

# COMMUNICATING TO PARENTS ABOUT QRIS

## Part **3** of 4



# Designing the Campaign Concept and Marketing Materials

### *What you'll learn...*

Part 3 of this series describes how we built on the approved communications strategy and tactics plan for BrightStars's parent campaign to develop a variety of marketing materials—both print and digital—that promote this QRIS to parents and families of young children in Rhode Island.

## Recap

**In Part 1** of this series, we discussed how to create a communications framework for reaching out to parents.

**In Part 2**, we reviewed strategy and tactics, as well as the kinds of marketing materials needed to reach each audience.

**In Part 3**, we'll share a case study—the parent campaign developed for BrightStars, Rhode Island's quality rating and improvement system.

**By now, you have a plan for your parent communications—outlining where, what, how, and with whom you'll connect in order to reach parents with information about your state's QRIS.**

**So, now that you've got your communications strategy in place, a brand identity, and a clear budget defined, the next step is to design the campaign concept(s). What exactly do we mean by that?**

## The Campaign Concept

Simply put, the campaign concept is the phrasing you'll use to convey your big-picture message to the audience. Keep in mind that the campaign concept (or concepts, as you may need more than one) will be most effective *only if* (a) it clearly communicates your message to the audience, and (b) it works for all audiences—regardless of age, ethnicity, or English-language ability.

For example, in our work with BrightStars—Rhode Island's quality rating and improvement system—we created **two campaign message elements.**

Why did the campaign need two? Simple: each concept was developed to address a specific, clearly defined goal:

- Communicate what parents can do with the system (find quality-rated care)
- Communicate why parents should do it (to give their children the best possible foundation for a bright future)

## Lead Concept:

**“Find quality-rated early care and education”**

## Secondary Concept:

**“The brightest tomorrow begins today”**

For the BrightStars parent-outreach campaign, we used both concepts in designing the marketing materials—strategically focusing on one or both of the messages depending on what the specific piece was intended to communicate, and the audience it was being created for.

In the following pages, you’ll see examples of actual pieces designed for BrightStars’ parent outreach campaign. Notice that some of the marketing materials included in this campaign were designed for targeted marketing while others were intended for mass marketing, since the original scope of BrightStars’ parent-outreach campaign included elements of both. (Refer to [Part 1 of this series](#) for more information on targeted vs. mass marketing.) As you review these materials, you’ll see how some of the copy and design components were used multiple times—ensuring a consistent message and saving money as well.

One final note before moving on... It’s helpful to remember that a key consideration for deciding the materials you choose to use with each audience will be directly related to your budget. Knowing that financial resources can impact decisions about marketing materials—

which, in turn, can affect the success of your efforts—below are some ideas to help maximize your investment.

## Making the Most of Your Marketing Investment

Once you’ve created the campaign concept, the next step is for your creative team to bring this concept to life by designing the marketing materials you’ll need.

The good news is that, while creating these materials requires an upfront investment, with careful planning of the materials and the content, many of these pieces can be “evergreen”—lasting a long time before they need to be refreshed. And once they’re designed, your materials should have a high potential for reuse as you move forward in your broader campaign and expand your outreach communications.

Finally, be strategic about the kinds of materials you’ll need in order to reach the goals for your quality rating and improvement system. While a TV commercial might look exciting and have high visibility with some

community leaders, you may actually reach your target audience better by focusing on materials like a simple brochure or rack card that you know will reach parents and families with children 0-5.

Creating the pieces that make sense for your state, your budget, and your audience will help ensure that all your efforts ladder-up to the objectives you want to achieve with your quality rating and improvement system.

## BrightStars' Parent Outreach Marketing Materials

### Audience: Parents of Children Aged 0-5



#### Poster and Flyer

These pieces are available in two sizes (18x24 and 8.5x11), and can be displayed in a variety of community locations, including libraries, grocery stores, and community centers. To reach a diverse audience, these are available in both English and Spanish; note that the toll-free line provides 24/7 access to multilingual operators.

