

Great Start Collaborative – Wayne County Quality Rating and Improvement System

(GSC-W QRIS)

“If the brain is purposefully stimulated and nurtured before a child is old enough to tie his or her shoes, that child’s lifelong capacity to learn will be forever enhanced. And, unfortunately, if it is not, an opportunity is lost forever.”

- Governor Jennifer Granholm

The purpose of a QRI System is to encourage and reward child care providers who are willing to improve what they do so that each child’s brain is purposefully stimulated and nurtured at an early age. Research has shown that by participating in the highest quality of care children demonstrate the lifelong capacity to learn and have more opportunities to be successful in life.

This Demonstration Project for a Great Start Collaborative- Wayne County Quality Rating and Improvement System has been created based on current research, Michigan data, input from providers, advocates, and stakeholders from state departments and agencies, and feedback on the initial recommendations from focus groups held at various locations throughout the state and county. Reviews of the quality rating systems in other states and conversations with early childhood professionals in those states or in states that are developing a system were reported to the workgroup. In addition, the workgroup consulted with experts in quality rating and improvement systems. This demonstration project is funded by the Skillman Foundation in conjunction with Great Start Collaborative funds.

The GSC-W QRIS provides three parallel tracks for quality rating – one for licensed center-based pre-school care, one for licensed center-based infant/toddler care, and one for registered family home providers and licensed group home providers. Each track takes into account the differences and similarities of each type of care, while remaining consistent in quality indicators. Providers will be able to move through five levels of quality, earning up to five diamonds within the QRIS.

The GSC-W QRIS will use the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) tools developed by the High Scope Educational Research Foundation to measure process quality. The family of PQA rating tools includes the Infant/Toddler PQA (I/TPQA) Form A, Preschool PQA (PQA) Form A, Family Child Care PQA (FCCPQA) Form A to assess the Process Quality of each site and classroom. Process quality refers to program characteristics such as the implementation of a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that meet the standards outlined in the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten, 2005* and the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs, 2006* developed by the Michigan Department of Education. It also includes the day-to-day interactions between children and adults, daily routines, and the amount and quality of materials available to children in the learning environment.

In addition, the GSC-W QRIS will utilize the Michigan QRIS proposal’s checklist in comparison to the Form B of PQA and I/TPQA to determine the level of each program’s structural quality in center based programs. For Family Child Care a check list based on the Michigan *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs, 2006* will be utilized in comparison with the Michigan QRIS proposal’s checklist. This will be a temporary measure until the FCC PQA Form B has been completed. Structural quality consists of provider/director qualifications, and professional practices. These aspects of child care quality are affected by government regulations, program policies, and economic climate. There is a significant body of research that identifies correlations between caregiver education levels, low child to teacher ratios, and high quality, intellectually stimulating care (Phillipsen, L.C., Burchinal, M.R., Howes, C., & Cryer, D., 1997).

Rating Criteria

Pre-School Center based Rating Criteria

Rating	Pre-School PQA A Score	Preschool PQA B Score	OR	Center Check List Points
◇	0-2 AND	0-2		0-9
◇◇	2-3 AND	2-3		10-19
◇◇◇	3-3.8 AND	3-3.8		20-30
◇◇◇◇	3.81-4.5 AVG	3.81-4.5		n/a
◇◇◇◇◇	4.51-5 AVG OR NAEYC Accredited	4.51-5		n/a

Infant/Toddler Center based Rating Criteria

Rating	Infant/ Toddler PQA A	Infant/Toddler PQA B	OR	Center Check List
◇	0-2 AND	0-2		0-9
◇◇	2-3 AND	2-3		10-19
◇◇◇	3-3.8 AND	3-3.8		20-30
◇◇◇◇	3.81-4.5 AVG	3.81-4.5		n/a
◇◇◇◇◇	4.51-5 AVG OR NAEYC Accredited	4.51-5		n/a

Family based Rating Criteria

Rating	Family Based PQA AND	Meet Standard Items* OR	Family based Check List
◇	0-2	0-20%	0-9
◇◇	2-3	21-40%	10-19
◇◇◇	3-3.8	41-60%	20-30
◇◇◇◇	3.81-4.5	61-80%	n/a
◇◇◇◇◇	4.51-5 Or Accredited through a National Professional Organization	81-100%	n/a

