with fewer than 5 CCPs, and should NOT deter a community from applying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon grant term beginning, all CCPs receive face-to-face consultation/coaching at least weekly with the PC coach. As the grant term continues, and all parties agree, fewer contacts are appropriate and allowable, but face-to-face contacts should occur no less than monthly throughout the course of the grant. • If not the same person, the PC and SU2Q coach will collaborate to insure the programs' needs are met without being burdensome. A Quality Action Plan will be developed which guides the Sixpence funds to support the CCPs' progress towards higher quality. The consultation/ coaching shall include education, and opportunity to reflect upon practice and problem solve around children's needs.
Supervision		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Supervisor has specific training in reflective supervision, infant-toddler development, early childhood program management, and is aware of child care regulations. • PC/Coach receives individual or group supervision at least weekly, and this includes education, coaching and an opportunity to reflect upon practice and problem solve around PC/Coach's/CCPs needs. • Coordinated supervision can be provided by more than one person and must include a process to verify grant compliance (i.e. documentation review.)

<p>Community Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has Partnership Agreements with ancillary community organizations to promote the access of children and families to community services that are responsive to their needs. • Whenever possible and feasible, districts should provide an opportunity for all of the existing child care providers within the community to become a partner, to whichever degree is mutually agreeable. If not feasible to include all CCPs, applicants should establish selection criteria to prioritize programs serving the highest numbers of at-risk infants and toddlers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to serving children through Sixpence, Partnership Agreements and/or contracts clearly define roles and responsibilities of each entity, address procedures for handling grievances, liabilities, and how the agreement will be affected should enrollment of Sixpence qualifying children falls below threshold, as well as assurance that funding will be used for the intended purpose of serving Sixpence qualifying children. • Partnership Agreements are updated annually, and more often as needed. • A local early childhood advisory committee that includes early childhood professionals, families and community members is required. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If there is an Early Head Start/Head Start program that serves the community, that program must be provided an opportunity to serve on the advisory committee. Additional representation might include the following: existing early childhood care and education providers, preschools, providers of early intervention and early childhood special education services, Planning Region Teams, Early Learning Connections Coordinators, resource and referral agencies, parents, and health and social service personnel. ○ An existing early childhood advisory group can meet the requirement for the advisory group if the representation includes those persons listed above and the mission of the group is expanded to encompass the purpose of this program. ○ Each organization represented on the local early childhood advisory committee must provide a statement specifying how they are involved in the grant, including any match that they intend to provide. ○ Meetings must follow Nebraska's Open Meeting Act, be held on a frequency, location, and time that is respectful of program and members, especially parents' needs.
<p>Staff/Child Ratio, Group Size, & Health & Safety</p>	<p>CCPs must meet or exceed state child care licensing regulations and be in good standing with child care licensing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCPs must maintain good standing status with child care licensing. • See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.

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Family Involvement		<p>Within 1 year of serving children through Sixpence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active parental participation on Advisory Committee. • PC and CCP must conduct at least two parent/caregiver conferences annually. • Offer ongoing opportunities for parent involvement and at least monthly parent education opportunities that include, but aren't exclusive to; car seat safety, safe infant sleep practices, child medical needs, prenatal care, abstinence from smoking, alcohol, and drugs while pregnant, breastfeeding, brain development, nutrition, physical activity/outdoor play, post partum depression, child and parental mental health/stress, and trauma/toxic stress, and technology use guidelines using Sixpence Technology Use Position Statement. Such education topics can be provided as a group or individually. If families aren't able to attend the group, information is shared individually. • Program provides written information about philosophy, policies and procedures which shall encourage family engagement. • See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.
Classroom Practices/ Curriculum		See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.
Developmental Screening & Assessment		See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.
Inclusive Practices		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An average of 50% of infants and toddlers served by all CCPs qualify under at least one of the identified risk factors. • See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.

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<p>Evaluation</p>		<p>CCPs must participate in SU2Q and show improvement in quality to achieve a Step 3 within 3 years. To track progress towards that outcome, CCPs must participate in evaluation as determined by Sixpence Board of Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ITERS/FCERS: Baseline and beginning of years 2 & 3 if Step 3 hasn't been achieved ○ For CCPs to continue partnering beyond the first three-year grant term, they must have achieved a Step 3 and continue working towards a Step 4/5. Therefore, CCPs shall submit rating requests annually and request SU2Q to provide an ERS observation for rating purposes. For CCPs who have achieved a Step 5, utilization of an existing observation tool such as CLASS or TPITOS* for centers or ITERS or Benchmarks of Quality* for FCCHs may be submitted to UNMC-MMI for evaluation purposes. *For programs implementing Pyramid. For programs not implementing Pyramid, UNMC-MMI will coordinate a video-based CLASS (centers) or in-person ITERS (FCCHs) observation annually after Step 5 has been achieved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Supplemental Guide for Sixpence Child Care Partnership Grant Programs Participating in Step Up to Quality for further guidance.
<p>Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program must offer services (provided by the CCP, and by the PC) on a full-day, year-round basis, meeting the needs of working families. • If a fee is charged to families, a child care subsidy agreement must be in place. 	<p>Upon grant term beginning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partner programs/providers are expected to maintain records providing evidence of sound, professional financial practices. • Programs must have an attendance policy that encourages consistent attendance, filling vacancies within a reasonable timeframe and is clearly communicated to families upon enrollment. • Programs must implement and maintain a process for ensuring that children most at-risk are enrolled in the program. • If grant funds are used to support child care scholarships, programs must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have a system to provide oversight and accountability, and ○ support continuity once the child ages out of Sixpence, and ○ utilize an application system which describes the selection criteria and attempts to utilize child care subsidy before scholarship funds will be disbursed. • The school district of enrollment is required to assign an NDE Individual Student Identifier from the Nebraska UniqID System to each child served by this grant, regardless of their anticipated home school enrollment. • In addition to Child Care Subsidy (required,) all publicly-available funding

RED indicates clarification/change effective July 1, 2019

		sources such as CACFP should be utilized. PC/Coach shall assist CCP and families in obtaining application and approval.
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Note: Additional Quality Criteria may be developed for programs who achieve a Step 3 prior to year 3 or for continuation funding beyond initial three-year grant term.