



ANNUAL REPORT for FY 2013

State Fiscal Year: July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013

Summary report of STARS participation, capacity and activity

Vermont's STep Ahead Recognition System has just completed its ninth year as an agent for engaging early childhood and school age programs in achieving standards that are associated with better outcomes for children, families and the professionals who work with them.

Over the past year, the STARS program repeated the growth pattern that has been characteristic of STARS since its inception. The total number of applications, including annual reports and renewals grew from 582 in FY 2012 to 753 in FY 2013, an increase of 203.

Table 1: Applications to STARS by month in FY 2013 compared to FY 2012.

	FY 2013	Increase over FY 2012
July	48	12
August	41	4
September	67	23
October	63	17
November	38	21
December	91	42
January	63	10
February	57	12
March	50	-6
April	61	28
May	68	0
June	99	28
total	753	203

Total programs in STARS FY 13: 739

Total regulated programs in Vermont: 1570

Percentage programs in STARS vs. all regulated programs: 47%

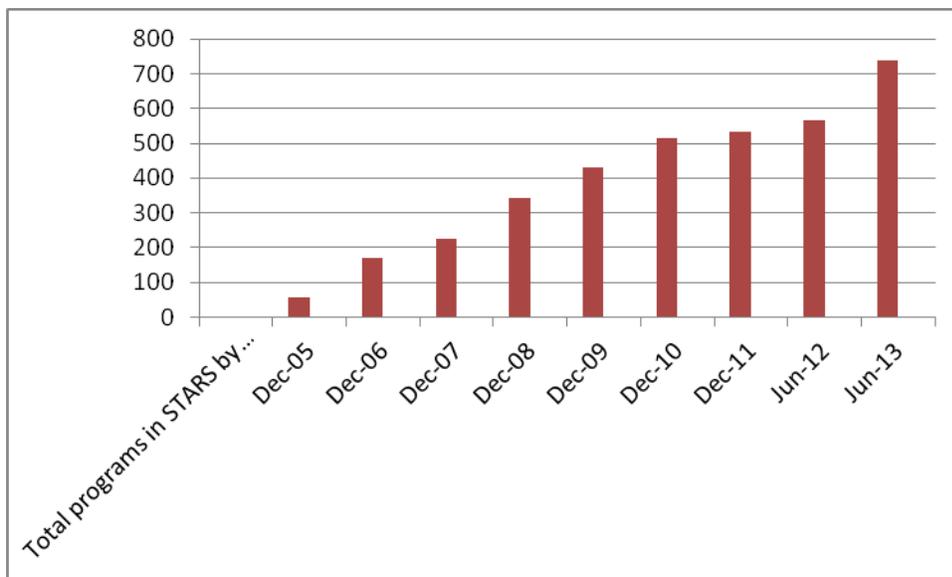
Total programs in STARS FY 12: 566 of 1592: 35% of total regulated programs

% increase over last year: 24%

Please note: STARS in capital letters refers to Vermont's STep Ahead Recognition System. When the word “stars” appears in lower case, it is referring to star levels.

SECTION 1: Information in this section describes numbers of programs in STARS, star levels of programs, and changes by year.

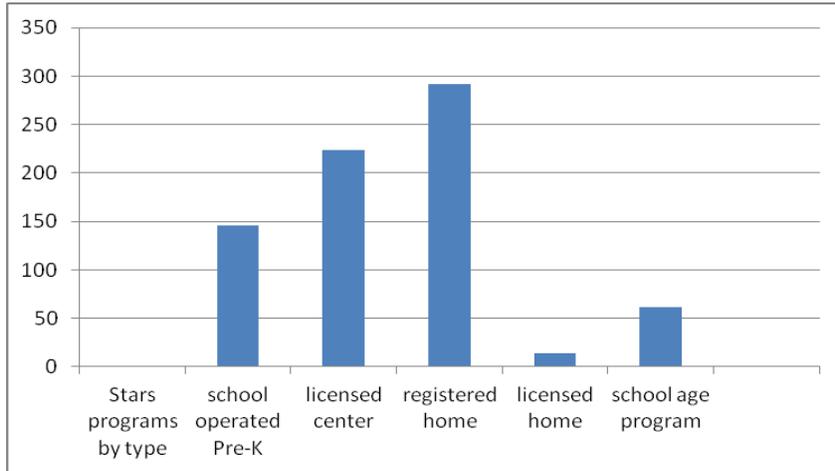
Table 2: Increase in STARS programs by year in STARS. This table shows the increase in the number of programs in STARS since it's inception, with the greatest increase (24%) taking place in the last year. This is attributed in large part to the development of mentorship projects sponsored by Vermont Birth to Three (VB3) and Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VAEYC), Child Care Resource and Windham Child Care Association.



As illustrated in Table 2, there are several years when the STARS program grew at a greater rate than others. In those years there were efforts made to increase incentives to participate in STARS. In 2008, legislation was passed mandating STARS participation at the 4 star level or higher or NAEYC accreditation in order for programs in ACT 62 partnerships and for school operated early childhood programs. In 2010, Child Care Financial Assistance reimbursement rates were linked to star level with higher reimbursement rates at higher star levels. In FY 2013, mentoring programs, incentives funded by Vermont Birth to Three including small equipment grants, publicity, and incentives for applying to STARS had the greatest impact on STARS participation.

Recommendation for future growth in STARS: Continue offering program support through mentoring and grant programs coupled with requirements for STARS participation and achievement linked to receipt of public funds.