*Based on *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs, 2006*

Accreditation

An alternative path to 5 diamonds in the GSC-W QRIS is through national accreditation. Many quality rating and improvement systems began as accreditation support projects to promote quality in programs for young children. In order to ensure consistent measures of quality, all accredited organizations will be required to apply to the GSC-W QRIS for recognition of their accreditation system as a valid measure of a 5 diamond program

Enrollment and Initial Evaluation

Center-based and group child care homes must be in business for one year and possess a regular license with the Office of Children and Adult Licensing, Division of Child Day Care Licensing (OCAL-DCDCL) to be eligible for application and continued participation in the QRIS. Family child care homes must be in business for one year and possess a valid certificate of registration with OCAL-DCDCL. Participation in the GSC-W QRIS is voluntary for all providers. For the first year GSC-W QRIS will be working with those defined child care providers who are operating in zip codes 48208, 48209, 48210, 48216, 48217 and 48223, basically the southwest and Brightmoor neighborhoods of Detroit.

An enrollment form will be available on line or through the neighborhood early childhood network. Only those who wish to participate in the QRIS, which includes a rating of 1-5 diamonds, need enroll. All other licensed providers will be kept informed of activities they can participate in to improve quality without being a part of the QRIS rating. Some incentives are available through participation. The rewards come through the rating process, for which a formal enrollment is required. Each QRIS enrolled provider will be assigned a mentor who will meet with the care providers to share how the program works. It is then that mentor's responsibility to do a baseline assessment, go over that assessment with the participants, and work with them to create an improvement plan utilizing available incentives and rewards. The mentor will then be available as needed to help the QRIS enrolled provider to meet their goals as stated in the improvement plan, connecting them with the many resources available. Within one year the mentor will do another assessment and turn the information to the QRIS staff who will assign a rating of up to 5 diamonds.

Enrolled providers have an opportunity every two years to increase their diamond ratings as funds are available. Participating QRIS programs must sign an information release before data pertaining to the quality of their programs will be shared between QRIS staff and other state agencies, such as the Department of Human Services, and the Michigan Department of Education, potential funders, and for the publication of their diamond ratings. All participants, whether rated or not, will be listed on the GSC-W website. Those with ratings will, upon permission, have their number of diamonds beside their names.

Professional Development System

Research proves a correlation between professional development and high quality early education and care. To better determine the status of the early childhood education and care workforce in Michigan, a workforce study is currently being conducted. Once complete, this study will provide policy makers and advocates an essential baseline of information about the characteristics of the early childhood education and care workforce. The information will help determine where and how professional development resources should be spent.

A professional development system for Wayne and Oakland Counties will help providers to move through a career pathway from a variety of starting points, with the ultimate goal that all providers have access and opportunity to move from one end of the pathway to another. These pathways, along with articulation agreements, and scholarships will benefit young children and their families, child care programs, and the state by allowing providers to increase their skills, which will ultimately increase quality of care and child outcomes. The GSC-W QRIS staff is working to increase articulation agreements between higher education programs and increased participation in the T.E.A.C.H. program. T.E.A.C.H. provides an affordable way for providers to obtain the education required for advancement in the QRIS. Wayne Co QRIS will be collaborating with United Way's Early Learning Hub professional development system, 4 C's trainings, Head Start staff training, and Detroit Public School early childhood training to

increase the opportunities to all early childhood providers and assist in making them available, affordable, and accessible. When identified training is not available or accessible, GSW-C will provide or identify the needed training. A career lattice for Wayne County will soon be available online at www.greatstartcollaborativewayne.org.

Compliance

The QRIS star rating is a designation separate from a program's license or certificate of registration from OCAL-DCDCL, and requires a program to meet standards above those required by licensing. These standards are based on High Scope's Program Quality Assessment (PQA) tool that is appropriate for the setting. The QRIS application should include an attestation of compliance with state licensing rules and regulations, and QRIS criteria, signed by a legal representative of the participating program. A program not in compliance with licensing rules and regulations or QRIS criteria would be in jeopardy of having its diamond rating suspended or revoked.

