

# GREAT KIDS, GREAT START!

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings,

Long before Hillary Clinton coined the phrase "It takes a Village," the sentiment was widely prescribed as a traditional African proverb. The sentiment suggests that proverb or not, "It takes a whole village to raise a child." Parents, neighbors, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends, pastors and teachers all have a hand in this. It is with this awareness and knowledge that the goals and work of the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative are driven. The Great Start Collaborative is working hard to ensure that all children are safe, healthy and have the tools they need for school readiness. It is these principles that bring businesses, organizations, schools and parents together to address what our children need to be

successful.

This year the Michigan legislature has requested



that all Great Start Collaboratives convene a school readiness workgroup to identify issues and obstacles in their community that prevent school success. It is our task to bring together parents, teachers, early childhood staff and

administrators as our "pre-school board" to ensure that every child in the Copper Country has the tools and support they need to grow and thrive.

As we embrace the understanding that it takes a community to create a village we will become more committed to improving the quality of life for all children in the Keweenaw. Each of us has a role in this, each of us can affect change, and each of us, everyone, can lay claim as members of our fine village.

I welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. Please feel free contact me at 906-482-9365 or [ccgreatstart@gmail.com](mailto:ccgreatstart@gmail.com).

Warm Regards,

*Catherine Benda*

Copper Country Great Start Collaborative Director

- Copper Country  
Great Start Collaborative  
Members**
- Aspirus Keweenaw*
  - Baraga Family Court*
  - BHK Child Development Board*
  - Copper County ISD*
  - Copper Country Mental Health*
  - Great Start to Quality Resource Center*
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  - Houghton Elementary School*
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  - Local Parents*
  - Michigan Department of Human Services*
  - Michigan Technological University*
  - Portage Health*
  - Village of L'Anse*
  - Western U.P. Health Department*



The Michigan Department of Education's Office of Great Start is responsible for a variety of high quality early learning programs and services designed to ensure that children are:

- ★ Born Healthy
- ★ Healthy, thriving and developmentally on track from birth to third grade
- ★ Developmentally ready to succeed in school at the time of entry
- ★ Prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of the third grade



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**Every child  
wants to feel  
safe and ready  
to succeed in  
school.**



## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?

Beginning in 2013, a child who is 5 years old on or before November 1 is able to enroll in Kindergarten.

In 2014, a child who is 5 years old on or before October 1 may enroll in Kindergarten.

In 2015 and beyond, a child who is five years old on or before September 1 may enroll in Kindergarten.

\* Some children seem too young or not ready for school. Some families and teachers believe that getting older will help the child get ready for Kindergarten. This is not always true, remember that children change a lot between May and September.

\* Children grow and develop by learning from the world around them.

\* New people and children help your child learn and grow.

\* All children need time to

talk about what they are doing with adults and other children.

\* Kindergarten can help parents help their children at home.

### **The Family**

Every child wants to feel safe and ready to succeed in school. Your family is the most important factor in supporting your child to achieve these feelings. Parent involvement improves your child's school success. It also helps your child feel good about himself or herself. Family support helps encourage your child to learn.

\* Maintain a daily routine that includes mealtimes, snacks, and bedtimes.

\* Be sure your child's shots and health check-ups are current.

\* Make sure your child has plenty of play and outdoor time.

\* Play with your child.

\* Listen to your child.

\* Talk to your child.

\* Read to your child.

\* Write with your child.

### **The Schools**

\* Work with families and neighborhoods so children enter Kindergarten ready to succeed.

\* Be ready to teach children who come to school with different experiences of learning.

\* Teach the material children need to learn for that grade level.

\* All young children can learn if they are given proper material, encouragement and family support.

For more information and answers on transitioning your child into Kindergarten go see the Michigan Department of Education Parent Guides at:

[https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530\\_6809-152726--](https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6809-152726--)

## THE PARENT LIASION CORNER

There are many reasons for developing school, family, and community partnerships. The main purpose, according to Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University is "To help all youngsters succeed in school and later in life." Epstein created the Framework of Six Types of Parent/Family Involvement which includes:

\* **Parenting-** Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.

\* **Communicating-** Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about

school programs and children's progress.

\* **Volunteering-** Recruit and organize parent help and support.

\* **Learning at home-** Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

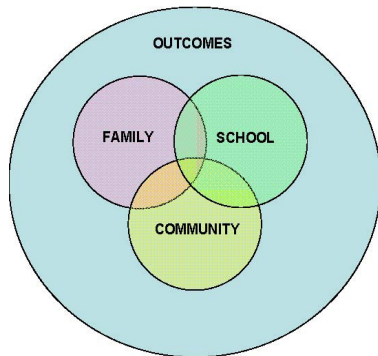
\* **Decision making-** Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

\* **Collaborating with community-** Identify and integrate resources and services from the community

to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

The Copper Country Great Start Collaborative in partnership with the Parent Coalition invites interested parents, guardians, child care providers and community members to participate in any of our upcoming events. For more information about the Parent Coalition and our upcoming events, please "Like" the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative on Facebook or contact Lisa Schmierer, Parent Liaison at 906-482-9365 or [greatstartparent@gmail.com](mailto:greatstartparent@gmail.com).