Table 3: Total programs by each type in STARS.

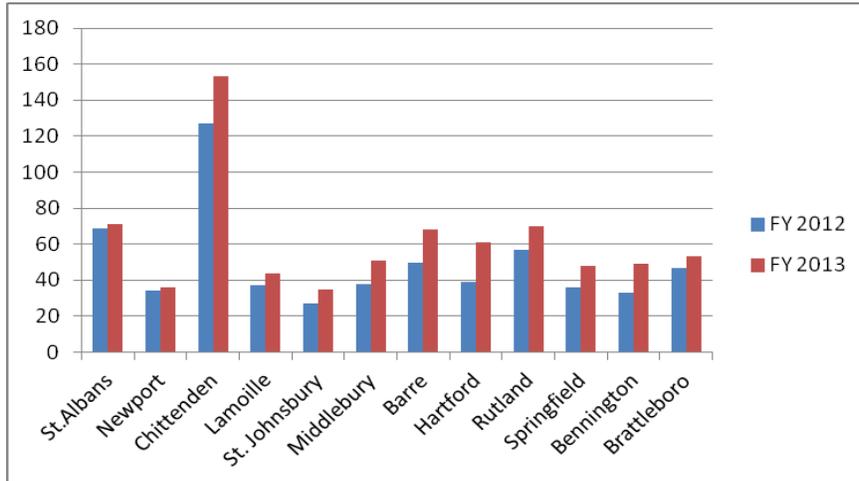


Please note: The label "licensed programs" refers to licensed centers, licensed homes and school operated Pre-K programs. Licensed school age programs are shown separately. Where School operated Pre-K is noted separately, the term "school operated Pre-K" refers to public school Pre-K programs and licensed centers or home providers providing pre-K services in partnerships with public schools.

Table 4: Percentage of programs in STARS by program type vs. total regulated programs by type.

	Total in STARS	Total in state	% of total
Registered homes	293	893	33%
Licensed programs	370	501	74%
School age programs	62	146	42%
Licensed homes	14	16	88%

Table 5: Programs in STARS in FY 12 vs FY 13 by AHS district



The above graph shows the growth in number of STARS programs in each AHS district over the past year.

Some districts have shown greater growth than others, and there could be several factors influencing this. In some regions there has been a lack of availability of mentors to provide support in applying to STARS. There are also economic factors that impact on STARS participating programs. Employment affects the numbers of families who need care for their children, which in turn affects the number of programs operating. In some regions, we have seen licensed programs downsizing or closing doors all together, at the same time as there are a high number of children in school based pre-K programs or in registered homes. In other regions the numbers of programs in STARS has not increased significantly because there already was a high number participating, and there is not that much room for growth.

Table 6: Change in Licensed programs by AHS district.

Licensed programs in STARS by AHS district	FY 12	FY 13	Total all Licensed in district	%increase FY 12 to FY 13	%total Licensed programs
St Albans	25	22	38	-12%	62%
Newport	17	17	25	0%	74%
Burlington	73	74	117	1%	60%
Lamoille	24	28	29	15%	93%
St Johnsbury	14	19	26	26%	68%
Middlebury	25	25	28	0%	83%
Barre	35	38	53	8%	72%
Hartford	28	35	47	20%	76%
Rutland	36	37	49	3%	77%
Springfield	17	17	21	0%	85%
Bennington	22	23	29	5%	79%
Brattleboro	32	35	34	9%	100%
total	348	370	501	6%	74%

