



BETTER CHILDCARE = STRONGER FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

At United Way, we believe every child deserves a great start – and that starts with having high-quality childcare centers where they can learn, grow, and feel safe. We've been working hard to make sure the centers in our region are the best they can be, so parents can feel good about where they send their kids, and teachers can get the support they need to do their jobs well.



877 teachers in our area utilized United Way programs to help improve the quality of care they provide. Because of their hard work, they could earn up to **\$2.8 million in extra pay** – a well-deserved reward for the important role they play in shaping our kids' futures.



192 childcare centers are serviced by our United Way Early Learning Team – that's **558 classrooms** - helping them meet Virginia's quality standards for early education.



1321 teachers received hands-on training and support from United Way to make sure their classrooms are welcoming, fun, and ready for learning.



UNITED WAY
Virginia's Blue Ridge

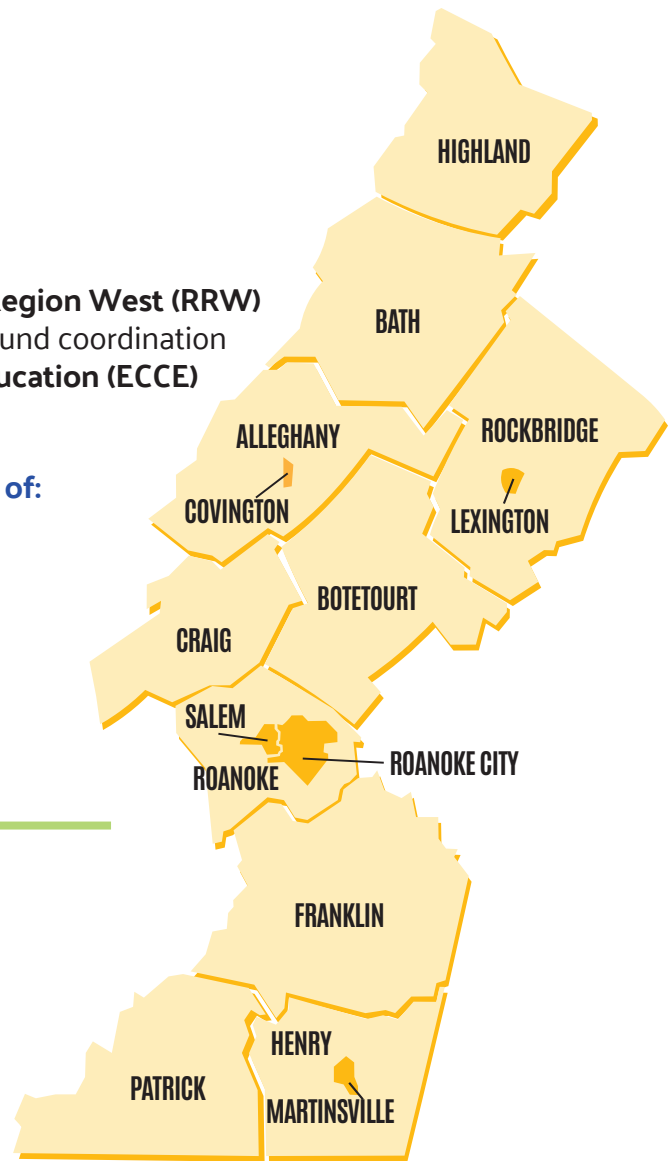
READY REGION WEST

WHO WE ARE

United Way of Virginia's Blue Ridge serves as the **Ready Region West (RRW)** lead. The Ready Regions lead is responsible for on-the ground coordination and integration of essential **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)** services and resources.

Ready Region West consists of the cities and counties of:

- Buena Vista
- Lexington
- Roanoke
- Covington
- Martinsville
- Salem
- Alleghany
- Franklin
- Roanoke
- Bath
- Henry
- Rockbridge
- Botetourt
- Highland
- Craig
- Patrick



23,680

Children under the age of 5 years old



16,411

Child care slots in the region

DEDICATED TO:



Quality Improvement

We will ensure all components are in place to coordinate quality measurement and guide improvement in publicly funded classrooms as part of VQB5.



Increase Access

We will build and strengthen better processes to help parents learn about and access Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in their community, while helping ECCE providers connect with families as part of Coordinated Enrollment and Mixed Delivery.



Building Relationships

We will engage with leaders across the region to facilitate buy-in for shared accountability and benefit.



Family Engagement

We will establish and strengthen strategies and structures to ensure family engagement.



540-777-4200



@readyregionwest



uwvbr.org/ready-region-west/



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WHAT IS VQB5?

VQB5 is short for Virginia Quality Birth to Five and is a system developed by the Virginia Department of Education with the goal of measuring and improving the quality of all publicly-funded birth-to-five classrooms, supporting families in choosing quality programming, and offering children learning experiences to prepare them for kindergarten.

VQB5 helps families learn about different birth-to-five programs so they can choose a program that best meets their needs.

Publicly-funded birth-to-five classrooms include:

- Child Care Centers
- Family Day Homes
- VPI/ECSE in public schools
- Head Start facilities

What does it mean if my child is enrolled in a VQB5 site?

