

The

Connection

January 2015



Resources For Families and Providers in Genesee and Livingston Counties



Inside this issue:

- Wishing you a Playful New Year! ...1
- Important Dates to Remember ...2
- The Provider Connection ...3
- First Aid and CPR Classes ...4
- Resounding Resources ...5
- Ages & Stages ...6
- Ready, Set Learn! ...6
- Winter Safety ...7
- Social Emotional Training ...8

Visit our Resource and Lending Library Monday through Friday from 8:00 am—4:00 pm. You will discover FREE useful resources for teaching, parenting and activities for quality time with your families!

Child Connect for Family Success

Serving Genesee and Livingston Counties on behalf of the Great Start to Quality Southeast Resource Center

**2710 East Grand River Suite 6
Howell, MI 48843
517-548-9112 (Howell)**

**FLINT LOCATION!!
1509 E. Court Street
Room 101
Flint, MI 48503
810-407-7285 (Flint)
800-260-0202**

**www.childconnectmi.org
Stop by and say "Hi!"**



**Why We Should Take Play Seriously
By Lenore Skenazy**

Play is nature’s way of getting kids to do the work of growing up. More and more, child development experts are turning their attention to free play—the kind that does not involve parents or coaches or anything with batteries. The new idea is that replacing free play time with extra academics or organized activities is not doing kids any favors. Play looks like a waste of time to some because it is not goal directed; however, play builds brains.

Play is dress rehearsal for adulthood, and, before that, for school. Think how many times a teacher has to say, “Wait your turn!” to get a kid to stop blurting out in class. At play, children get endless practice waiting their turn. Self-control gradually becomes second nature. Schools that cut short recess think they’re adding “education time.” But play is education time. Play is so crucial that all mammals do it. “In play,” says Peter Gray, a professor of psychology at Boston College, “young mammals practice the very skills that they must develop in order to make it into adulthood.” Young predators practice pouncing on dead leaves. It’s not “real” hunting, but it’s making them limber and quick. Meanwhile, the prey animals are practicing how to get away from the “pouncers.” Squirrels’ play looks like a whole lot of tag. Why would Mother Nature program animals to frolic, even though it wastes valuable energy and puts them at danger? Would not it be safer for them to just huddle close to home all day? How come they gambol out in the open? Because play is even more important than conserving energy or hiding at home.

Our children also need to play to grow and develop. Staying on task. Focusing. Creating. Cooperating. Communicating. Free play fosters almost all the traits we want our children to develop. And there’s even a perk: it’s fun!

It’s all about Quality.



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER!!!

Child Connect for Family Success is happy to provide free professional child care at the Parker Middle School during Livingston County's 8th Annual Community Connect!

COMMUNITY CONNECT will be held at Parker Middle School (Howell) on Saturday, **February 7, 2015**. Community Connect is a free, one-day event to help Livingston County residents who are in need to connect with services in a friendly, easy-to-access location.

For more information call 2-1-1, the Livingston County United Way's free helpline. To volunteer, contact Donna Gehringer at: dgehringer@lcunitedway.org

Child Connect's Annual Membership!



Renew your Child Connect for Family Success Professional Membership for 2015!

Membership benefits include discounts on training and lamination services and unlimited access to our Resource Library and so much more!

Call Peggy Hall at:

517-548-9912 to **renew on**

February 1st, 2015.

ATTENTION PROGRAM DIRECTORS!!

Join us in January for another incredible Directors' Training on January 12 from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm at Child Connect. We will continue our discussion and share insights about "Motivating Staff". Please call our office at 517-548-9112 to sign-up today!

Winners of the 2014 Caring for Kids Raffle!

Child Connect for Family Success is happy to announce the 2014 Caring for Kids Raffle winners:



Congratulations to first place prize winner, Deanna Couet, who won the \$500.00 VISA Card.



Congratulations to second place prize winner, Kelli Herbert, who won a Dell Venue 8 Pro Tablet.



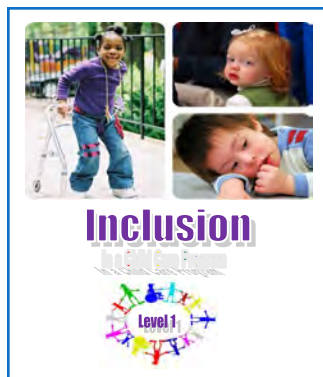
Congratulations to Kristy Shoens for winning the iPad 2



2015 Raffle Tickets will go on sale
September, 2015!

Distance Learning Opportunities! "Learning at your pace at your place!"

So many classes to choose from!



Call 517-548-9112 to register for any of our distance learning classes.

Request a flyer to see the full listing of classes available.



Making Icy Ornaments

Your kids will love making these eye-catching, icy mobiles. Wait until you have a few days of freezing temperature and try this fun activity with your class. All you need are some jam lids or shallow dishes, string, and some seasonal nature objects such as berries, seeds, or leaves.