Every attempt has been made to address all aspects of the system in a thorough and thoughtful way. However, it is recognized that changes will be made to the QRIS as the details of the system become clearer during implementation. The Rand Corporation's analysis of Colorado's Qualistar QRS showed that "...research and development of the system is ongoing rather than at a single point in time" (Stoney, 2004).

Incentives are available for all licensed providers who are participating in the targeted neighborhoods.

These incentives validate the work of the programs, and provide encouragement and technical assistance for further improvement.

Early Childhood Networking Group

An active, involved networking group will be supported in each neighborhood participating in the QRIS. The purpose of the network is to support the individuals. The networks are operated based on participants needs and facilitated by a neighborhood organization. It supplies emotional and social support for care providers, especially those who are isolated from regular adult contact. It supplies a place where ideas and resources can be freely shared. It supplies the possibility of developing group buying power with health insurance, liability insurance, supplies, substitute pools, legal and audit assistance as determined by the individual participants. Gift Card incentives will be available for those who attend the network meetings. Connect providers with the local CEPP where appropriate.

Collaboration with Head Start, GSRP, and private center based programs

The QRIS is available to all licensed sites in the targeted area. Peer mentoring will be established between sites helping each other and the family home providers in improving the quality of care in the neighborhoods. Collaborations between public and private sites will include training opportunities, networking, and mentoring.

Public Recognition

Public recognition lets programs associate their names with quality standards. Such associations give them marketing clout to recruit new families into their programs. For example, local newspapers and television stations may give periodic "Diamond Results," that list which programs have been reviewed and their rating.

Public Recognition options

- GSC-W seal for display for all those participating in 3 network meetings and/or 10 hours of training recommended by GSC-W. These sites will also receive permission to use the GSC-W seal as an electronic tag for websites and email.
- Public recognition – newspaper listing, listings on websites, and local radio for those who sign a release.
- Listing of providers with GSC-W seals and those with ratings on GSC-W website.
- Advertising – Free marketing in the form of brochures describing what each diamond rating means and where the program fits on the scale. It would be a brochure that allows programs to easily include their own information. Also, the diamond rating for each program would be available to parents from their local 4 C office.

Rewards System

To participate in these rewards, the program must enroll in the QRIS. Rewards address the criteria required to move up to the next diamond rating, as illustrated in their improvement plans based on the latest assessment

GSC-W Seal for display for all who enroll in the QRIS if not received previously.

Certificates

- A. Participation Certificate-given to all providers who enroll in the QRIS
- B. Diamond Rating Certificates (framed)- given to those with a three and greater diamond rating.

Professional Development options

- Training specific to the use of the Program Quality Assessment tool
- Access to other necessary trainings at reduced costs or free, such as First Aid/CPR, Basic and Advanced Child Care Futures Training, Better Kid Care training relevant to the requirements, Early Learning Hub trainings. Conference fee scholarships available if training is part of the improvement plan.
- Trainings based on the needs determined on the improvement plan. Trainings will often include a tool kit appropriate to the training. After the initial assessments are complete, a detailed training plan and schedule will be developed and shared with all participants.
- Upon application and approval, payment for qualified substitutes to allow private sector providers attend trainings pertinent to their improvement plan during the work day.
- Professional Memberships (NAEYC, 4 C's, NAFCC, etc.). Subscriptions to early education publications can be considered as well (ex. Scholastic). This would be based on provider need as identified in the improvement plan. Financial support can be designated following evaluation of the provider's financial status as this must be maintained and can be given as a match or in full.

Mentors/Technical Support

Successful Mentoring as a Path for Quality Improvement

Research on mentoring programs provides insights into what makes for a successful mentoring program. Three factors that are demonstrated to influence the success of mentoring programs are a) the intensity of the mentoring, b) the quality of the relationship of mentors and mentees and c) the structure of the mentoring program.

- A. Intensity of mentoring
 - a. How often should mentors and mentees meet?

- b. What modality should be employed as part of the mentoring process?
- c. When should mentors meet with their mentees?
- d. Where should mentors meet with their mentees?
- e. Whom should mentors and mentees meet with?