Table 7: Change in Registered Homes by AHS district

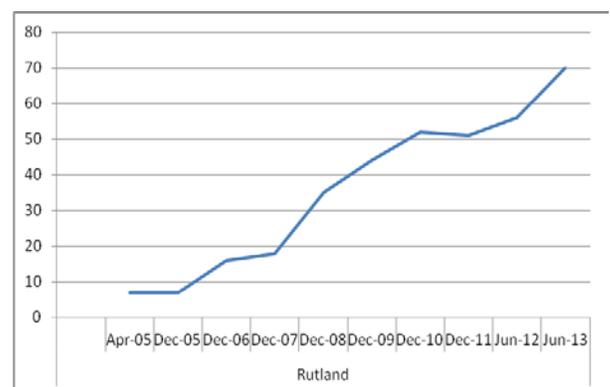
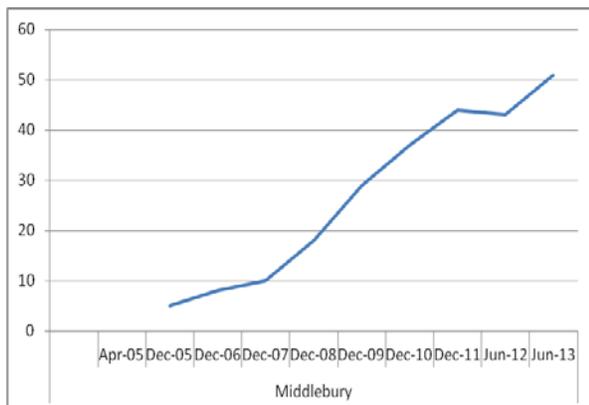
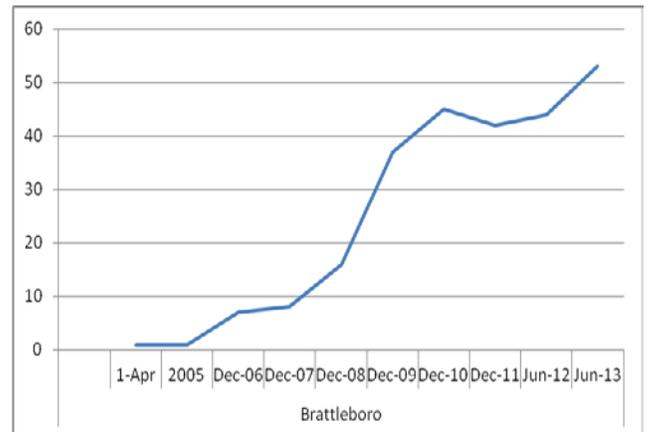
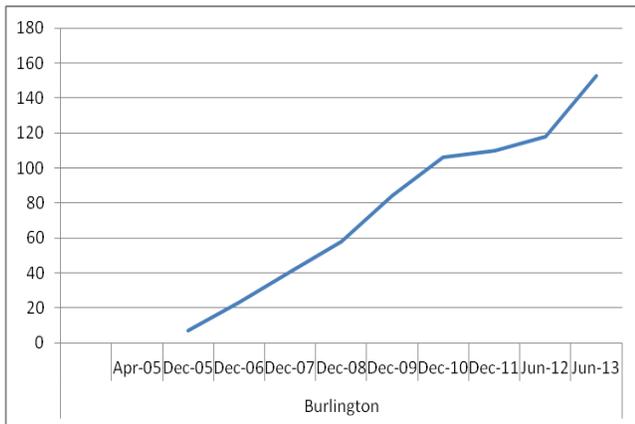
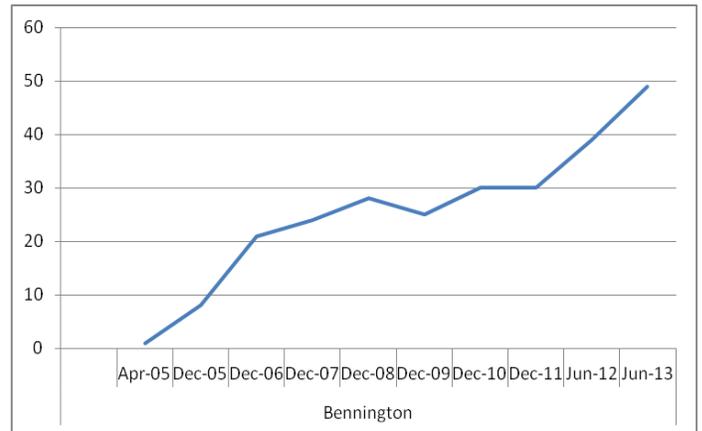
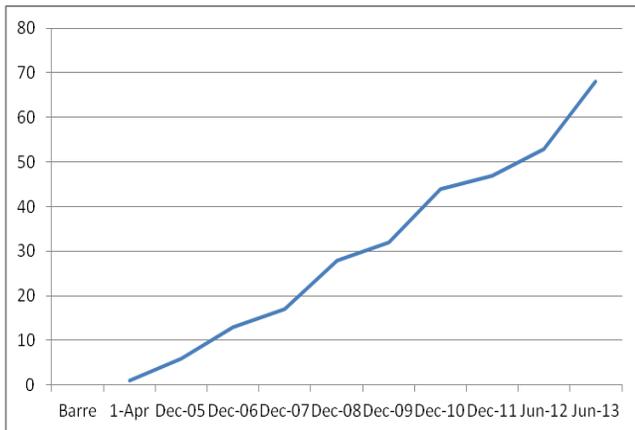
Registered homes by AHS district	FY 12	FY 13	Total Registered Homes in district	% increase FY 12 to FY 13	% district total Registered Homes
St Albans	41	46	150	11%	31%
Newport	17	18	54	6%	33%
Burlington	30	45	154	40%	29%
Morrisville	12	14	56	16%	25%
St. Johnsbury	8	15	54	47%	28%
Middlebury	11	21	54	48%	39%
Barre	9	21	109	58%	44%
Hartford	9	22	48	60%	46%
Rutland	16	26	84	39%	30%
Springfield	18	29	33	38%	87%
Bennington	10	21	60	53%	58%
Brattleboro	13	15	36	14%	35%
total	194	293	892	33%	40%

Table 8: Change in School Age programs by AHS district

School Age programs in STARS by AHS dist	FY 12	FY 13	% increase FY 12 to FY 13	Total School Age programs	% of total Licensed School Age Programs in district
St. Albans	3	3	0	4	75%
Newport	0	0	0	2	0%
Burlington	24	32	25%	40	80%
Morrisville	1	2	50%	5	40%
St Johnsbury	1	1	0	2	50%
Middlebury	2	3	33%	16	19%
Barre	5	7	29%	19	37%
Hartford	2	2	0	17	12%
Rutland	5	6	17%	18	33%
Springfield	1	2	50%	7	29%
Bennington	1	2	50%	7	29%
Brattleboro	2	2	0	9	22%
total	47	62	12%	146	36%

Table 9: Increase in programs by AHS district since 2005.

It is notable that in FY 12 some AHS districts showed a decline or no change in STARS participation. In FY-13 all AHS districts showed increase in the number of programs participating in STARS.