1. Arrange your nature items inside upturned jam jar lids or shallow dishes. To make a star shape, simply place a star cookie cutter within the lid.

2. Place the lids in a row on a tray and lay a piece of thick string over the row of lids, linking them together.

3. Pour water into each lid, making sure all the materials and the string are completely submerged.

4. Place the tray outdoors overnight or until the water freezes.

5. Carefully remove the frozen disks from the lids. (You may need to dunk them in warm water to loosen.)

Hang your ornaments outside a window or in a tree in the garden and enjoy them as long as the cold weather lasts!



LET'S CONNECT!

Child Connect for Family Success is Online:

Our website: www.childconnectmi.org

Like us on [FACEBOOK](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Chance to win \$1,000! Just log on to: www.psocial.co/childconnect



First Aid and CPR Classes!

For Parents, Early Childhood Personnel and the Public!

CPR and First Aid Renewal in Livingston County

January 22nd—6:00—9:00 pm

CPR and First Aid (Full) in Livingston County

January 24th—8:00 am-1:00 pm

CPR Renewal ONLY in Livingston County

January 24th—1:00—3:00 pm

CPR and First Aid Renewal in Genesee County

January 13—6:00—9:00 pm

CPR Renewal ONLY in Genesee County

January 17—1:00—3:00 pm

Full CPR and First Aid in Genesee County

January 17—8:00 am—1:00 pm



Call 517-548-9112 to REGISTER
for Livingston County and
Call 810-407-7285 for Genesee
County.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OLD CPR CARD WITH YOU TO CLASS

2014

Child Connect Platinum

Members:

First Presbyterian Child Care
(Julie Aramian, Director)

Little Glads Child Care Center
(Beverly Farmer, Director)

IXL Howell
(Melissa Sell, Director)

IXL Hamburg
(Jamie Miller, Director)

IXL South Lyon
(Kristen Zarycki, Director)

Janet Joseph
(Community Partner)

Maple Tree Montessori
(Sue Cherry, Director)

Lil' Peanuts Family Child Care
(Laura Hayes, Owner/Director)

Creative Kids Learning Center
(Jodie Hutcheson, Director)



Resounding Resources

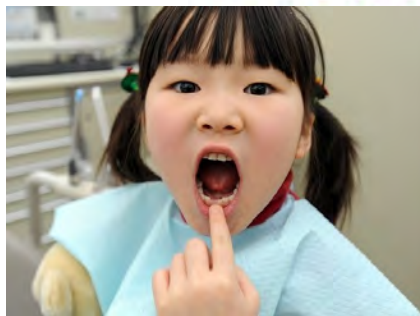


Child Connect invites you to come into our Resource Library located at 2710 E. Grand River in Howell, to enjoy our NEW wall of back-back learning kits for children (birth-6 years of age). If you live in Genesee County check out our Resource Library located at 1509 E. Court Street, Room 101 in Flint!

There are so many kits to choose from—AND best of all you can check these out for FREE!

Child Connect is open from 8:00 am—4:00 pm (Howell) and 8:00 am—3:00 pm (Flint)—evening appointments are also available upon request. We look forward to seeing you!

February is National Children's Dental Health Month



Hurry in to Child Connect for Family Success and reserve our mini-dentist office for your make believe center. You can check it out for one week along with our dentist dress-up kit! It is a great way to promote dental health with your toddlers and preschool children!

Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)



Using the ASQ as a developmental assessment screening tool is beneficial to early childhood programs, children and families. Designed as a low cost screening instrument to identify children who may need early intervention services, the ASQ is easy-to-read, has a simple scoring process, and straightforward interpretation. The ASQ can be completed by parent/guardian, care provider, teacher, or both teacher and parent. The ASQ helps individualize guidance regarding child behavior and development, provides valid, reliable and developmental information over time and assists with referrals to appropriate specialists for further testing.

The ASQ includes 19 questionnaire intervals that begin as early as 4 months through 60 months and assesses areas of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social development. Families can benefit from the ASQ as it bridges communication with providers about child development, provides a road map for growth and development in the early years, and provides reassurance.

Child Connect for Family Success is ready to help answer questions regarding the use of the ASQ and the benefits to your program. Please contact Jennifer Rountree at (517)548-9112 if you have any questions regarding the ASQ. We are excited to announce we will be offering an ASQ introductory training in March of 2015 for early childhood providers and the families they serve. Look for more information in future newsletters regarding the date.

Ready, Set Learn! Kindergarten Readiness Program

Are you a Livingston County early childhood provider, or a parent with a young child in child care struggling with a child's behavior or development and not sure where to turn? Be sure to contact Child Connect regarding our Ready, Set, Learn! Kindergarten Readiness program!