The mentor mentee relationship is the cornerstone of the whole mentoring process. Linking mentors with mentees requires thoughtful consideration of temperament, attitudes, flexibility, strengths and challenges for both parties. Mentors *MUST* be sensitive to the potential perceptions of mentees of someone “finding fault” with their work and “being experts”. Neither of these perceptions should be the reality of the mentoring relationship; yet they are perceptions to be overcome through thoughtful relationship building experiences. Research shows that intense mentoring that is built upon respectful relationships with targeted outcomes, clear action plans, and reflection provide the best overall mentoring program outcomes. Thus, most of the mentors for the QRIS program will come from community organization within the neighborhood who have already begun a relationship. Most of the mentees will come through the networking process where trust and relationships are built. To support the neighborhood organizations other mentors may be selected and introduced to the mentees by a neighborhood representative. These mentees may need longer periods of introduction and relationship time than those who have worked with the mentees previously. Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP) have Educational Specialists that will serve in the role of the mentor sites. Head Start programs have an Educational Specialist system that will serve in the role of the mentor for their sites. Head Start and GSRP will collaborate to provide outside assessors and additional mentor assistance to each other.

Mentoring intensity typically is impacted by the structure (time and money) of the overall mentoring program plan as well as the time and availability of the mentee and mentor.

The most significant modality employed is on-site person to person modality. However, other modalities should also be employed as tools to support the in-person modality. For instance phone calls, electronic communications, traditional mail of note cards and articles, and networking opportunities with other mentors and mentees. As the mentoring relationship develops the modality employed also develop based upon the mentoring relationship and particular situation. However, minimum number of on-site mentoring experiences must be maintained based upon the demonstration model criteria.

A minimum of 2 hrs per month to a maximum of 8 hours per month depending on the need of the mentee, the level of the assessment (the lower, the more time should be invested), and the agreement between the mentor and the mentee. A Mentor Reflecting Form will be filled out and signed by both mentor and mentee at every visit. This is a guide to your discussion and support.

Mentors and mentees need to meet in groups or clusters with other people in addition to their assigned mentor/mentee. Mentors have a lead mentor that is the critical link between the mentors and the Great Start Collaborative office. This lead facilitates communication with the other mentors and coordinate activities. For instance, the lead mentor should plan mentor to mentor meetings. At these meetings mentors come together to explore the strengths and challenges of the mentoring process. Highlights should be shared along with questions and or suggestions for addressing mentoring issues. In addition, one of the greatest factors in change forces is that being connected to others in similar situations. Thus, mentees should have two to three opportunities beyond the initial orientation of the program to connect with other mentees. These connections should be seen as part networking, part celebration and part professional development. Targeted training areas are to be included in these

events. These will meet at least quarterly, with monthly meetings at the beginning of the demonstration project.

B. Quality of Relationship

The quality of the mentoring relationship requires few assumptions and many expectations. Assumptions made can often lead to disappointing results. While expectations that are clear, written, trained upon and evaluated add value to the mentoring program. Mentoring expectations are to include basic work ethic expectations. These policies include work hours, written documentation protocol, reporting methods, and professionalism. Attitude and interactions is another area of expectations that need to be clearly defined. Communication skills; oral, written and body language expectations are to be clearly noted.

The expectations are for the mentor in all cases and in some cases the mentee. Mentees should be lead in a discussion of their role and responsibilities as a mentee with emphases placed on their strengths, abilities, and communication skills.

How Could **My** Mentor Help Me Improve Early Childhood Education Quality for Children in My Program?

Interview your mentor and ask about their strengths and challenges in mentoring other early childhood professionals. What has worked best for them? What has not worked well and why?

Do a self-analysis of how you as a mentee see yourself in regards to key talents and key challenge areas of your work with children.

Ask the mentor to be frank and open with you about your work with children and families.

Work with the mentor during the assessment process. Learn to understand the assessment and how it measures quality.

Work with the mentor to develop a plan to improve the quality of your program through the process quality measurement tool (PQA Form A) and/or through the structure quality measurement tool (PQA Form B or Standards Checklists or MQRIS Checklists).