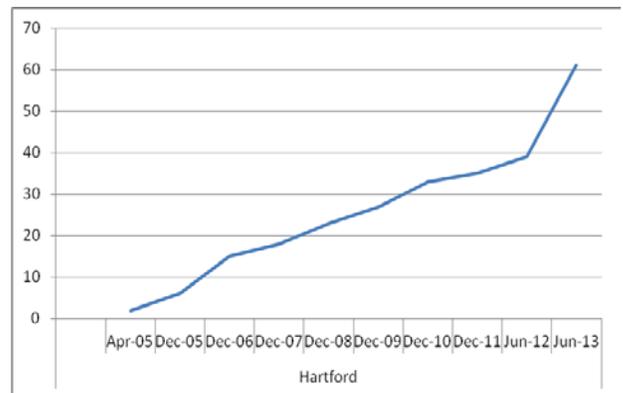
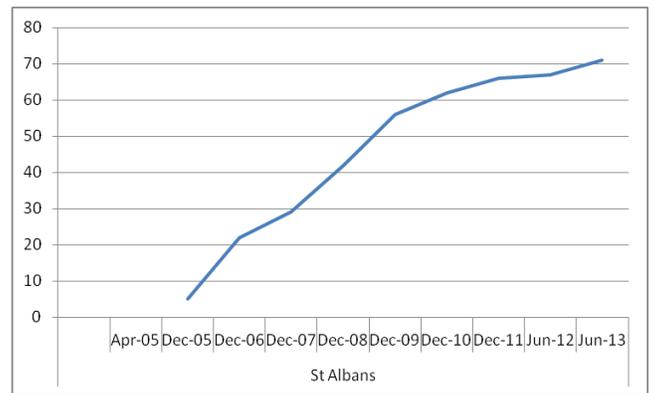
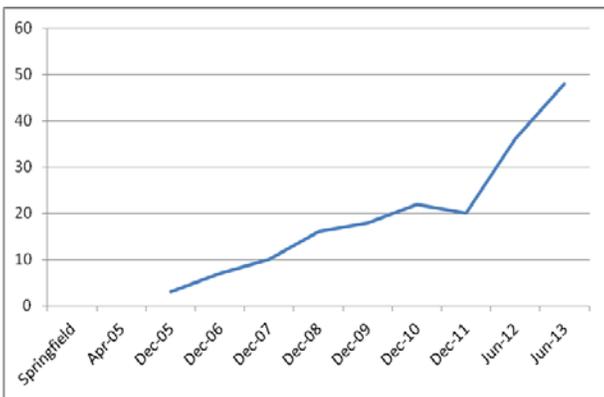
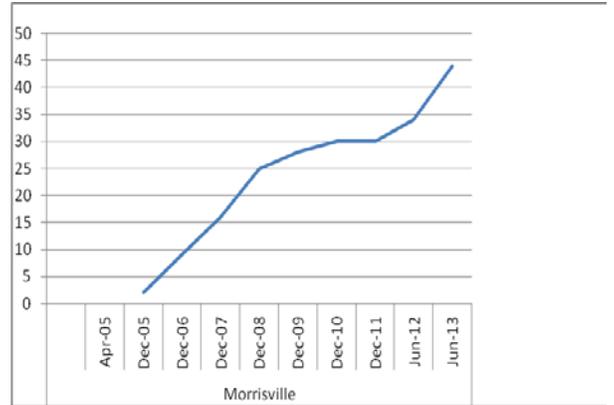
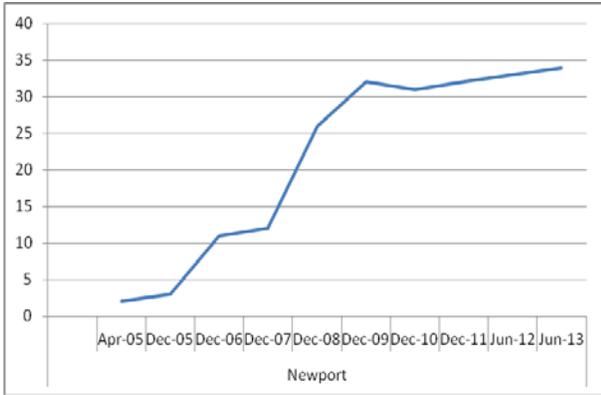
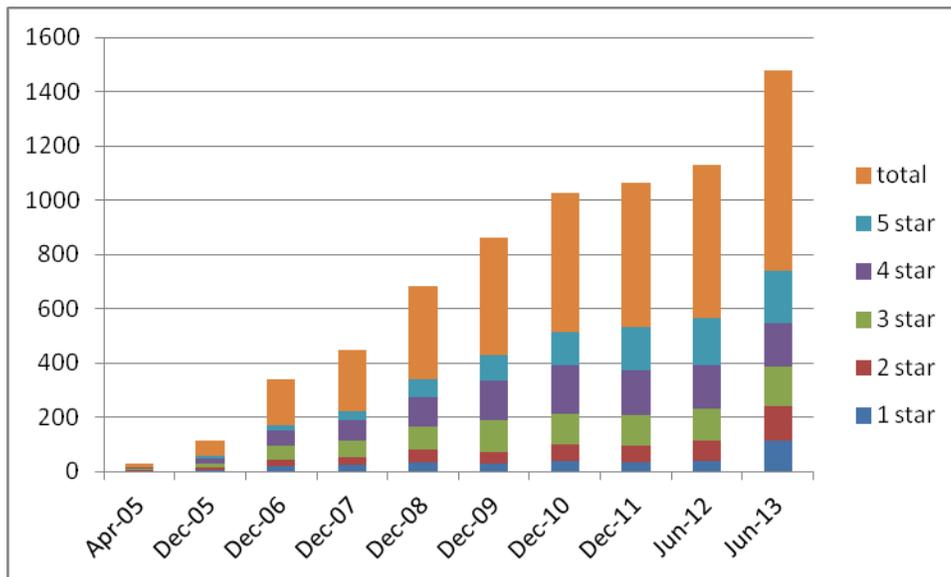


Table 10: Total STARS programs by AHS district. The following table combines the information shown in the graphs in Table 9 for the last two years, and includes percent of increase over last year and percent of regulated programs in each district.