Ready, Set, Learn provides FREE services by trained early childhood consultants who know that challenging behaviors do not mean that a child is "bad"- just that the child is trying to tell the adults in his/her life that "something isn't right." We are here to help and welcome the opportunity to further explain this wonderful program to you and the families in your care. Contact **Jennifer Rountree (517) 548-9112** at Child Connect with any concerns or questions you may have.



Winter Safety for Families With Small Children

By Maureen Ryan

Toddlers and Twos Expert

The winter days are a glorious and joyful time, especially when you have very young children who are in awe of the snowfall, the glow from the fireplace, and trappings of the season.

Unfortunately, though, every year there are tragic stories of children who are injured by dangers and mishaps that are common during this time of year. You can avoid most of these issues by paying close attention to safety guidelines and by using the tips and resources below.

Dress Your Little One for the Season

If you are like me, you are always caught a little off guard by those first few really cold days. I can never really figure out what 40 degrees or 20 degrees requires as far as dress for my little ones -- full on snowsuit? extra sweatshirt under the fall vest? As a general rule, you can think what you would be comfortable in and add one additional layer (an extra long-sleeved shirt for instance).

Two other points to consider when dressing children safely for winter:

Don't impede her mobility. If that snow suit prevents her from getting back up when she falls down, pack it away. Your toddler is better off with a cozy layer of thermals and an easy-to-move in winter coat or pullover suit.

Forget fashionable. Many of those cute outfits you see hanging in the store are not really warm. It's worth it to invest in clothes that can keep out the snow and wind when you take your tot for his first sled ride. Consider buying your child a winter parka one size up. A good coat will often still provide comfort and good mobility when it's a bit roomy. Some high-end styles also come with growth panels, so you can at least get the start of next season out of it by letting down the panel.

Check Toy Recalls and Safety Ratings

It would be nice if we could assume that any product made for children was safe and reliable. That's just not reality, unfortunately. When you're shopping for gifts, be sure to check lists of the most recently recalled toys to be sure you haven't already purchased one of the "bad" gifts. You can also sign up for email updates from the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

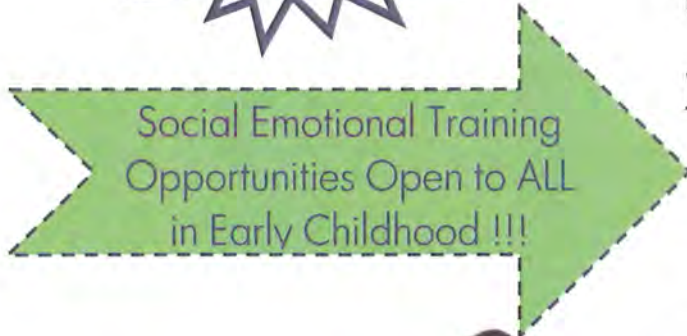
Beyond avoiding recalled toys, be sure you are familiar with what to look for in an age-appropriate toy and how to know if a plaything is safe for your child.

Be Aware of Fire Safety

If you're lucky enough to have a wood burning fireplace in your home, then you should use it -- especially during the winter days when it warms the house and your soul with good old-fashioned comfort. Just be sure everyone in the house is aware of fire safety. That means knowing not just that you shouldn't touch the fire (of course) but also knowing that fireplace ashes should be disposed of in a proper bucket and placed outside the home.

Stave Off Winter Colds and Flu

Seeing distant relatives and celebrating the season with play date parties are the things of memory making. The down side is that you and your child are more likely to be exposed to a host of germs. That doesn't mean you should turn down the next invitation or say no to hugs and kisses at the family gathering. Instead, be smart about avoiding winter illnesses and keeping your family healthy. To start, be sure that everyone who can receive a flu shot has gotten one for this year. Then make sure everyone washes their hands frequently because it is another prevention method for all communicable diseases.



Join

Jennifer Rountree

Ready, Set, Learn!
Kindergarten Readiness Program

When: Wednesdays
6:30 – 8:00 pm

- January 14
- February 25
- March 25
- April 22 and 29
- May 6 and 13
- June 3 and 10
- July 15
- August 12
- September 16

Join Jennifer for a free interactive social emotional training series that focuses on early childhood educators and the support they *need* for the **important** work they do! This training series will utilize the research-based Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (**CSEFEL**) model and materials to help promote healthy social and emotional development in infants and young children. This model offers a full array of many relevant topics and strategies. Each training session will build on the previous week, based on group participants' input, needs, and interests.

REGISTER NOW

Limited Space Available

Call: (517) 548-9112



2710 East Grand River, Suite 6
Howell, MI 48843
Phone: 517-548-9112
or 800-260-0202
E-mail: childcareL@aol.com
Website: www.childconnectmi.org

Funding for this training/support is offered through a generous 32p Block Grant from the Office of Great Start