# **Assessing the Impact of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) on Childcare Accessibility in Georgia**

**Objective:**

This research project aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Georgia's Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) in enhancing the accessibility and quality of childcare services for families across the state.

**Methodology:**

* Conduct a literature review to examine existing research on QRIS implementation and its impact on childcare accessibility and quality outcomes.
* Analyze administrative data from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to assess the distribution of QRIS-rated childcare providers and their geographic proximity to underserved communities.
* Utilize survey data to gather feedback from childcare providers and families regarding their experiences with the QRIS program and its perceived benefits and challenges.

**Findings:**

* Preliminary analysis suggests that childcare providers participating in the QRIS program have demonstrated improvements in program quality and compliance with health and safety standards.
* However, disparities persist in the distribution of QRIS-rated providers, with underserved communities facing limited access to high-quality childcare options.
* Stakeholder feedback highlights the need for targeted investments and support services to address barriers to QRIS participation and enhance childcare accessibility for vulnerable populations.

**Policy Recommendations:**

* Expand outreach and technical assistance efforts to encourage greater participation in the QRIS program among childcare providers serving low-income and rural communities.
* Implement targeted incentives, such as grants or subsidies, to support QRIS participation and quality improvement initiatives for providers located in underserved areas.
* Strengthen collaboration between state agencies, community organizations, and childcare stakeholders to develop holistic strategies for improving childcare accessibility and quality statewide.