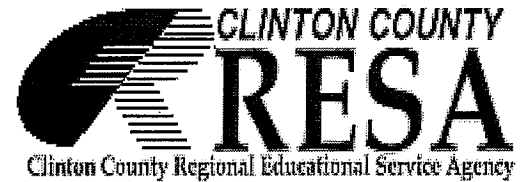




MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION



# CLINTON COUNTY GREAT START NEWSLETTER

## September - October - November 2010

### GREAT PARENTS GREAT START AND EARLY ON PLAYGROUPO SCHEDULE

All playgroups are held on **Wednesdays** at Clinton County RESA Educational Center, 4179 South U.S. 27, St. Johns on the following dates:

**FIRST SESSION:**

September 22  
September 29  
October 6  
October 13  
October 20  
October 27

**SECOND SESSION:**

November 10  
November 17  
December 1  
December 8  
December 15

**Session Times:**

9:30a.m. – 10:30 a.m. (Focus will be 0-3 yr olds)

11:00a.m. – 12:00p.m. (Focus will be 3-5 yr olds)

5:30p.m. – 6:30p.m. (Focus will be 0-5 yr olds)

(All ages welcome to all playgroups – Activities will focus on indicated age groups)

### GREAT PARENTS GREAT START PARENT LED PLAYGROUPO SCHEDULE

All playgroups are held on Thursdays at St. Peter Lutheran Church, 8990 Church Rd., St. Johns

**FIRST SESSION:**

September 23  
September 30  
October 7  
October 14  
October 21  
October 28

**SECOND SESSION:**

November 11  
November 18  
December 2  
December 9  
December 16

**Session Time:**

9:15a.m. – 10:45 a.m. (Focus will be 0-5 yr olds)

Playgroup Parent Facilitator: Eva Luce  
Playgroups Sponsored by: CCRESA, Great Parents Great Start

The playgroups are open to any family having children ages birth to five years living in Clinton County RESA district. The groups will be jointly facilitated by Kittie Butcher, MSU Extension (Early On); Sue Petty and Floretta Latham, Great Parents Great Start; and Laurie Dachtler, CCRESA Early On. For your information included are descriptions of Early On and Great Parents Great Start. *Early On Michigan* is the system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers, birth to three years of age, with developmental delays and/or disabilities. Early On supports families as their children learn and grow. Great Parents Great Start is a grant through the Michigan Department of Education that supports Regional Education Service Agencies (CCRESA) to develop parent involvement and educational programs for children ages birth to five years of age. These playgroups are free and universally open to all families. **If interested please call MSU Extension at 989-224-5240 to reserve a spot for the playgroup time of your choice. This year we are limiting each group to 12 families.**

### **GOODBYE FROM JOYCE BISCHOFF**

It is with mixed emotions that I say good-bye to all the families, colleagues, and friends I have come to know over the past 3 years as the Parent Educator for CCRESA's Great Parents Great Start. Everyone has been so supportive that working was a joy. However, it is time for me to recognize my limitations and move on. The biggest reason for this change has a name, it is Lucy Jane, my first grandchild for whom I will be providing child care. The position will now be filled with two very dedicated and talented educators, Sue Petty and Floretta Latham. I wish all Great Start and Early On staff a successful and fun new year.

Joyce Bischoff.

### **HELLO FROM SUE PETTY AND FLORETTA LATHAM**

The new Great Parents Great Start educators for the 2010-2011 year will be Sue Petty and Floretta Latham. Sue has a background in special education and was a classroom and playgroup teacher at CCRESA before accepting this position. Floretta has been a speech therapist in Ohio and Michigan. Most recently she has been a speech therapist and playgroup facilitator for CCRESA. They are both looking forward to an exciting year with Great Parents Great Start families.

### **GREAT START PARENT COALITION**

The Great Start Parent Coalition has taken off to a "GREAT START"! The Great Start Parent Coalition is made up of parents, grandparents, and care givers of young children in Clinton County. The Coalition: serves as a "voice" for parents in the community, assists in building public support for early childhood as an investment, supports and participates in the assessment and strategic planning work of the Great Start Collaborative, and strengthens the commitment of parents in the community, on behalf of young children. Meetings will be held the third Tuesday of each month (no December) from 6:00 - 7:30 PM at CCRESA Education Center. Registration required the Friday before the meeting. Maria Cook is the Parent Coalition Liaison and can be reached at (989) 224-6831 extension 428 or [mcook@ccresa.org](mailto:mcook@ccresa.org). We believe that "SMALL VOICES MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE." Come and join us.

### **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library is a free literacy program for children birth to age five living within the Clinton County RESA boundaries. Once a child is registered, they will receive one age appropriate book monthly until their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Clinton County RESA, Great Parents Great Start, our six local school districts, private donors, Capitol Region Community Foundation, Capital Area United Way and Consumers Energy Foundation bring this wonderful opportunity to you. For more information on how to enroll your child, contact Karen Black at 989-224-6831.