#### Brochure

Parents who call the toll-free line to learn more about BrightStars receive this introductory brochure. It features basic information about the BrightStars system, and explains how it benefits both parents and their children. This brochure is also available as a downloadable PDF from the BrightStars website.





## Checklist

The *Choosing an Early Care Program Checklist* helps parents know what to look for when deciding on a program and provider for their family. This piece is available to parents who call the toll-free number, and can be downloaded as a PDF from the BrightStars website or accessed via smartphone or tablet.

## Website

Featuring an interactive function that allows parents to search for quality care providers, the site also provides information on related issues like how to choose and pay for a program, and includes blog posts to educate and support parents.



**The brightest tomorrow begins today.**



**Find quality rated early care and education.**

1-855-398-7605  
Call to receive a customized list based on your family's needs and a guide to help you select the best program.

**EarlyEducationMatters.org**  
Search online using the Exceed Early Learning Program Search tool.

**Quality Early Care and Education**

**Find It Here**



## Advertising

Print ads like the one shown (above, left) can be placed in publications that reach parents and families of young children. A paid-advertising campaign through Facebook displayed the banner ad (shown at right) on websites for local family-friendly businesses. To maximize the impact of this expense, it may be helpful to consult with a professional about the best times and locations for ad placement.



### Billboard and Transit Shelter

Intended to promote broad-based awareness of the BrightStars quality rating and improvement system, these pieces emphasize what the system is used for. Billboard-type designs are always limited in scope (traditionally capped at 6-8 words); since it's seen very quickly, this kind of marketing outlet should be used only for very top-line messages. (Note that this design has not yet been executed in Rhode Island.)

## BrightStars' Parent Outreach Marketing Materials

**Audience: Family Influencers Who Interact with Parents**

### Handout

This two-sided piece informs parents about the BrightStars system and its role in providing quality early care and education, as well as resources available to help parents of young children search for the right program for their family.





### Pamphlet

This piece discusses both the “what” and “why” of BrightStars—using clear, simple language to explain what the system is, and clarify how it benefits children now and in years to come. To reach a diverse audience, these pamphlets were created in both English and Spanish.

### Magnet

This simple giveaway serves as a visual reminder for parents, and allows quick access to ways they can get more information.



## BrightStars' Parent Outreach Marketing Materials

**Audience: Providers Who Work with Parents of Children Aged 0-5**



### Facility Signage

Yard signs like the one shown (at left) and window clings (below) communicate to current and prospective parents that that provider is a BrightStars participant, and demonstrates the program's commitment to quality care.



## Rack Cards

These pieces (available in both English and Spanish) allow providers to offer current and prospective parents more details about BrightStars—giving them tools to explain why the system is important and underscoring the provider’s commitment to quality early care and education.



## Bumper Stickers

With these giveaways, providers offer parents a way to show the community their support for BrightStars and for quality early care and education. (As an added bonus, these “rolling advertisements” promote and reinforce awareness to other parents.)

## Stickers

These stickers for children in a BrightStars-participating program highlight specific criteria for a particular aspect of quality care and education. And because children enjoy the reward of a sticker, they’re likely to share the recognition with their parents—promoting more awareness of the system.



## What's Next in This Series?

**The final part** of [this series](#) will describe how the BrightStars team used these custom marketing materials to launch and execute

their campaign to connect young parents and families in Rhode Island with quality care and education for their children.

## About Orange Square

Orange Square is dedicated to improving the lives of children and their families by combining your expertise in QRIS with our expertise in marketing communications and the QRIS National Learning Network.

Together with you, we work to improve the quality of early care and education by building public awareness and engagement.



Learn more about our services and knowledge on QRIS marketing communications at [orangesquare.com/QRIS](http://orangesquare.com/QRIS)



Join our LinkedIn group dedicated to QRIS marketing and communications at [linkedin.com/groups/8540612](https://linkedin.com/groups/8540612)



For questions or to get in touch with us, email [kristine@orangesquare.com](mailto:kristine@orangesquare.com)



Orange Square Inc.  
161 Exchange Street, Suite 1  
Pawtucket RI 02860  
401-305-6611  
[orangesquare.com](http://orangesquare.com)