



# Star Rating Readiness Checklist

## for Family Child Care Centers

**Instructions:** When your program is ready to begin the rating process, please upload this completed document to the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the GNJK Readiness Checklist document type **AND** email it to [GNJKRating@montclair.edu](mailto:GNJKRating@montclair.edu). Standards and training documentation should also be added to the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the applicable GNJK category for the document type.

**About the Star Rating Readiness Checklist:** This checklist is designed to help family child care providers after they have completed all Grow NJ Kids requirements for 1- and 2-star ratings with their Quality Improvement Specialist (QIS) and/or Technical Assistant Specialist (TAS), and have decided to seek a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating. The information on this page must be fully completed. The checklist also notes the documentation to submit electronically, and the documentation that will be reviewed onsite. This checklist will also serve as notification to Grow NJ Kids Rating of your readiness to begin the rating process.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Child Care Center Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact #: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School Closing Phone # and/or Website: \_\_\_\_\_

TAS Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Information may be shared with my TAS during the rating process, including the Rating Summary Report

TAS Primary Contact #: \_\_\_\_\_ TAS Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which of the following apply:  Family Child Care Center  Receives Subsidy Curriculum used: \_\_\_\_\_

Applying for Star Rating of:  3  4  5 Applying for 3-Year Renewal:  Yes  No Date last Star Rating received: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Star Rating Received:  3  4  5  Extension

Parking available?  Yes  No If no, please check the days of alternate side parking (if applicable):  M  T  W  Th  F

Location of parking: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructional day start time: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival time for children: \_\_\_\_\_ Building hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of assistants (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Days worked: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours worked: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children enrolled in program: \_\_\_\_\_ Age range of students: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of identified children with special needs currently enrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary language of instruction: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate how many children are in each age group: Preschool Programs: 3yr old: \_\_\_\_\_ 4yr old: \_\_\_\_\_

Infant/Toddler Programs: Infants (under 11 months): \_\_\_\_\_ Toddlers (12 months-23 months): \_\_\_\_\_ Twos (24 months-35 months): \_\_\_\_\_

Family Child Care Provider Certificate of registration attached:  Yes  No NJCCIS Facility ID: \_\_\_\_\_

**Two-Month Window:** Please provide a window of two months during which an onsite rating visit can occur. Please list any dates of exclusion within this time (e.g., holidays, in-service days, meetings, days of special events). **Up to 10 dates of exclusion within your selected two-month window are permitted.** Once documentation has been reviewed, Grow NJ Kids Rating will contact you to advise when the observation will occur.

Requested Two-Month Window: \_\_\_\_\_

10 Days of Exclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

## Star Rating Readiness Checklist Components

There are two parts to the Star Rating Readiness Checklist for Family Child Care Centers:

**Electronic Summary Sheet for a 3-, 4- or 5-Star Rating:** The Electronic Summary Sheet lists all the documentation/evidence that needs to be submitted electronically on the NJCCIS File Cabinet when seeking a 3-, 4- or 5-Star Rating. Professional development/training documentation that will be reviewed on NJCCIS is also listed here.




**Onsite Documentation:** The Onsite Documentation section lists documentation/evidence that is reviewed onsite. During the onsite documentation review, Grow NJ Kids Rating staff will review all staff and children’s folders/files. Please provide clear detail of where folders/files are stored.




## NJCCIS Registration

**NJCCIS:** Providers and any additional staff members should be registered on NJCCIS with formal education and additional professional development/training documented on their professional profile. Any additional training documentation that is not available on NJCCIS should be available for review as well.




## Electronic Summary Sheet for 3-, 4-, & 5-Star Ratings




The summary sheet lists documentation by GNJK Criteria #. According to the star rating sought, please upload documents on the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the applicable GNJK category for the document type, check off the box, and write the file name inside each box.