Total programs in STARS by AHS district	FY 12	FY 13	Total regulated programs	% increase FY 12 to FY 13	% all regulated programs
St. Albans	69	71	189	3%	38%
Newport	34	35	80	3%	44%
Chittenden	127	153	321	17%	48%
Lamoille	37	44	94	16%	47%
St. Johnsbury	27	35	85	23%	41%
Middlebury	38	51	103	26%	50%
Barre	50	68	186	27%	37%
Hartford	39	61	112	37%	54%
Rutland	57	70	153	19%	46%
Springfield	36	48	62	25%	77%
Bennington	33	49	101	33%	49%
Brattleboro	47	53	84	12%	63%
total	565	739	1570	24%	47%

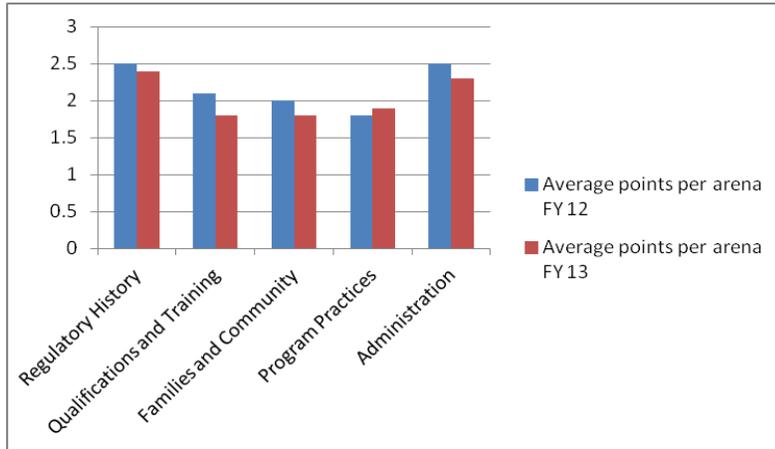
The next group of tables contains information about changes in point and star levels over time as well as points averages in the STARS arenas and changes in star levels by AHS district.

Table 11: Number of programs in STARS by year, and number of programs at each point level by year.



The table above shows the greatest increase in star levels for last year to this year at the one and two point level, with the most number of programs continuing to be at the five star level for the last three years. Programs entering STARS this year have largely been registered homes who have entered at the one and two star level.

Table 12: Change in average number of points per arena in the last 2 years.



As in previous years, STARS participants average the lowest number of points in the Program Practices Arena, even though the number of possible points is the highest. Programs earned points in the Regulatory History and Administration Arena went up as opposed to the other arenas. This is because points in the Compliance History and Administration arenas are the most easily accessible to programs applying to STARS for the first time, and as earlier stated, there has been an increase in the number of providers applying to STARS in the past year.

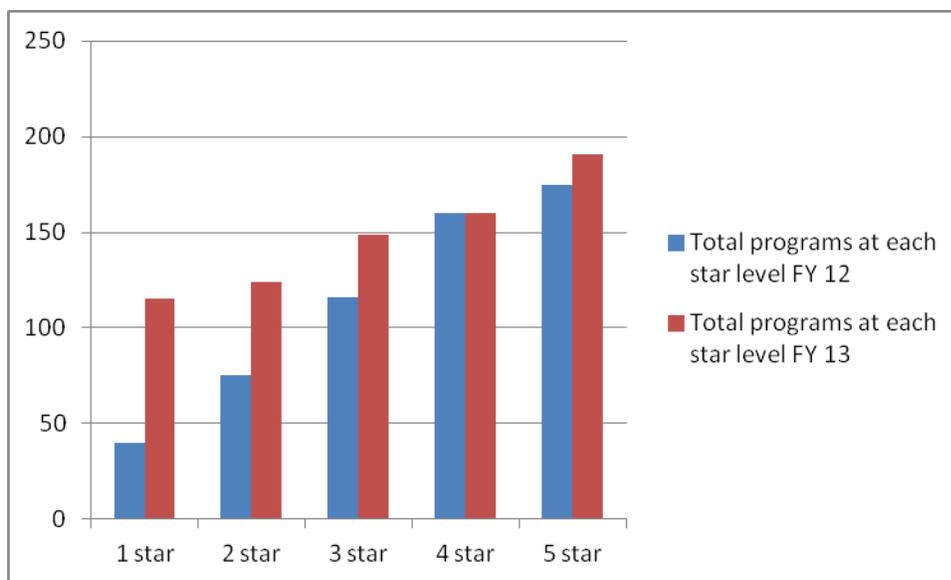
Reccommendation: Provide support for programs already in STARS to implement and document program activities and practices related to the Qualifications and Training, Families and Community and Program Practices arenas.

Table 13: Changes in star levels over the last 2 years. This group of tables and graphs shows the changes in STARS over the last two years, including the rate of change.