# Step into the Sandbox!

Join us for the Sandbox Party Convention.

Come stand with Michigan's youngest learners because they are the surest road to an economically vibrant Michigan. In this moment, your voice has never been more critical.



**Thursday, August 26,  
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.  
Breslin Student Event  
Center  
One Birch Road,  
East Lansing, MI 48824**

For more information, updates about the Convention and to register, please visit [www.michigansandboxparty.com](http://www.michigansandboxparty.com).

- ★ FREE, fun event for the entire family
- ★ Gubernatorial candidates have been invited to speak
- ★ The Verve Pipe will perform music from their "A Family Album"
- ★ Free goodie bag to the first 3,000 people in the door (open at noon)
- ★ Exhibits geared toward parents, children, educators, and professionals
- ★ Dance and music acts
- ★ Mock election for children under 18
- ★ Interactive crowd activities
- ★ And much more!

## Helpful Parenting Tips

### TRY THESE SEPTEMBER THINGS TO DO:

- Go outside and touch: a tree, a flower, the sidewalk. How many ways are they different?
- Go outside after dark and look at the stars.
- Talk to each other through a paper towel tube....quietly.
- Take an old white sock and draw a face on it with markers: a dandy puppet! Give it a name.
- Play with a flashlight. Use the words on, off, light, and dark.

### TRY THESE OCTOBER THINGS TO DO:

- Buy some gourds at the store or farmer's market. Feel the difference in textures and look at different colors.
- Imitate popping popcorn. Jump up and down and make popcorn noises.
- Is your home child proof?
- Where is the moon? When can you see it? What color is it?
- Can you hear crickets outside after dark?

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

August 26<sup>th</sup> – Sandbox Party Convention  
1pm – 4pm – Breslin Center

September 22<sup>nd</sup> – Playgroups start

### OUT AND ABOUT PLACES TO GO WITH YOUR FAMILY:

Featuring:

MSU 4-H Children's Garden  
Near Bogue & Wilson Street on MSU Campus  
8am – 5pm

Cost: Mon – Fri \$3 to \$5 for parking  
Sat & Sun - FREE

## TERRIFIC, NOT TERRIBLE

Waiting in line at the drugstore last week, I smiled at the young mother ahead of me, who was struggling with her little daughter, a child who had no patience with this grown-up activity of waiting.

The mother gave an elaborate sigh, rolled her eyes at me, and muttered, "The terrible two's." I smiled in response, thinking how misunderstood is this title for toddlers.

Bill Cosby once said, "Give me one hundred two-year olds and I can take over the world." This sentence captures the dynamic nature of the two-year-old.

If you created a list of words to describe this youngster, you would add terms like energetic, impulsive, egocentric, curious. In fact, for every negative you mentioned, you could find a positive characteristic, as did Cosby, noting the powerful force of two's.

The strongest tool for survival as a parent of this child who has been on the planet for twenty-four short months is to understand how striving for autonomy, a sense of self, and independence rules this child's life. Understanding why toddlers behave as they do, indeed **MUST** behave, and how adults can help and guide their efforts is vital.

What tools does a two -year-old have? Well, consider: energy with practically no limit; a compulsion and need to move; powerful curiosity that peaks around eighteen months; big ideas, and strong emotions, with frustration often heading the list.

What does a two-year-old not have? Lacking are: much verbal language or a lot of ability to process the streams of language that comes from adults—consider this in relation to the frustration listed above. Also lacking is judgment of the consequences of actions, or any sense of other's needs or feelings, or any self-control.

Juxtapose these two lists, and you get some idea of why this is a tough time for both youngsters and parents.

Now the biggest question of all—what does this child need for healthy development?

A most important answer is the adults who can understand toddler limitations, adults who, in fact, expect their lack of control, and can offer them control from without—freedom within limits.

They need adults who are neither exasperated nor angered by the two-year-old's level of development, knowing that in time new abilities will come. And they need adults who remember those big ideas and enormous curiosity.

That means adults have to avoid over-restriction, which will inevitably lead to head-on power struggles. Two's need a safe, interesting world for active exploration, to satisfy that profound curiosity.

Mostly, two's need opportunities to see themselves as powerful and capable, with grownups cheerfully supporting their efforts to do as much for themselves as they can.

While parents in a hurry may find it challenging to wait while the two-year-old struggles to put on socks or pull up pants, the gain in a sense of autonomy is priceless.

Two's need adults who can value the growing sense of power without being intimidated by the youngster who is trying it out. And two's need adults who get a good night's sleep and can smile at all that energy, as did Bill Cosby.