Work with the mentor to develop resources to help implement your plan. These may include staff development, funds, free resources, substitutes so staff can attend training,

C. Mentoring Program Structure

1. Mentors are to be contracted or hired through neighborhood organization (Job Description attached)
2. Lead Mentor is to be contracted by Great Start Collaborative – Wayne (Job Description attached)
3. Mentor to Mentor Meetings/Support Group at least quarterly, monthly at first
4. Mentee Events – networking, celebration and professional development – may be incorporated into some Neighborhood Provider Network meetings, one on one coaching, or support group meetings.
5. Mentor tools

- a. Mentors to take books or supplies for children/classrooms for each mentoring visit that are to be for the classroom/program.
 - b. Plus one professional resource for the mentee. A professional resource may be a handout, an article, a book, computer or other appropriate and relevant resources.
 - c. The mentor coordinator/lead mentor should organize the mentee materials so that all mentees receive the same high quality materials. Mentors will be given an account at Erasers and Crayons (15225 Dix Toledo Rd (Just south of Eureka), Southgate, MI 48195, (734) 284-4884) of up to \$150 per year per mentee to supply appropriate materials.
 - d. If what is needed is not available through that source, contact the lead mentor and/or GSC-W director for further assistance.
6. Mentor Resources:
1. Professional Membership: If the mentee or staff do not have membership in a professional organization, GSC-W will pay for their first year membership.
 - a. Have them select a organization. National Association for the Education of the Young Child (www.naeyc.org) and National Association for Family Child Care (www.nafcc.org) information and applications should be in your notebooks as well as online. You may also research all 3 types of Accreditation (NAEYC, NAFCC, NAA) by going to the Metro Detroit AEYC website at www.metrodetroitaeyc.org. There are several very informative brochures and website links shared on the Metro Detroit AEYC's website that would be valuable information.

All types of Early Childhood Professionals would benefit from membership in the MiAEYC. Membership information can be found at the www.miaeyc.org website. link to MiAEYC Membership application web page - http://www.miaeyc.org/membership/Membership_Page.html
MiAEYC Membership form - <http://www.miaeyc.org/membership/Membership%20Application.pdf>
You can be a member of MiAEYC and NAEYC for the same cost. Make sure they choose the state affiliate and a local affiliate (either Metro Detroit AEYC if the live or work in Detroit or north of 8 Mile; Southern Wayne Monroe County if they live or work outside of Detroit in Wayne or Macomb County. Both very active affiliates that provide local activities.
 - b. Once the mentee/staff have filled out the applications, turn them in to the Director of GSC-W for processing.
 2. Mini-grants
 - a. Purpose: To assist provider in achieving improvement plan goals.

b. Application (attached and online) must be turned in by November 1 of each fiscal year.

c. Must be no more than the sliding scale illustrated below:

Rating	FCC with 6 children	FGCC with 12 children	Licensed Center with 1-45	Licensed Center with 46-120	Licensed Center with Over 121
◇	1200	1300	1400	1500	1600
◇◇	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400
◇◇◇	800	900	1000	1200	1200
◇◇◇◇	400	500	700	800	1000

d. Turn into lead mentor.

3. Larger funding sources—for building and safety needs.

a. Children’s First Finance

i. Contact: **Monica Duncan**

First Children's Finance Michigan Director

Direct 248-259-2676 monica@firstchildrensfinance.org

ii. Loan –

iii. Growth Fund

b. Other Resources are being developed. Keep in touch with the Early Care and Education Action team and/or the Lead Mentor for more information.

4. Community Learning Centers

a. Brightmoor Community Center, 14451 Burt Rd., Detroit MI 48223, **Phone** 313.531.0305 **Fax** 313.531.7336, **Email** brightmoorcomm@sbcglobal.net Contact Person: Denise Smith, 313-531-2500 x5, dsmith@develctrs.org

b. Southwest Detroit Early Learning Hub, Munger School, 5525 Martin St, Detroit, MI, Hub Director: Lynn McGregor lmcgregor@swsol.org Mobile: (313) 515-8570

5. Free and reduce price resources

a. Kiwanis Club books for children. Free books. Call ahead. Can get multiple copies of same book for children to take home.



