



# September & October 2015

## EUP Great Start *Connections*

"ALL CHILDREN WILL BEGIN KINDERGARTEN SAFE, HEALTHY, AND READY TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND LIFE."

**Important Information About  
GSRP Funding  
([details on Page 2](#))**



Photo Sources: [thecreativemama.com](#), [sunflowerkids.org](#), [arthistormom.com](#)

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# GREAT START READINESS PROGRAM

SUBMITTED BY ALICIA LAWLOR

School bells will be ringing in just a few short weeks as many children head back to school. Sadly, some bells may not be heard this year as the region faces financial uncertainty for one local preschool program. Over the past several years, the region has had tremendous success increasing the amount of Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) funding. This program provides a quality preschool experience for at-risk 4 year olds. Last year, the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District (EUPISD) funded 307 slots for at-risk four year olds. Our goal is to identify funding for almost all of the 600 preschool age children to attend a high-quality preschool. The EUPISD has followed the success of GSRP graduates through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Data indicates children who have participated in a GSRP program in the EUP score 5-10% higher in math and reading on state standardized assessments in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade than their peers who did not attend a GSRP program.

The 2015-16 school year has brought about change for the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Initially we have been allocated funds for 181 children, a 41% decrease in the number of children who will be able to attend GSRP. This reduction translates to a loss of nearly half a million dollars to our community. Reductions will have a substantial impact on the number of children participating in GSRP. While preliminary reports from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) indicate our funding may be restored for this year, this is not a guarantee.

We are launching a regional campaign to educate legislatures about the positive outcomes of investing in early childhood education. Individuals who have knowledge of the positive effects of the Great Start Readiness Program are encouraged to contact their elected officials. Legislators need to hear how their decisions change the lives of young children and families.

- GSRP funding needs to be stabilized so that children can be enrolled in the spring for the following school year.
- Funding needs to be expanded so that it can serve all four year old children and not pick one child over another.
- Of particular note for our area of the state, opportunities for young children and families need to be fair across the state. Children living in the Upper Peninsula should have the same opportunities for state funded preschool as those living in large urban areas of the state.

Funding for GSRP and many other programs in schools are determined by eligibility for Free & Reduced Lunch. Even if families don't intend on taking advantage of the school lunch program, completing the form helps keep tax dollars local instead of being shifted to more urban areas within the state.

We encourage you to share your personal story and how these potential funding changes impact your family. Legislators would like to hear from voters and how decisions in Lansing impact the people who elected them. When contacting elected officials, please include your name, address,

**GSRP (CONTINUED)**

and phone number. Your elected officials are:

**Chippewa & Mackinac Counties:****Lee Chatfield**

P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909-7514

(517)373-2629 (517)373-2413

[LeeChatfield@house.mi.gov](mailto:LeeChatfield@house.mi.gov)

**Wayne Schmidt**

P.O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909-7536

[senwschmidt@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senwschmidt@senate.michigan.gov)

**Luce County:****John Kivela Wayne Schmidt**

P.O. Box 30014 - Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Phone: (517) 373-0498

Toll Free (888) 429-1377

[johnkivela@house.mi.gov](mailto:johnkivela@house.mi.gov)

P.O. Box 30036 -Lansing, MI 48909-7536

(517)373-2413

[senwschmidt@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senwschmidt@senate.michigan.gov)

In addition to the elected officials for our congressional region, please consider contacting the legislators on the School Aid Appropriations Committee that help inform the decision made in regards to GSRP funding.

**School Aid Legislative Appropriations Committee****Senator Goeff Hansen**

P.O. Box 30036 - Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Phone: (517) 373-1635

Toll Free: (866) 305-2134

[SenGHansen@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:SenGHansen@senate.michigan.gov)

**Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood**

PO BOX 30036 - Lansing, MI 48909

Toll Free 855 347 8006

[senhhopgood@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senhhopgood@senate.michigan.gov)

**Senator Phil Pavlov**

P.O. Box 30036

Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Phone: (517) 373-7708

Email Form: [http://www.senate.michigan.gov/ima\\_form.asp?name=comment25&form\\_path=e:/webforms/rep](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/ima_form.asp?name=comment25&form_path=e:/webforms/rep)



# GREAT START PARENT COALITION

Hello!

Summer is coming to an end. It's hard to believe school will be starting soon.

An exciting partnership has formed between the Great Start Parent Coalition and local service agencies. In August, the Parent Coalition assisted United Way of the EUP, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and the Salvation Army – Sault Ste. Marie with their annual Project Backpack day! On August 14, at Van Citter's Field in Sault Ste. Marie, backpacks full of school supplies were distributed to families in need.

The Parent Coalition had fun this summer during our playgroup sessions and our Family Fun Nights. Playgroups are still held every Friday morning 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Project Playground (until the weather gets uncooperative, and then we'll move inside). Family Fun Nights are held every second Tuesday of the month at 2076 Shunk Rd. in Sault Ste. Marie. Family Fun Nights are held in partnership with the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians Early Childhood Program, and are open to all families!