FY 12 licensed early childhood centers	# at star level	Total regulated programs	% licensed early childhood programs of total regulated programs.
1 star	8	31	26%
2 star	22	61	33%
3 star	51	113	45%
4 star	116	165	70%
5 star	142	161	88%
total	339	532	64%

FY 13 licensed early childhood centers	#at star level	Total regulated programs	% licensed early childhood programs of total regulated programs
1 star	13	82	16%
2 star	25	113	22%
3 star	63	135	47%
4 star	105	157	67%
5 star	159	178	89%
total	366	666	55%

Total number of programs at each star level FY 12 and FY 13.



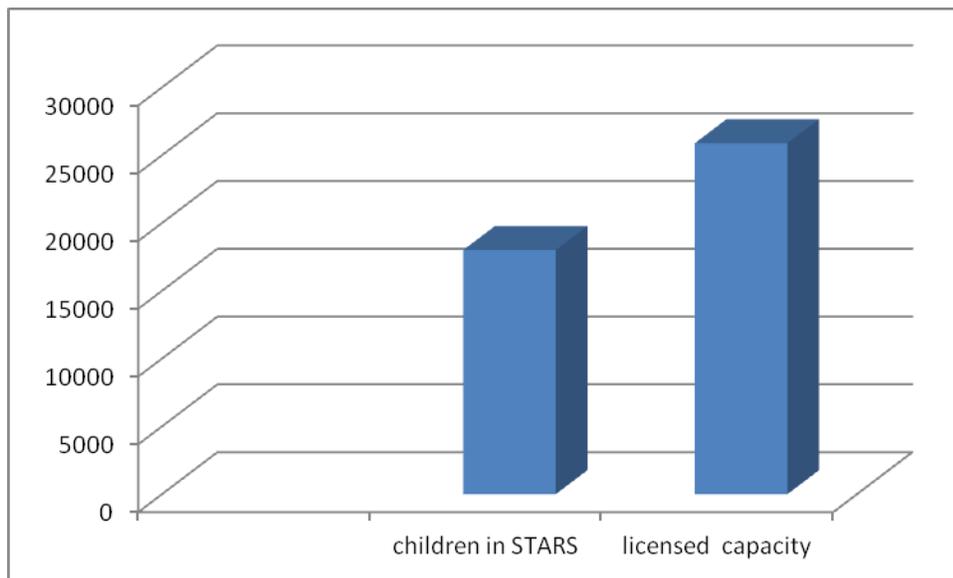
As previously noted, the number of programs at the one and two star levels have shown the greatest increase, with the number of programs at the 4 star level remaining the most static, and the number of programs at the 5 star level continuing to be the highest.

SECTION 2: The information in the next group of tables describes capacity and funding. The information will be broken down by funding source, program type and AHS district.

Table: 14 Programs at each star level in STARS vs all regulated programs in each AHS district.

AHS district	1 star	2 star	3 star	4 star	5 star	Total STARS programs	total regulated programs in district	% of total
St Albans	17	14	13	15	12	71	189	38%
Newport	4	2	10	7	12	35	80	44%
Burlington	18	17	25	40	53	153	321	48%
Morrisville	5	10	8	12	9	44	94	47%
St.J	7	5	5	9	9	35	84	42%
Middlebury	7	11	7	11	15	51	103	50%
Barre	18	9	15	11	15	68	186	37%
Hartford	9	15	14	12	11	61	112	54%
Rutland	10	15	14	13	18	70	153	46%
Springfield	14	5	12	7	10	48	62	77%
Bennington	5	10	12	8	14	49	101	49%
Brattleboro	2	9	14	15	13	53	84	63%
total	116	122	149	150	191	739	1507	47%

Table 15: Number of children in STARS programs and total licensed capacity for the state.



Total Children in STARS programs: 17,998

Total licensed capacity for the state: 25,883

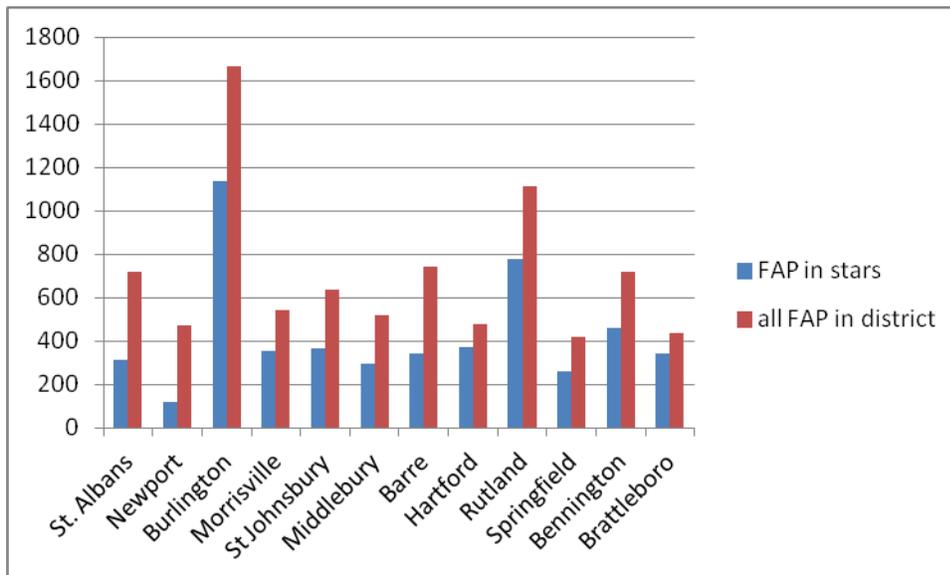
Percentage of children in STARS vs. licensed capacity: 70% , and increase of 13% over FY 12.

