

Getting started

To use all of the Great Start to Quality search features, you may want to think about the following items in advance:

1. There are three types of licensed programs that best fits the needs of your family:
 - a. Child Care Centers – Usually multiple rooms or classrooms, this category includes child care, preschool, nursery school, schoolage programs, Head Start and Great Start Readiness Programs.
 - b. Family Child Care Homes – A home where early learning and care is provided for up to 6 children.
 - c. Group Child Care Homes – A home where early learning and care is provided for up to 12 children.
2. During what time of day/night do you need care?
3. How much can you afford to spend per week?
4. If you receive child care payment help from the state, does the provider or program accept those payments?
5. Do you need transportation? (Some child care or preschool facilities provide pick-up and drop-off. Others will transport schoolage children to and/or from school.)
6. Are you looking for a provider or program that's close to home, work or another family member?

PLEASE REMEMBER: To find the very best child care, preschool or schoolage program, you should visit more than one program with your child if possible. These steps can help you make the decision:

>> Schedule a phone interview:

Phone # _____

>> Schedule an in-person visit:

Date _____ Time _____

>> Ask about important concerns such as policies on visitors, discipline, activities, training and safety.

>> Check references, review licensing reports, check the Star rating at www.greatstarttoquality.org and ask other parents.

>> Make a decision that is best for your child and commit to being involved.

Free and low-cost options: You may qualify for a child care subsidy or scholarship. Contact your Great Start to Quality Resource Center to learn more. 1-877-614-7328.

START HERE to find quality licensed programs for children ages 0-12.

"I feel my children are getting the best preschool education I can give them. It's top quality care."

— Melissa Sanders about the family home provider her children attend in Adrian.

Parents & Families



Learn more:
1-877-614-7328

www.greatstarttoquality.org

MICHIGAN
Department of
Education

Great Start to Quality
Start here for Quality Early Childhood Education

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



Learn more:
1-877-614-7328

www.greatstarttoquality.org

What is Great Start to Quality?

Great Start to Quality (GSQ) is Michigan's quality rating and improvement system. GSQ makes it easy for you to identify quality licensed programs for children ages 0-12, and provide you with the best for your child and the most for your money.

Why does quality matter?

Children start learning from day one – long before kindergarten. Quality child care, preschool and schoolage programs can help them succeed in school, work and life, providing a safe and nurturing environment.

What can Great Start to Quality do for you?

Great Start to Quality makes it easy for you to identify quality licensed programs, for children ages 0-12, to help you get the best for your child and the most for your money. The easy-to-use website, www.greatstarttoquality.org, helps you find and compare programs and providers, by rating child care, preschool and schoolage programs on a scale of one-to-five Stars based on program quality indicators for care, safety, professionalism and early learning.

Finding child care is easy

www.greatstarttoquality.org is the one-stop resource to see quality ratings of all licensed and registered child care, preschool and schoolage programs in Michigan. Free and available 24/7, you can search in the ways that are most important to you. Use the ZIP code to search for care near where you work or nearer to home. You can even search for providers who accept payments from the state or children with special needs from peanut allergies to handicap-accessible play areas.

What are the options for child care and preschool?

Most children in Michigan are in child care, preschool or schoolage only settings, so it's important for these experiences to be the very best. Here are some of the options to consider:

State-Licensed Programs

Child Care, Preschool Centers, and Schoolage Programs – These provide learning and care in a licensed center-based setting with rooms or multiple classrooms, including child care, preschool, schoolage programs, Head Start and Great Start Readiness Programs.

Group Child Care Homes

These provide early learning and care in a licensed home-based setting for up to 12 children.

Family Child Care Homes

These provide early learning and care for up to six children in a registered home-based setting.

Other Options:

License Exempt Providers (formerly known as “unlicensed” providers)

Are adults (at least 18 years old) enrolled by the Child Development and Care Program within the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start to care for up to four children at the same time, either where the children/child lives or in the provider's home. If care is delivered in the provider's home, the provider must be related to the children/child by blood, marriage or adoption.

Is every child care and preschool rated in Great Start to Quality?

Licensed and registered programs – including Head Start and Great Start Readiness Programs – are rated. Unlicensed providers – often relatives who receive payments from the state for taking care of a child – are not rated, but they have access to resources to improve their quality through the Great Start to Quality Resource Center.

Extra support for families

Great Start to Quality Resource Centers across the state are available to assist parents in their search for quality child care, preschool and schoolage programs and provide information about assistance to pay for care. Resource Centers also have a lending library of books and other learning materials for families to use with their children.

To learn more about what the Great Start to Quality Resource Center can do for you, call
1-877-614-7328.