The Great Start Parent Coalition is excited to offer community partners five parent education training topics. Training topics include: Empowering Your Parent Voice, Strengthening Families, Early Childhood Literacy, Family Financial Literacy, and Parent Leadership.

On September 19, I please join our Great Start team in Moran for our 2nd annual Mosquito Dash. It's a 2K fun run with obstacle course for older children and adults; we'll also be holding a Toddler Dash prior to the fun run for ages 3 to 5 years old. It's sure to be a blast, don't miss out! Registration details on page 5.

As always, if you have any questions or would like more information about the Great Start Parent Coalition, please feel free to contact me directly. I can be reached at [raranda@eupschools.org](mailto:raranda@eupschools.org) or by phone 906.203.2807 – or, feel free to stop me on the street when you see me!



Like us on Facebook: EUP Great Start  
Parents & Collaborative

Photo Source: [www.handsonaswegrow.com](http://www.handsonaswegrow.com)

Questions, Concerns or Comments, Please Contact:

Raulaniesa Aranda, Parent Liaison

[raranda@eupschools.org](mailto:raranda@eupschools.org)

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)



# GREAT START COLLABORATIVE

The EUP Great Start Collaborative and United Way of the EUP are thrilled to sponsor the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Mosquito Dash Challenge Saturday, September 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Mosquito Dash is a physical run where participants encounter several obstacles, including road running, mud pits, water, climbing, crawling, tire jumping and more. This family friendly event also includes a separate obstacle course for our little runners who are 5 and under. Last year's event boasted 122 participants, and despite the torrential rainfall, we received rave reviews!

This initiative supports programming in Chippewa, Mackinac, and Luce Counties through the United Way of the EUP, as well as the Becky Davis Early Learning Scholarship, provided by the EUP Great Start Collaborative. This scholarship provides an early education opportunity for children who would otherwise go without.

Registration and the start/finish line for the event will be located at the Brevort Township Playground in Moran. UP in Smoke will be on site to offer refreshments, and King's Fish Market will provide a lunch by donation to runners and spectators at their location in Moran.

Registration is available on race day, but tee-shirts are guaranteed to pre-registrants only. Entry fees vary by age. We hope to see many come out and enjoy the race! To pre-order, contact Cara LaFaver at [clafaver@eupschools.org](mailto:clafaver@eupschools.org) or (906) 440-2410. Those interested can register at Active.com or by mailing the form below to:

EUPISD, Attn: Cara LaFaver  
 315 Armory Place  
 Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783



## MOSQUITO DASH 2015 REGISTRATION

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** Male Female **Age on Race Day:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Adult T-shirt Size:** S M L XL XXL **Child Size:** S M L XL  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **Race:** 3-5 Year Old Obstacle Course or 2K  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent or guardian if under 18)

**Waiver:** I understand participation in this event is potentially hazardous, and I should not enter unless I am medically able and properly trained. In consideration of acceptance of entry, I assume full and complete responsibility for any injury or accident, which may occur while I am traveling to or from event, during event, or while I am on the premises of event.. I also am aware of and assume all risks associated with participation, including but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, effect of weather, traffic and conditions of the roads. I, for myself and my heirs and executors, hereby waive, release and forever discharge event organizers, sponsors, promoters, and each of their agents representatives, successors, and assigns, and all other persons associated with event, for all my liabilities, claims, actions, or damages that I may have against them arising out of or in any way connected with participation. I understand this waiver includes above parties to use photographs, videotapes, recording or any record of the event. I hereby confirm that I am physically fit and qualified to participate in this event and I am at least 18 years of age or have had this release signed by my guardian if I have not reached the age of 18. I understand the entry fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.



Questions, Concerns or Comments, Please Contact:

Cara LaFaver, Great Start Collaborative Director  
[clafaver@eupschools.org](mailto:clafaver@eupschools.org)  
 906-632-3373  
[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)

# Early On® and Infants & Toddlers

## Social Emotional Development

*"Making friends. Showing anger in a healthy way. Figuring out conflicts peacefully. Taking care of someone who has been hurt. Waiting patiently. Following rules. Enjoying the company of others. All of these qualities, and more, describe the arc of healthy social-emotional development. Like any skill, young children develop these abilities in small steps over time. Learn what you can do to support social-emotional development in your child from birth to age three." Development of Social-Emotional Skills. (2014). <http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/social-emotional-development/social-emotional-development.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>*

To develop socially and emotionally, toddlers need to interact and play with others—babies, children and adults. This gives them many opportunities to learn from those around them and to become a functioning and contributing member of a social group.

Let's take a look at some useful and fun activities provided by [www.playhivetoy.com](http://www.playhivetoy.com) that toddlers can do with others to help strengthen their social and emotional skills.

### Time For Play

By far the best way to promote development of social and emotional skills is by allowing your toddler to interact and play with other children. Organize play dates at the park, your house or take them to a play group or occasional care. Amongst other children they will learn to relate to and interact with others. They will also begin to lay the foundations for sharing, cooperating, listening to others, regulating their own emotions, dealing with emotions in others and social problem solving. Playing with siblings or children who are younger and older than them will also benefit your toddler's social and emotional skills.

