

How to understand the Great Start to Quality Program Quality Indicators and scoring

The Great Start to Quality Program Quality Indicators apply to all providers, whether home-based or center. The following can help you understand the scoring and how it applies to your situation.

Family and Community Partnerships – 8 points (16 percent of total)

Providers help parents learn more about how their children learn and grow and they meet with parents to talk about their children's development. Providers let parents know about places in the community that can help them when they need assistance and support children's transitions to kindergarten and other programs.

Administration and Management – 6 points (12 percent of total)

Providers have a written contract that they provide to all enrolled families. There are written expectations for staff, if applicable, and yearly staff evaluations. Staff set yearly goals for themselves and providers offer different types of benefits for their staff.

Environment – 8 points (16 percent of total)

The physical space, where care is provided, is free of safety hazards and providers offer nutritionally sound meals as well as nutrition education to families. Providers keep track of children's physicals and communicate with families about their children's overall health.

Curriculum and instruction – 12 points (24 percent of total)

Providers have a mission statement for their program, follow a flexible daily schedule, and use a curriculum that helps them make decisions about the daily routine. Providers also observe children's development over time and share this information with parents in a conference-type meeting.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development – 16 points (32 percent of total)

Providers have a college degree, have attended and/or are taking college classes, have obtained a Child Development Associate or Montessori credential, and/or have participated in trainings relevant to child development and/or child care topics.

"I think every child care provider should go through the Great Start process. We don't get opportunities to really evaluate ourselves because we're in it every day – but things change over the years. There are always areas to improve."

— Gwendolyn Riley, 5 Star home provider, Gwen's Place, Detroit



QUALITY MATTERS and help is available to get started.

"You may wonder 'Are they going to pick me apart?' But that's not the concept at all. They help you. I feel we have a great program, but I realized they're even finding ways to improve that."

— Christine Haydon, 5 Star center provider, Allen Park Presbyterian Preschool

Programs & Providers



Learn more:
1-877-614-7328

GreatStartToQuality.org

Funding from the Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education supports the implementation of Great Start.





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What is Great Start to Quality?

Great Start to Quality is Michigan's tiered quality rating and improvement system that supports early childhood programs and providers in their efforts to improve their programs while helping families find and choose quality programs that meet their children's needs.

Why does quality matter?

Children start learning from day one - long before kindergarten - so quality child care and preschool can help them succeed in school, work and life by providing a safe and nurturing environment.

What's in it for licensed/registered programs and providers?

Great Start to Quality supports early childhood programs and providers in their efforts to improve their programs. The easy-to-use website gives every child care and preschool provider the opportunity to participate in a 5 Star quality rating and improvement system based on program quality indicators for care, safety, professional development and early learning. These ratings allow families to compare programs to find one that best meets their needs. A custom-tailored Quality Improvement Plan will help outline specific steps providers can take to earn a higher quality rating. And programs and providers participating in Great Start to Quality will receive marketing and promotional materials to help advertise their facility and quality rating.

Extra support for providers

Great Start to Quality Resource Centers across the state are available to help you reach your highest potential as a caregiver and early childhood educator. Opportunities for improvement are available through training, quality improvement consultation, professional development and scholarship opportunities. Each Great Start to Quality Resource Center has a lending library filled with educational materials available to providers and families. Eligible providers have the opportunity to work with a Quality Improvement Consultant and create a custom-tailored Quality Improvement Plan.

Getting started is easier than you think

UPDATE YOUR PROFILE AND GET NOTICED!: All licensed and registered providers in Michigan have a program profile on GreatStartToQuality.org, which must be updated to get started. At GreatStartToQuality.org families search 24/7 for quality child care and preschool. This is why it is important for you to update your profile and include detailed information about your program (photos, cost of care, age groups you serve, open slots, link to your website, special accommodations, etc.). The more information, the better.

Get started by going to GreatStartToQuality.org and click on Providers and Educators.

COMPLETE THE SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY: This will determine the program's initial Star rating. When the rating process is completed, the rating will publish on GreatStartToQuality.org.

UPLOAD EVIDENCE: Documents to support information provided in the Self-Assessment Survey must be uploaded. Some of the required documents listed may be captured in one document, for example, a program's handbook or employment policies may contain information that can serve as evidence for multiple items.

SUBMIT THE SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY Once the survey is complete and the evidence has been uploaded and linked, it is ready to submit.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT: Programs that have submitted a Self-Assessment Survey can begin developing their Quality Improvement Plan and may be eligible to receive individualized coaching and consultation from a Quality Improvement Consultant through their local Great Start to Quality Resource Center.

VALIDATION: Validations are required for programs and providers with a submitted Self-Assessment Survey at 4 or 5 Stars. A percentage of programs and providers with a submitted Self-Assessment Survey at 1, 2, or 3 Stars will be selected for validation. All programs and providers are subject to an online review of the uploaded documents. A Validator who has reviewed all uploaded documents in advance will contact the provider to schedule the validation. During the validation, the Validator will discuss the program with the director or lead staff to verify Self-Assessment Survey indicators that need further clarification. Following the validation, a Quality Improvement Consultant will contact the program to share the results.

ASSESSMENT: Programs requiring an on-site assessment will be contacted by an Assessment Specialist to establish a 30-day window for an unannounced visit. Great Start to Quality utilizes the Program Quality Assessment (PQA), developed by the HighScope Educational Research Foundation, to look at environment and adult/child interaction.

PUBLISHED RATING: Ratings are published on GreatStartToQuality.org for two years. Programs that have made improvements that may result in a higher Star rating prior to the two year anniversary of their rating can apply for reassessment.