Table 16: Children in STARS programs as compared to licensed capacity in each AHS district

AHS district	Children in STARS programs	Total licensed capacity	%
St. Albans	1254	1149	109%
Newport	516	750	68%
Burlington	5383	8362	64%
Morrisville	1087	1397	79%
St. Johnsbury	839	1050	80%
Middlebury	985	1775	55%
Barre	1626	2564	49%
Hartford	1403	1820	77%
Rutland	1764	2812	63%
Springfield	1059	1173	92%
Bennington	1083	1396	76%
Brattleboro	999	1635	61%
total	17998	25883	70%

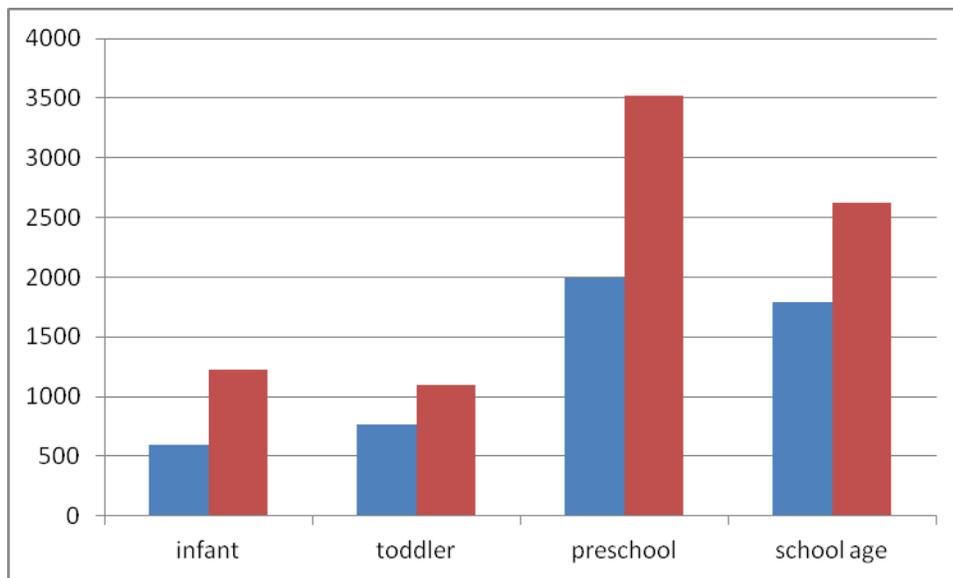
Note: The high percentage in the St. Albans district is a reflection of the number of children attending part day programs. For example, a program that has more than one session per day might serve twice the number of its licensed capacity in a day.

Table 17: Children receiving financial assistance in each AHS district. This graph shows the number of children in STARS programs who receive state funded financial assistance(FAP) as opposed to the total number of children receiving financial assistance in each AHS district.



AHS district	Children receiving FAP in STARS programs	Total Children receiving FAP	% of total
St. Albans	314	716	44%
Newport	118	469	25%
Burlington	1138	1667	68%
Morrisville	353	543	65%
St. Johnsbury	365	639	57%
Middlebury	298	519	57%
Barre	340	745	46%
Hartford	371	477	78%
Rutland	780	1113	70%
Springfield	262	421	62%
Bennington	459	719	63%
Brattleboro	344	438	79%
TOTAL	5142	8182	63%

Table 18: Number of children in STARS programs receiving financial assistance by age vs number of children in all regulated programs receiving financial assistance by age.*



*** Blue columns= children in STARS**
Red columns= children in all regulated programs

These two tables show the difference between the number of children at each age receiving financial assistance in STARS programs as opposed to those receiving financial assistance in all regulated programs.

Age	stars	state	%
infant	594	1230	48%
toddler	767	1096	70%
preschool	1998	3516	56%
school age	1790	2624	68%
total	5149	8466	60%

The above table clearly shows that the most vulnerable group, infants in low income families, are the least likely of any age group to be served in a quality rated program. A goal for improvement would be to increase the number of infants receiving financial assistance and being served in STARS rated programs.

Table 19: Funding sources for children in STARS programs.

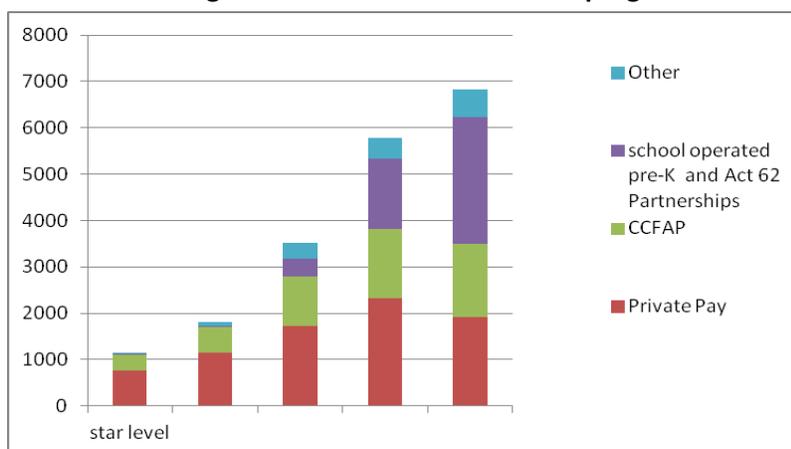
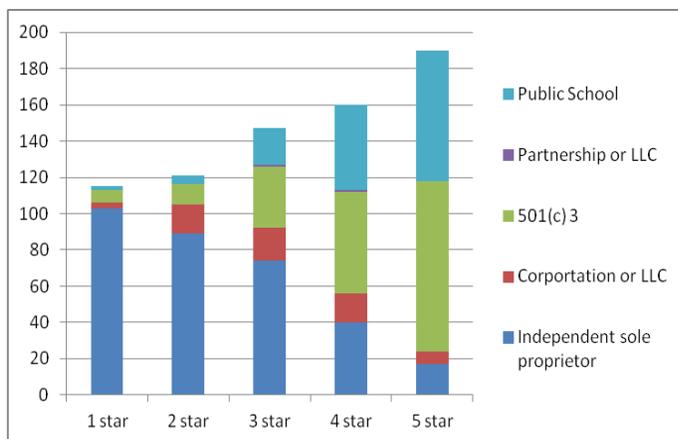