- b. Play groups in the area (for family home settings)
 - c. Great Start/Great Parents Booklets from WCRESA. Samples are in notebook. Order through WCRESA, contact person: Lena Montgomery
 - d. Resource for free pamphlets in Spanish and English for parents. Corporate Headquarters Los Angeles, 1300 W. Fourth Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017-1475
213-240-5900, 213-240-5945, www.chs-ca.org
6. Help with CDA and college scholarships
- a. TEACH program. (Pamphlets Enclosed)

Contact person: Erica Willard

1.800.MI TEACH; www.mi4c.org; 839 Centennial Way, Lansing, MI 48917
 - b. Career Lattice information for available local professional training and college classes.
7. Mentor Assessments – Initial assessment utilizing the same tools of rating assessment, rating assessment before the end of the first year and every other year thereafter.
8. Mentor Data Base – As a demonstration project, details need to be kept. You will be given a form and/or electronic tool to keep your records. This needs to be kept up to date at all times and have documentation to back up the statistics. These will be monitored and turned into the lead mentor.

Next Generation:

In order for us to have sustained quality improvement for early childhood programs in Wayne County we need to consider the next generation of mentoring that can derive from this demonstration. Those participants that have been mentored and improved to a 4 Diamond level, will then commit to provide mentoring to other providers. From mentee to supportive mentor; a true next generation step for quality improvement.

Financial Rewards

- 1. **Merit Awards** – Cash rewards when a site earns a diamond rating of 2 or higher. Amount varies based on the licensed capacity and level of rating.

Based on licensed Capacity and level of rating.

Rating	FCC with 6 children (23)	FGCC with 12 children (9)	Licensed Center with 1-45 (19)	Licensed Center with 46-120 (17)	Licensed Center with Over 121 (3)
# Yr 1					
◇◇	200	300	500	600	800
◇◇◇	300	400	700	800	1000

◇◇◇◇	400	500	800	1000	1100
◇◇◇◇◇	500	600	900	1200	1300

In the unfortunate event, that a rating is lowered, the provider is not eligible for this recognition until the rating is replaced to former status and maintained for one year.

Rating criteria must be turned in to GSC-W office by November 1 of each demonstration project year to receive merit awards in the current funding cycle. All information received after November 1 will be contingent on funds available in the next funding cycle.

2. Annual Quality Recognition Award

Exclusive for 5 Star Providers -\$500

In the unfortunate event, that a rating is lowered, the provider is not eligible for this recognition until the rating is replaced to 5 Diamonds and maintained for one year.

3. Mini-Grants – After an initial assessment has been made, the site may apply for a mini-grant to assist in their improvement plan to get to the next level. Amount of grants will vary based on the licensed capacity and level of rating and offered as long as funding is available.

Rating # Yr 1	FCC with 6 children (23)	FGCC with 12 children (9)	Licensed Center with 1-45 (19)	Licensed Center with 46-120 (17)	Licensed Center with Over 121 (3)
◇	1200	1300	1400	1500	1600
◇◇	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400
◇◇◇	800	900	1000	1200	1200
◇◇◇◇	400	500	700	800	1000

The application for a mini-grant must be received at GSC- W office by November 1 of each demonstration project year to receive funds in the current funding cycle. No applications will be accepted from November 1 through December 31.

4. Access to larger grants: When a site needs to make structural changes or changes that would not be covered in a mini-grant to improve their site, assistance will be made with writing grants and making funding requests of a wide variety of funders committed to this project.

First Children’s Finance (FCF) will offer access and information about the Growth Fund (grant program) and Loan Fund as well as work to develop other resources that improve the internal business management systems for family and center providers.

(Loan Fund: Family Providers 1,000-25,000 and Center Providers 1,000-125,000)

- DHS Subsidy:** Michigan Department of Human Services (MDHS) provides many providers grant assistance for child care. This amount, however, does not cover the full cost of providing services. Each December of the Demonstration project, centers who have received a diamond rating of 2 or higher will receive a bonus based on level of rating and prorated by the number of children supported by MDHS at time of application.

Public Recognition and Advertising

At the Month of the Young Child Conference (MOYC), public recognition will be given exclusively to all Diamond Providers and a highlighted list of these providers will be included in conference documents.

Develop a printed rating publication that identifies all enrollees in descending order or a publication exclusive to 4 and 5 Diamond Providers. It would be encouraged for this publication to be used by the 4C's and other child care resources so that the providers will continue to gain exposure and expand their business. This list will also be available at the Great Start Collaborative-Wayne website.

Are there other venues to announce these ratings?