

Response to MAISA questions

Cheboygan Otsego Presque Isle Educational Service District

1. What is COP ESD doing now in parent education and reading to preschool children?

Special Education

Early On

Early On (part C of IDEA) provides early identification of children birth to 36 months with developmental delay or a health condition that might lead to developmental delay. It provides evaluation and coordination of services, parent education on their child's conditions, information on child development, and parent support. Early On serves approximately 60 to 70 children annually.

Early On encourages parents to read to their children and provides books periodically to individual families and at family group events. It also co-sponsors community workshops and other activities regarding reading to children, brain development, and related topics.

COP General Education (along with Special Education, Early On, and Tapestry) organizes the Northern Michigan Early Childhood Conference (in its fourth year in November 2003), providing several hundred parents and early childhood professionals with information, training, and support that includes a strong emphasis on reading, early literacy, and related subjects.

Tapestry Project

In addition to the long-standing Special Education and Early On programs, COP ESD has undertaken significant early childhood and parent education elements through our Tapestry Project (funded under Michigan's ASAP-PIE grant from the Michigan Department of Education). During 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, COP has used several models to provide parent education and a range of related activities, including:

- Through home visits, two Parents as Teachers (PAT) educators help parents to provide their young children (birth to kindergarten) with developmentally appropriate activities to foster growth and development and help prepare them for success in school and beyond. Over 110 families have received home visits to date.
- Parent educators from MSU Extensions provide home visits using the Building Strong Families model.
- Health Departments in our three counties provide nurse home visits during a child's first year. They provide information to parents and assist with child development, nutrition, hearing/ vision/ and developmental screenings.
- Tapestry has sponsored parent child play groups, parent groups, and a parenting series using the "Love and Logic" model to provide parents with education and support in raising their young children. Tapestry also provides information on parenting, child development, and related topics to parents by mail on request.
- A network of other community organizations collaborates with the project to encourage parents of young children to foster their children's development in every possible way.

Both PAT and BSF provide hands-on parent education, and strongly encourage parents to read to their children, providing them with techniques, tips, books and other materials to support reading.

2. What does COP ESD plan to do in the future regarding parent education and reading to young children?

Early On will continue to encourage parents to read to children, and will collaborate in efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of parenting and reading to young children.

Tapestry will continue to provide PAT home visits and related parent education in 2003-2004. The parent educators will assist parents and other family members to read to their children. They will also help coordinate community projects such as storytelling (with local libraries) and volunteers (older children, siblings, and family members) to read to young children.

COP-ESD will continue to organize the Early Childhood Conference for parents and professionals working with young children. At least one session will focus on reading/ story telling with children.

For more information contact

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