



The

Connection

Resources
For Families and
Early Childhood
Professionals

APRIL 2019

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Visit our Resource and Lending Library Monday through Friday from 9:00 am-4:00 pm. You will discover FREE useful resources for teaching, parenting and activities for Quality time with your family!

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Child Connect
for Family Success

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The Importance of Sensory Play

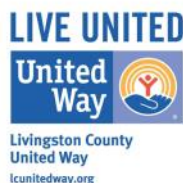


Children are natural scientists—investigating, exploring, and experimenting with the materials found in their environment. In the past, children were expected to go outside to play. They picked up sticks, rocks, and flowers to sort and count. How many times, as a child, did you watch a caterpillar on the ground, following it closely to see where it was going? Did you ride bicycles around the block and play Hide-and-Seek outside with friends until you were called inside for dinner? These experiences helped us develop our senses and taught us to self-regulate our actions, preparing us ultimately for the more formal education of school.

Today, many children are relegated to playing indoors. Video games, television, and computer games are the primary indoor occupations. Even though these activities provide visual and auditory stimulation, they are fast-paced and do not allow the child to self-regulate. At the same time, parents and teachers are increasingly pressured to “prepare” children for school. Unfortunately, this results in younger and younger children being expected to complete worksheets and other inappropriate assessments. Playing video games, watching television, or doing deskwork hinders a child from using all their senses to explore, discover, and learn from their surrounding environment.

Why is sensory play important? What factors influence sensory development for a young child? How do sensory activities add value to a child’s overall development? Sensory play includes any play activities that encourage a child to explore materials which stimulate their senses. These activities can range from yoga or dancing to sand play or finger painting. (continued on Page 5)

It's all about Quality



2019 Child Connect Platinum Members:

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Tammy Sexton, Owner/Director
Make Believe Manor

Follow the Child Connect GPS (Guided Professional Services) on your journey to quality!

Child Connect's GPS leads early childhood professional development in **Livingston County** to the next level by providing guided professional services including:

- 1) Intentional planning and customizing professional development for your program;
- 2) Customized training modules and regularly scheduled training modules;
- 3) On-site classroom evaluations [using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning] to help you identify areas for improvement;
- 4) Classroom Program Quality Assessment (PQA) or PQA-R;
- 5) Professional consultations and coaching to model the skills taught during our research-based training modules to maximize the overall impact of professional development;
- 6) CDA Scholarship Program;
- 7) Hybrid CDA Program;
- 8) Ready, Set, Learn Kindergarten Readiness Program
- 9) Pediatric and General First Aid and CPR/AED Classes
- 10) Other compliancy classes including Blood borne Pathogens training, Safe Sleep, Shaken Baby Prevention and SIDs Prevention training.

Call **517-548-9112** to schedule your on-site classroom evaluation and consultation.

Sue Cherry, Director
Maple Tree Montessori Academy

Cassie LaButte, Director
Roo's Corner

Jenny Chambers
Down on the Farm Child Care

Katie Sloan, Director
Little Glad Early Childhood Center

David Simancek, Director
Swartz Creek CDC Program



The Provider Connection

Professional Development Opportunities ...

**Pediatric First Aid, CPR, and AED
Training**

April 18, 2019 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm

\$65.00 per person



Register online at childconnectmi.org
or call 517-548-9112

Register for all classes online at:
childconnectmi.org or by calling
517-548-9112

View the 2019 UPDATED
Professional Development Calendar
[HERE!](#) Including 18 FREE Classes!

LET'S CONNECT!

Child Connect for Family Success is
Online:

Our website: www.childconnectmi.org

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DIRECTOR'S SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Courtney Aldrich, MSU-E

What Children Need to Know
Monday, April 8
1:00 - 3:00 pm

Child Connect, 861 E. Sibley (in Southeast School)
Register online: childconnectmi.org

So many classes to choose from!

Register online at:
childconnectmi.org

Or call us at: 517-548-9112

Register Online Now
April 13, 2019

Exploring Montessori Conference

"The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind."

Child Connect for family success

Kellogg Family Foundation

DOUGH TO GO!
APRIL 30
6:30-8:30 PM

HANDS ON EXPLORATION
RECIPES FOR SENSORY PLAY
WITH CHILDREN

JO ANN COOK, CFLE

Social & Emotional Support & Training

**SELF CARE & STRESS
MANAGEMENT**
APRIL 16, 2019
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Holly Carter, LLMSW
Register online at childconnectmi.org

Resounding Resources



Resource of the Month: April 8-12, 2019 is “The Week of the Young Child”—an annual celebration hosted by the National Association for the Education of the Young Child (NAEYC) to spotlight early learning, young children, their teachers, families and communities. Celebrate with us!

Child Connect has many learning kits you can use with your children for each of these special days! Come to our FREE Resource Lending Library located at 861 E. Sibley—and take home a learning kit today!

