

PRESS RELEASE



East Texas Child Care Centers Complete Texas Rising Star Certification

Kilgore, TX, July 8, 2015: Nine child care providers in East Texas have recently completed their certification for the Texas Rising Star program. The Texas Rising Star (TRS) program is a voluntary, quality-based child care rating system of child care providers participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's subsidized child care program. TRS Certification is available to Licensed Center and Licensed and Registered Child Care Home providers who meet the certification criteria. The TRS Provider certification system offers three levels of certification (Two-Star, Three-Star, and Four-Star) to encourage providers to attain progressively higher certification requirements leading to a Four-Star level. A Texas Rising Star (TRS) provider is a child care provider that has an agreement to serve Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)-subsidized children and that voluntarily meets requirements that exceed the State's Minimum Child Care Licensing (CCL) Standards.

Newly certified providers in East Texas include: Noah's Ark in Brownsboro, 3-Star; Tender Learning in Grand Saline, 3-Star; Learning Express Station #2 in Gun Barrel City, 3-Star; The Growing Stick in Tyler, 4-Star; Kilgore College Child Development Center in Kilgore, 4-Star; L & M Christian in Marshall, 4-Star; Longview Child Development Center in Longview, 4-Star; See Saw Children's Place – Fairmont in Longview, 3-Star; and Love and Learn in Chandler, 3-Star.

Across Texas, parents and families enroll their children into child care programs, including center-based and home-based programs. Numerous research studies have shown that at-risk children who attend higher quality child care programs are more prepared for school entry than children who do not attend quality child care programs. These providers who voluntarily achieve TRS provider certification, offering quality care that exceeds the State's Minimum Child Care Licensing Standards for director and staff qualifications, caregiver-child interactions, age-appropriate curricula and activities, nutrition and indoor/outdoor activities, and parent involvement and education, are in a better position to contribute to the early development of children. As providers progress through the levels of TRS provider certification, they contribute progressively more to the development of the children they serve on a daily basis.

"If you are considering a child care facility for your child, whether this will be self-paid or if you will be receiving assistance from Workforce Solutions East Texas, just look for the Texas Rising Star logo," said ETCOG Director of Workforce & Economic Development, Doug Shryock. "With a Texas Rising Star certified agency, you will know you have chosen an organization who wants to do more than the minimum state requirements. These agencies are voluntarily exceeding expectations, and meeting higher standards, so that children get the best care and education possible."

The Workforce Solutions East Texas Board is committed to increasing child care quality in the fourteen county region it serves. It offered Child Development Associate credential training to TRS Providers in an effort to assist the TRS Providers maintain their TRS status. It also provided four Director Academies in an effort to assist TRS Provider Directors and Assistant Directors in creating a better child care quality setting for the children in East Texas. The

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Workforce Solutions East Texas Board will continue to offer trainings and assistance to East Texas Child Care Providers. For more information, contact ETCOG's Workforce & Economic Development Director, Doug Shryock, at (903) 218-6425.

About Workforce Solutions East Texas

It is the mission of the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board to improve the quality of life in this area through economic development by providing a first-class workforce for present and future businesses. The Board works in partnership with chief elected officials of the region and is the primary source of local workforce policy. The Workforce Solutions East Texas Board is one of 28 local Workforce Solutions Boards located throughout the state. The board serves Henderson, Van Zandt, Rains, Wood, Upshur, Camp, Marion, Harrison, Panola, Gregg, Rusk, Cherokee, Anderson and Smith counties. The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) serves as the administrating agency of the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board.

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