

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE READING AND SCHOOL READINESS TO ALL CHILDREN

Allegan County ISD

Baby Links

- Baby Links reaches out to all families with newborns, informing them of services available to them as members of the Allegan County community, and connecting them with those services whenever possible.
- Valuable data is collected through the Baby Links program to help inform schools of the numbers of infants born in their districts and of the risk factors present in the families of these infants.
- Mailings are sent to all families from birth to kindergarten entry when the children reach critical developmental stages. Information is provided on child development, health, child care, safety, services and resources, and other important information aimed at helping the parents achieve success in preparing their children for school.

Parents as Teachers

- Parents as Teachers offers home visits that provide information and activities to stimulate child development with a focus on preparation for school success. The importance of reading is particularly emphasized by bringing books to each home visit and teaching parents appropriate ways of reading to their young children. Parents also learn techniques for fostering pre-literacy skills in their children based on the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP).
- Families are linked to a primary care physician when needed. Immunizations of children are tracked to insure that they are up to date, and vision and hearing screenings are provided.
- Each child is given developmental screenings annually. This process helps educate parents on appropriate developmental expectations. When delays are detected they are often remediated through intensification of PAT services and/or through referrals to Early On.
- Services are provided by a Spanish-speaking parent educator to Hispanic families.
- Parent education is provided through Parent University which offers classes on relevant parenting topics that were identified through a survey of enrolled families. Classes are presented in a succinct format and offered frequently so that parents can get the information they need when it is most needed.
- Play and Learn Groups are literacy based, offering activities based on the theme of popular children's books. Activities are planned and organized to address all developmental domains and inclusive of children of various ages and

developmental abilities. Families receive free children's books when they attend the groups. Groups are offered each month throughout the school year in elementary schools across the county.

- Parenting groups with moms who are in jail facilitate improvement of parenting skills and enhanced parent/child relationships despite the mother's incarceration.
- Families enrolled in PAT are offered connection to resources for services that are beyond the scope of the program.
- Services for fathers include:
 - Educational groups for dads using an established parenting curriculum
 - Father/child Play and Learn groups
 - Outings and events for fathers and children
 - One on one assistance in problem solving when issues arise that interfere with a father's ability to participate in parenting.
 - Parenting groups for incarcerated fathers at the county jail
- Infant mental health services provide therapeutic intervention for families at risk of poor attachment.
- Child care providers are offered the Parents as Teachers curriculum to enhance awareness of the child care provider's role in school readiness and improve their skill in preparing children for school.

INSTITUTIONAL MATERIALS AND CURRICULA DEVELOPED BY EARLY EDUCATION SERVICES

- Extensive PAT Staff Manual, including forms and training information
- Promotional fliers and brochures
- Play and Learn Groups curriculum
- Child Care Providers curriculum
- Parent University curriculum
- Evaluation materials
 - Evaluation protocol
 - Completed evaluation report
 - Tools used in evaluation including:
 - Risk Assessment
 - Parenting Skills Assessment
 - Intake and Exit Interviews
 - Annual Satisfaction Survey

- Database
- Hiring, training and supervision procedures
- Specialized professional development process