Music Monday: April 8! When children sing, dance, and listen to music, they develop their language and early literacy skills while being active and encouraging move-

Tasty Tuesday: On April 9, focus on healthy eating and fitness. Cooking together connects math with literacy skills, science and more!

Work Together Wednesday: April 10! When children build together they explore math and science concepts and develop social and early literacy skills. Children can use any building material—from a fort of branches on the playground to a block city in the classroom.

Artsy Thursday: April 11 celebrate with Artsy Thursday. Children develop creativity, social skills and fine motor skills with open-ended creative projects where they can make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands. Celebrate the joy and learning children experience when engaged in creative activities.

Family Friday: Wrap up the week of the young child with Family Friday on April 12. Engaging and celebrating families is at the heart of supporting the youngest learners. Invite families into the classroom for a special celebration of our choosing—be sure to take lots of pictures to display at the children’s level.



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Why is Sensory Play Important (continued from Page 1)

Often adults are hesitant to offer a child opportunities to participate in sensory play as this type of play can be messy and loud, or could result in disruptive behavior. However, with a few simple rules, a thoughtfully prepared environment, and enough time, the benefits of sensory play for a child are invaluable. Sensory play enhances the way in which a child reacts to their environment through visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory perceptions. Young children have a physical and emotional desire to see, hear, touch, smell, and taste things that are within reach and new to them. As a child grows, the need for exploring materials within their world continues. Sensory exploration enhances cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral development.

The outdoors naturally supports a child's development as children explore their environment with all their senses. This should be encouraged as much as possible. However, when the weather or other conditions inhibit outdoor play, opportunities for similar exploration should be fostered indoors. This will take more creativity and preparation on the part of the adult. Many natural loose parts such as pinecones, flowers, or stones can be brought inside for discovery and play. Your Sensory Table can be utilized for more than just sand or water play. Try filling it with other natural materials such as snow, dirt, bark, fall leaves, or pine needles. (Hint: If you don't have a sensory table, an outgrown baby bath tub works great for sensory play in a home environment.)

Open ended art experiences can also foster sensory exploration. Finger painting, for example, is an appropriate activity that stimulates multiple senses with the unique smell and feel of the starchy paint. It is just as fun to smear paint all over your hands as it is to spread it on the paper! To an adult, however, the activity looks messy and the immediate reaction might be to ask the child to wash their hands. As soon as an adult intervenes in such a way, the sensory learning connection abruptly ends. It would be far more valuable for the adult to instead discuss how the paint looks on paper and how it feels between the fingers.

Indoor exploration can encompass a variety of sensory activities. Adults can create sensory play activities that meet the child's sensory needs using common household materials. For example, the following simple indoor activities promote sensory development and can be set up easily by parents or teachers:

- Paint with water on tissue paper. Use eyedroppers to encourage fine motor skills.
- Mix baking soda and colored Jell-O, then slowly pour in vinegar for a visual explosion.
- Scribble on aluminum foil using colored marker
- Create a variety of sound effects using pots, pans, stainless steel, and wooden utensils.
- Tape bubble wrap around children's feet for a unique walking experience.
- Try painting with your feet. Put the paper on the floor and remove the children's shoes & socks.
- Practice yoga poses such as the tree pose, flower pose, star pose, and frog pose.
- Construct an indoor obstacle course using couch cushions, blankets, pool noodles, and hula hoops.
- Play "Guess that Scent" using variety of lotions, like sunscreen, hand soap, dish soap, tooth paste.
- Taste and compare sweet versus salty food items, such as mini marshmallows and pretzel sticks.

Finally, remember that all exploration takes time. If a child is to become attuned to and engaged with their environment, they will need time to explore, discover, and connect with all their senses. When this is encouraged, challenging behaviors naturally lessen. Children learn to self-regulate, communicate their ideas, and are ready to absorb new information. Most importantly, children will find a joy and enthusiasm for learning which will carry them through their whole lives.



Register Online Now

April 13, 2019

Exploring Montessori Conference



Easter Activities for toddlers and preschoolers



Wonderful Opportunities
Designed for YOU!

Call 517-548-9112

Register online at:
childconnectmi.org

[Fun Easter Activities](#)

2018-19 Genesee County CDA Scholarship Students enjoy interactive training at Great Expectations Early Childhood Program at Cummings Community School in Flint. Child Connect appreciates the ongoing support of the Community Foundation of Greater Flint who make this life-changing program possible! Child Connect is accepting applications for the 2019-20 CDA Scholarship Program in Flint!



Flint Kids Fund
flintkids.org

Your CDA is the best first step in your Professional development. To complete an application for 2019-20 CDA Scholarship Program go to our website:

[2019-20 CDA Scholarship Application](#)