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
<b>1.3.2</b>	<b>Let's Move Child Care Checklist and daily schedule or lesson plans</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Let's Move Child Care Checklist <b>and</b> daily schedule <b>or</b> lesson plans from prior three months before rating submission.  <b>File Name:</b>		
<b>1.3.3</b>	<b>Sample Menus</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample menus for prior three months before rating submission showing nutritious meals and snacks are encouraged and/or provided, and are respectful of religious and dietary restrictions.  If no food is provided by the center, program should submit evidence that a resource regarding the importance of nutrition/packing a healthy lunch is shared with all families.  <b>File Name:</b>		

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
1.4.3	Documentation that parents received information on health and safety topics		<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of resources distributed to parents that covered preventative health, mental/behavioral health issues, nutrition and obesity, medication administration policies and procedures, oral health practices, and/or communicable disease prevention. Information for at least four of these different topics relating to health and safety must be provided to parents within the last 12 months.  <b>File Name:</b>	
1.5.1	Tooth brushing policy with description of storage procedure in parent handbook			<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of policy <b>and</b> written description of storage procedure in parent handbook.  <b>File Name:</b>
1.5.2	Breastfeeding Policy in parent handbook (if applicable to enrolled children)  <i>Note: Standard is waived and points are awarded if no infants are currently enrolled in the program</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> Program has a policy in the parent handbook that supports breastfeeding-friendly principles, including accepting and storing breast milk and providing a comfortable place for breastfeeding.  <b>File Name:</b>




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
<p><b>2.3.2;</b> <b>2.4.1;</b> <b>2.5.1</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson plans with experiences planned around NJ Birth to Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards; evidence of attending basic training in developmentally appropriate practices; documented individual activities supporting childrens’ identified goals; a curriculum reflective of current research and best practice must be in use, FCCERS-3 Item 12, 7.3 scored “yes.”</b></p> <p><i>Note: The training requirements outlined in these standards apply to the provider, an alternate provider, and an assistant if working at the program regularly.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lesson plans from prior three months.</p> <p>Training documentation of five hours or more in at least two Core Knowledge Areas focused on FCC Developmentally Appropriate Practices within the last three years. One of these trainings must be in the topic area of “Physical Environment” under the Learning Environment and Curriculum Core Knowledge Area.</p> <p><i>Note: Copies of the NJ Birth-Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards may be reviewed onsite, and will also be required to demonstrate this standard has been fully met in addition to what is listed here for electronic submission. See Onsite Documentation section below.</i></p> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lesson plans for prior three months with evidence of activities/experiences planned around the early learning standards.</p> <p>Training documentation of 10 hours or more in at least three Core Knowledge Areas focused on FCC Developmentally Appropriate Practices within the last three years. One of these trainings must be in the topic area of “Physical Environment” under the Learning Environment and Curriculum Core Knowledge Area.</p> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lesson plans for prior three months with documented individual activities to support each child’s identified early care/educational goal.</p> <p>Provider has attended 20 hours of training or more in at least ten training topics within the last three years. At least 10 training hours must be completed in topics listed under Core Knowledge Areas: Learning Environment and Curriculum, and Child Growth and Development, and must include training on “Physical Environment” and “Language Arts and Literacy.”</p> <p>A curriculum reflective of current research and best practice must be in use.</p> <p>FCCERS-3 Item 12, Indicator 7.3 must be scored “yes” during GNJK Rating onsite observation.</p> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>
<p><b>2.3.3</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence of home language policy/communication</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of written explanation of communication that has been shared with parents or a signed receipt with parent signatures documenting they have received this information.</p> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
2.4.2	Copies of completed developmental screening tool; protocol/policy in Parent Handbook; Parent signature and date results shared		<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of completed developmental screening tools for children enrolled more than six months; protocol/policy in parent handbook.  <i>Note: Copies of completed screening tools and parent signatures may be reviewed onsite, and will also be required to demonstrate this standard has been fully met in addition to what is listed here for electronic submission. See Onsite Documentation section below.</i>  <b>File Name:</b>	
2.4.3	Provider uses opened-ended questioning and provides interesting learning opportunities throughout the day to engage children in learning and meaningful conversations		<input type="checkbox"/> FCCERS-3 item 12, Indicator 5.1 must be scored “yes” during GNJK Rating onsite observation.	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
<b>3.3.1;</b> <b>3.4.1;</b> <b>3.5.1</b>	<b>Strengthening Families Protective Factors (SFPF) Framework: documentation of family correspondence (flyers, emails, photos, newsletters, social media); Strengthening Families (SF) Survey Results; Evidence of SFPF Framework is fully implemented: annually updated SF Quality Improvement Plan, SF Self-Assessment Tool for Family Child Care; SF Action Plan based on outcomes from Self-Assessment</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Samples from at least three or more of the following strategies distributed within past 12 months (flyers, emails, photos, newsletters, social media, etc.) aligned to one or more of the following protective factors within the SFPF Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental resilience</li> <li>• Social connections</li> <li>• Knowledge of parenting and child development</li> <li>• Concrete support in times of need</li> <li>• Social and emotional competence of children</li> </ul> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Collated summary sheet with number of families enrolled and number of SF surveys returned from families <b>or</b> copies of any/each SF survey(s) completed in the past 12 months should be submitted. Completed SF surveys from at least 50% of enrolled students must be returned. <p><b>File Name:</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence SFPF Framework is fully integrated into the program (including: annually updated SF Quality Improvement Plan, the program’s completed SF Self-Assessment for FCC, SF Action Plan based on outcomes from Self-Assessment and completed SF surveys filled out by parents). <p><b>File Name:</b></p>
<b>3.3.2</b>	<b>Documentation of family correspondence on early learning standards</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of two examples of information focused on age-appropriate early learning standards/Developmentally Appropriate Practices shared with families within past 12 months. <p><b>File Name:</b></p>		
<b>3.3.3</b>	<b>Documentation of family correspondence on expectations/routines</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of information related to program expectations and routines shared twice: during enrollment and at least one other example shared with families within past 12 months. <p><b>File Name:</b></p>		