**Overlapping Spheres of Influence**



## YOUR CHILD'S FIRST VISIT TO THE DENTIST

**When should my child first see a dentist, and why?** We would like to see children at approximately one year of age. This is the ideal time for us to carefully examine the development of your child's mouth. Then, at about age three we will begin cleaning their teeth.

**How do I prepare my child for the visit?** Talk to your child about what to expect, and build excitement as well as understanding about the upcoming visit. Use positive words, such as "we want to count your teeth" or "it may tickle".

**What will happen at the first visit?** The first visit is usually short and involves very little treatment. This visit gives your child an opportunity to meet our dentists and hygienists. Appointments for children should always be scheduled earlier in the day, when your child is well rested. If the child is compliant, the dentist will check all of your child's

existing teeth for any potential problems. A fluoride varnish may also be applied at this time to prevent tooth decay.

### **How often does my child have to visit the dentist?**

The dentist likes to see children every 6 months to build up the child's comfort and confidence level in visiting the dentist, to monitor the development of the teeth, and promptly treat any developing problems.

Regular visits will be expensive, won't they?

Regular visits can prevent damage and pain. Preventive services aren't expensive and will save time, money, and your child's teeth. Most importantly they can build a strong foundation for a lifetime of good oral health.

**Why are first teeth important? They're going to come out in a few years anyway?** Those first teeth are needed to chew, to speak, and to look attractive. The primary

teeth also help hold space so that the permanent teeth have room to come in straight. In addition, dental disease can affect your child's total health.

### POINTERS FOR PARENTS

**DO** make dental visits a fun adventure for your child.

**DO** be prepared to let your child go into the treatment room alone.

**DO** remember that what you say and do in dental health will affect your child's feeling for many years.

**DON'T** bribe your child to go to the dentist, or threaten a visit as punishment. This can spoil their feelings about dental care.

**DON'T** let others tell your child frightening stories about dental visits. Explain that he should ignore scary stories of other children and adults, and depend on you and the dentist for information.

*Information compliments of Sally D. Orr, DDS & Mark T. Carlton, DDS, Laurium, MI*



## WHY PLAY IN KINDERGARTEN?

There are many ways to learn. Children and adults learn best when they are encouraged and interested.

Many years of research shows that play is more than just fun and games.

Play boosts strong growth in many areas, including:

**Mental:** There is a close link between play and strong brain growth. It lays the groundwork for later school success in reading and writing. It provides experiences that help children develop.

**Social:** Play is important for the imagination. It also helps to develop creative problem-solving skills.

**Emotional:** Make-believe play improves teamwork and compassion. It also helps children learn to control their behaviors.

**Physical:** The rough and tumble of active play helps children's muscles develop and brains grow.

Play has other benefits for learning:

\* Most kindergartners are not ready to sit and listen

for long periods of time.

\* Research shows play works better when the teacher uses the child's strengths and interests. The teacher can then provide chances to learn through experience.

\* A young child's play is his/her work. A kindergarten classroom should be filled with chances to learn through play.

\* Children love school when the teacher supports their learning both in and out of class and when their parents are interested in their school day.

**Research shows play works better when the teacher uses the child's strengths and interests.**





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*The mission of the Copper Country Great Collaborative (CCGSC) is to coordinate an early childhood system that supports all families in Baraga, Houghton and Keweenaw counties in providing great start for their children from birth to age five. The CCGSC focuses on five interconnected components that help young children learn and grow. Collaborative members work together to increase awareness and access to services that address child and family. They also work to streamline and improve service delivery models to better meet community needs in an era of limited resources.*

### The five Great Start components are:



### Copper Country Great Start Collaborative

#### A Great Start For Copper Country Children —

- ★ **Safe**
- ★ **Healthy**
- ★ **Ready to succeed in school and life**

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## How am I doing ?

Interested in your child's growth and development?

Bring this newsletter to Tree House Indoor Playground for a free Ages and Stage Screening

Call 482-9363 for an appointment

If your child is between the ages of 6 months and 60 months call 482-9363 to schedule a time for a free Ages & Stages Developmental Screening. Trained staff at the Tree House Indoor Playground will look at your child's strengths, check for trouble spots and provide tools to help you nurture your child's growth and celebrate developmental milestones. Plus, your child will have an opportunity for a free playtime at the Tree House Indoor Playground.

For more information or to schedule a screening call 482-9363. This Project is sponsored by the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative and the Keweenaw Family Resource Center.