VQB5 sites focus on providing interactions and using quality curriculum. Your child's teacher receives CLASS observations, feedback and support multiple times a year. The quality of a VQB5 site is measured by teacher-child interactions that are developmentally-appropriate and the use of comprehensive curriculum.

A high-quality curriculum defines specific, sequenced learning goals to meet all children's individual needs, including children with disabilities, suspected delays, or other special needs, and provides developmentally appropriate structure and sequence to classroom activities that promote children's engagement.

In VQB5, **over 30,000 CLASS observations** are completed annually in **over 10,000 infant, toddler and preschool classrooms**, including family day homes. This provides educators with frequent and actionable feedback to guide improvement.

HOW DO I FIND VQB5 SITES?

Visit earlychildhoodquality.doe.virginia.gov/ or **scan QR Code** bellow to start searching for VQB5 sites and view **Quality Profiles** on the providers in your area.

This new website provides families clear and comparable quality and learning information about quality for over 3,100 sites in Virginia. This includes VPI/ESCE in public schools, head starts, childcare centers, and family day homes that participated in the VQB5 this past year.

What are Quality Profiles?

VQB5 Quality Profiles include information about performance on quality measurements, curriculum used, where the sites public funding comes from, and general information about the site.



JOIN THE READY REGION WEST FAMILY HUDDLE

Our Family Huddle is designed for parents, caregivers, and guardians of children from birth to 5 years old to share valuable information about available childhood services.

Families will have the opportunity to provide beneficial feedback to enhance services throughout the region.

Join the huddle, use your voice, and we can make a change together!

To get involved and learn more, email:
families@uwrw.org



ASQ

Ages and Stages Developmental Screening Questionnaires for Children provides reliable, accurate development and social-emotional screening for children between 1 month and 5 1/2 years.



SMART2START

Find the best early child care and education options for your family today by scanning the QR code or visiting:

www.Smart2Start.org



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READY REGION WEST PRESCHOOL PROGRAM GUIDE

Your Guide to Low or No Cost, High-Quality Preschool Programs with Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative, and Mixed Delivery



READY REGION

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HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START

Head Start:

Must be 3 or 4 years old by September 30th, a child who turns 3 after this date is eligible for attendance once reaching their 3rd birthday

Early Head Start:

Must be an infant or toddler younger than 3 years old

Children are eligible for no cost Head Start services if:

- Family's income is equal to or below 130% of the federal poverty guideline
- Child is in foster care
- Family is experiencing homelessness
- Family is receiving or is eligible for Public Assistance (SNAP, SSI, TANF)

Learn more about specific requirements and openings near you at Smart2Start.org



VIRGINIA PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE (VPI)

VPI:

Must be age 4 before September 30th, some programs serve children age 3

Children are eligible for no cost VPI slots at a public school program if:

- Family's income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty guideline
- Family is experiencing homelessness
- Parent/Guardian did not complete a high school program
- Child is eligible for special education services and has a disability or delay

Learn more about specific requirements and openings near you at Smart2Start.org



MIXED DELIVERY

Mixed Delivery:

Full Day, Full Year Care

Ages 0-4, must be of age before September 30th

Children are eligible for no cost Mixed Delivery slots at a Child Care Center if:

- Family's income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty guideline
- Family is experiencing homelessness
- Parent/Guardian did not complete a high school program
- Child is eligible for special education services and has a disability or delay
- Child is determined to be eligible based on local eligibility criteria unique to **Ready Region West**

Learn more about specific requirements and openings near you at Smart2Start.org

VIRGINIA'S CHILD CARE SUBSIDY ELIGIBILITY:

- Be a Virginia Resident
- Have a child who is not yet in kindergarten
- Household income below 85% of the state median income
- Child must be a citizen or legal resident in the United States

- Child's Immunization Records
- Documentation of Household Income
- Be actively employed, participating in an education or training program, or receiving child protective services



Smart2Start joins public school systems, Head Start programs and private providers to give all families access to early care and educational resources. Working together, we can ensure every child enters kindergarten with the skills needed to succeed in school and in life.

Family FAQ

1. How do I create my account?

Visit families.smart2start.org and click on the “**Apply or return to an in-progress application**” button or scan the following **QR Code**.



Get Started!

2. How do I log in?

Once you finish and submit the information for your account, **check your e-mail** for a log-in code.

**Be sure to check your spam folder*

3. How do I begin an application?

After you create your account and get signed in, click on the “**Apply or return to an in-progress application**” button, then follow the prompts and answer the questions.

Note: If you don’t have time to complete the application, just come back later! Your information will be saved.

4. What kind eligibility documents do I need?

Eligibility documentation includes: Photo ID, most recent wellness check, immunization record

5. How do I choose a provider?

Choose providers in order of preference. Providers shown are based on your location.

Click Submit

6. What’s next?

Family Navigators will reach out to confirm application info. Application will then go to preferred provider and provider will then contact you moving forward with enrollment.

To learn more about **Smart2Start** or for additional assistance,
visit smart2start.org or call **540.283.2777**.