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
3.3.4	Evidence of encouragement of parent participation in activities or events that promote learning or family engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of two examples of encouragement of or parent participation (e.g., sign-in sheets, photos, etc.) within past 12 months. <b>File Name:</b>		
3.3.5; 3.5.2	List of community organizations that welcome parent members; list of community organizations where parents can be involved and copies of flyers with meeting information	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of list of community organizations that welcome parent participants. <b>File Name:</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> List of community organizations in which parents can be involved is shared with families <b>and</b> copies of flyers/meeting information is shared with families. <b>File Name:</b>
3.4.2	Documentation of parent conferences or meetings with families and setting individual early care and educational goals		<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that parent conferences/meetings with families were held at least two times over a 12-month period <b>and</b> that at least one documented early care/educational goal is identified for the child (documentation of conference/meeting offered and child’s developmental progress provided to families in absence of meeting for families who may decline a conference/meeting). <b>File Name:</b>	
3.4.3	Copy of oral hygiene policy and educational materials shared with parents		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of oral hygiene policy <b>and</b> evidence of education and/or information provided to parents within last 12 months on good oral hygiene practices and avoidance of behaviors that increase the risk of early childhood cavities, based on guidelines provided by Caring for our Children. <b>File Name:</b>	



GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
4.3.1	Provider has received training in the administration of the adopted developmental screening tool	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional development in the adopted developmental screening tool. Can be reviewed onsite if staff training/credentials are not found on NJCCIS or in electronically submitted certificates/sign-in sheets.  <b>File Name:</b>		
4.3.2	Provider receives ongoing formal professional development that builds upon the required training for FCC registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Required: 60 hours within three years. Can be reviewed onsite if staff training/credentials are not found on NJCCIS or in electronically submitted certificates/sign-in sheets.  <b>File Name:</b>		
4.4.1	Provider has professional development that prepares them to work with young children who have special needs		<input type="checkbox"/> Professional development that prepares them to work with children who have special needs: a minimum of two hours and completed every three years. Can be reviewed onsite if staff training/credentials are not found on NJCCIS or in electronically submitted certificates/sign-in sheets.  <b>File Name:</b>	
4.4.2	Professional development is received in the Pyramid Model, social-emotional development, and/or Infant/Child Mental Health		<input type="checkbox"/> Professional development in one of the topic areas: a minimum of two hours and completed every three years. Can be reviewed onsite if staff training/credentials are not found on NJCCIS or in electronically submitted certificates/sign-in sheets.  <b>File Name:</b>	