Table 20: Programs at each STAR level by business type.



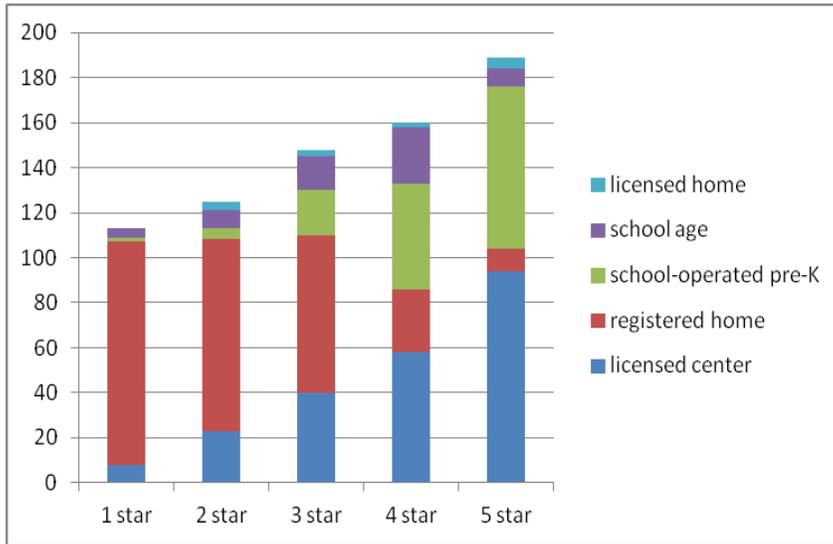
Independent sole proprietor are registered homes.

Corporation, Partnership or LLC are for private for profit programs

501(c)3 are private non profits programs, and can also be corporations

Public school are school operated, publicly funded Pre-K programs, or ACT 62 public- private partnerships

Table 21: Programs at each star level by program type



It is interesting to note that the vast majority of programs at the 5 star level are school operated pre-kindergarten programs, or nonprofit licensed centers.

SECTION 3: The information in this section relates to the use of the Environment Rating Scale(ERS) as a program assessment tool and how ERS scores relate to points in the Program Practices Arena of STARS.

**Table: 22 Assessment requested by programs and completed by STARS assessors for FY 13
YPQA 3
ERS 76**

Assessments completed: 62

ERS average program scores	Un scored	4.0-4.9 range	5.0-5.9 range	6.0-6.9 range
1 star	1	0	1	0
2 star	2	0	0	0
3 star	4	1	8	3
4 star	0	7	34	23
5 star	0	5	25	43

Table 23: Program Assessment scores and points achieved in the Program Practices Arena

Points in the program practices arena for 3 star programs	
0 points	35
1 point, self assessment	97
2 points assessment consultation	6
3 points, score in the 5 range	0
4 points, score in the 6 range	0
5 points, national accreditation, head start	0

Points in program practices arena for 4 star programs	
0 points	3
1 point, self-assessment	49
2 points, consulting about assessment	45
3 points, score in the 5 range	42
4 points, score in the 6 range	17
5 points, national accreditation, head start	3

Points in program practices arena for 5 star programs	
0 points	0
1 point, self assessment	0
2 points, consulting about assessment	0
3 points, score in the 5 range	27
4 points, score in the 6 range	77
5 points, national accreditation, head start	85

The most notable thing about the information about ERS assessment and points in the program practices arena is that programs who have achieved three and even four stars may not have had any verification of the quality of their program from a trained outside observer. Recommendation: link program assessment by an outside observer to star level in the program practices arena.

Table 24: STARS Closure information

Programs closed by quarter	
1st qtr	14
2nd qtr	18
3rd qtr	7
4th qtr	12
total	51

Reasons for programs closed in STARS	
Program no longer operating	31
Not renewing STARS	8
Program merge	3
No annual report filed	5
Retiring	2
No subsidy children	1
Can't use new application	1

There has been an increase in the number of programs that have been closed in STARS over previous years. Most of that number have been registered homes that are no longer operating, but some have been licensed center closures. Overall, 15 of the programs who are no longer in STARS are still operating but have chosen not to participate. Last year, 16 programs chose not to continue in stars, and 14 programs closed completely. To summarize, the number of STARS file closures has increased because the number of programs closing increased while the number of programs not continuing in STARS has remained the same.

Respectfully Submitted:

Johanna Vaczy and LouAnn Beninati
STARS Coordinators