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
4.5.1	Provider has, at a minimum, an FCC CDA, is enrolled in a CDA program, or, if provider has a higher degree unrelated to early childhood education or child development, has nine credits in child development			<input type="checkbox"/> Current CDA Certificate; an enrollment letter or transcript from three years prior to rating submission indicating provider is enrolled in a CDA program; or NJCCIS documentation. Can be reviewed onsite if staff training/credentials are not found on NJCCIS or in electronically submitted certificates/sign-in sheets. <b>File Name:</b>
4.5.2	Evidence of provider’s participation in a professional early childhood-related association/conference			<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of agenda from conference/certificate of attendance/active membership certificate (must be current/from within prior year). <b>File Name:</b>
5.3.1	<p>Copy of schedule of meetings and agendas from provider/ assistant meetings, if there is an assistant currently working at the program, and written procedure for sharing information with substitute/ alternate</p> <p><i>Note: Standard is waived and points are awarded if there is not an assistant and/or substitute/alternate</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of schedule of meetings with assistant <b>and</b> agendas from the prior three months; <b>and</b> written procedure for sharing information with substitute/alternate.  <b>File Name:</b>		

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
5.3.2	Parent Handbook listing policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Handbook listing policies and procedures regarding each of the items below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substitute care arrangement</li> <li>• Persons authorized to pick up the child</li> <li>• Medication administration</li> <li>• Emergencies</li> <li>• Discipline Policy</li> <li>• Conferences</li> <li>• Visitors to the home</li> </ul> <p>The Parent Handbook should also include policies and procedures on the following, if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Field trips</li> </ul> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>		
5.4.1	Marketing materials and/or recruitment strategies		<input type="checkbox"/> Three examples of marketing and/or recruitment strategies.  <b>File Name:</b>	
5.4.2	Evidence of tracking system for business-related practices		<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that a tracking system is in place for each of the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income received</li> <li>• Caregiving hours</li> <li>• Business hours worked in the home</li> <li>• Other business-related expenses</li> <li>• If applicable: meals/snacks served to children</li> </ul> <p><b>File Name:</b></p>	

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/Documentation Required			
5.4.3	Documentation of filing taxes		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of most recent tax form filed (Schedule C). <b>File Name:</b>	
5.5.1	Evidence of current operating budget			<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of current operating budget with projected income and expense figures. <b>File Name:</b>
5.5.2	Evidence of current liability insurance policy			<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of current liability insurance policy. <b>File Name:</b>
5.5.3	Evidence of annual family surveys and results of surveys used to develop program's improvement plan			<input type="checkbox"/> Completed family/parent surveys and provider's improvement plan based on survey feedback. <b>File Name:</b>

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 (e.g. where all children's folders are located together, where the provider's folder is located)

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<p>#</p> <p>u )</p> <p><i>If there are no children moving to preschool/kindergarten, submit for each child: reports from family conferences that include five academic/behavioral goals for the following year.</i></p> <p>)</p> <p>= ) h</p> <p>= ) h</p>	<p># 7</p> <p>8 VKM k</p> <p>O</p>
<p># VK" u o VKh u</p> <p>O o</p> <p><b>NJCCIS professional development documentation:</b> All staff members should be registered on NJCCIS, and their professional profile should reflect completed formal education and professional development/training. However, if particular documentation isn't found on NJCCIS, it will be reviewed onsite in staff folders. Please be sure to note location of staff folders.</p>	<p>h o 7</p> <p>8 VKM k</p> <p>O</p>



## Observation Agreement

Independent Raters will arrive a few minutes before the scheduled observation to ask questions pertaining to non-observable items on the Environment Rating Scale such as the total number of children enrolled, if there are any children with identified disabilities, etc.

The Individual Raters entering the classroom(s) are there solely to observe, and will do their best to stay out of the way and not be disruptive to your program. Because the Raters are there to observe as much as possible during the three-hour observation, please keep interactions with Raters during this window to a minimum.

All adults in the state of NJ are mandated reporters. Whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect by a provider/center staff member or any other person, our Raters must verbally notify the NJ Department of Children and Families State Central Registry. If there is any imminent danger(s) or hazard(s) that threaten the health and safety of children in a provider's home or childcare center, the Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing will be notified.

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**Signature of Program Primary Contact**

**Date**

## Star Rating Readiness Certification

I certify that my program has completed all Level 1 and Level 2 GNJK Standards and that my program's child care license is in good standing. I have also worked with my Technical Assistance Specialist to successfully prepare my center/school for the rating process as required for the star rating I am seeking. On this Star Rating Readiness Checklist, I have noted all documentation that has been submitted electronically and the onsite documentation to be reviewed and considered towards the final rating decision.

License is in  
good standing

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**Signature of Program Primary Contact**

**Date**

License is in  
good standing

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**Signature of Technical Assistance Specialist**

**Date**