### Roll and Kick

Rolling and kicking a ball to your toddler and having them return it is a great way to lay the foundations for turn taking and sharing. Make sure at the end of your game you praise your toddler on a "good game of turn taking" so they start to understand this concept. This will also give their gross motor skills a great work out.

### Shaving Cream Finger Painting

Onto your table top, squirt some shaving cream. Let your toddler feel it and swirl it around the table. After they've had a little play with it, show them how to spread it around the table and use their fingers to scribble or draw pictures. While you are doing this draw a happy face. Say "Look, there is a happy face. I can make a happy face on my face" (demonstrate the facial expression). Ask them to copy. Then, do the same with the sad face.



Photo Source: [1.bp.blogspot.com](http://1.bp.blogspot.com)

[Questions, Concerns or Comments, Please Contact:](#)

Early On

906-632-3373 ext. 142, 145, or 123

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)

# Early On®/Infants & Toddlers

## Social Emotional Development (continued)

### Parallel Play

Toddlers aren't yet ready to engage in cooperative play with others nor are they ready to play in groups. Toddlers are able to play in a solitary style or even a parallel style (beside but not with others). With this in mind, make opportunities for your toddler to play beside other toddlers. Play sets with multiple pieces such as blocks, a train set, sand pit with sand pit toys, doll sets, etc. are suitable as they are easy to spread across two or more toddlers.

### Playing with Educational Toys

Educational toys aren't just about ABCs and 123s. They are toys that help with learning a range of skills such as social and emotional skills. Playing with educational toys that encourage social interaction such as dolls, cars, boats, play food, tea sets, cooking sets, etc. are fantastic for the early development of social and emotional skills. When children play with these educational toys they are role playing real life situations and are also beginning to develop creative story lines for their play. Through playing with these types of educational toys with others toddlers are starting to learn skills that will help them with sharing, turn taking, communicating, developing imaginative ideas, compromising, patience, social problem solving and emotional regulation.

### Naming Emotions

Help your toddler recognize their emotions by naming them. When your toddler becomes angry, scared or sad, label the emotion they are feeling. For instance "I can tell that you are angry right now." Acknowledging and labelling their emotions makes these feelings less overwhelming and will help them identify how they are feeling as they grow and mature.

### Phone Calls

Do you have a few old phones or toy phones lying around the house? For this game you need two phones. Give one to your toddler and keep one for yourself. Pretend to ring your toddler and encourage them to answer the phone by saying "Hello (name). Your phone is ringing, you'd better answer it and say hello". When they answer ask them easy questions that they can answer, for example "How are you?", "What are you doing?" Then when you have finished, make sure they end the conversation with "Goodbye". This activity helps toddlers build vocabulary for greeting others. It engages them in answering questions and builds skills in the to and fro pattern of conversation.

### Fruit Sharing

To help your toddler embrace the concept of sharing, cut up a few pieces of fruit for you and your toddler [at meal time]. Instead of placing their fruit into their own individual bowl put the fruit onto one plate to share. Sit down with your toddler and encourage them to take one piece of fruit off the plate. Then take one yourself and talk to your toddler about how you are 'sharing' fruit from the same plate. Continue to share the plate of fruit together until finished.

### Praise the Positive

Your toddler needs your positive feedback and attention. If you only pay attention or give them feedback on their behavior when they have done something wrong, they will learn to misbehave to get your attention. So give positive feedback, attention and praise to your toddler when they are doing positive things.

### Toddler Choices

Help your toddler gain independence, an important social skill, by giving them opportunities to make their own

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[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)

# Early On®/Infants & Toddlers

## Social Emotional Development (continued)

decisions. Of course the choices that you give your toddler will be extremely simple and within reason. It's best to give them two choices, any more than that will be too confusing for your toddler. Ask them would they like milk or water, blue paint or red paint, boots or runners.

### Water Painting

On a sunny day it's lots of fun to have a go at water painting. Half fill a small bucket with water and drop two brushes into it. This is a simple activity for two to promote the idea of sharing the bucket. Encourage your toddler and partner to use the water to paint things outside. They can paint the ground, the fence, a tree trunk, rocks, etc. The water will dry in the sun so you don't have to worry about spills or what is painted. As sharing is a new concept for toddlers, you may have to remind them that two people need to dip their brush into the same bucket so they aren't always dominating it.

### Books

Kids' books are a great way to reflect on positive social and emotional behaviors. Drawing your toddler's attention to certain aspects of a story can help you introduce concepts that will later transform into real social and emotional skills. While reading, comment on characters emotions, "Oh look, puppy is sad, he has lost his mummy". Or comment on kindness "Wow, that was nice of puppy to give kitten the flower." Or comment on the ability to consider others, "I like how puppy and kitten are sharing the milk". Although your toddler might not have the ability to share, take turns or regulate emotions all of these positive social and emotional messages are absorbed and will later manifest into positive behaviors with others [to sign your children up for free books, go to [eupkids.com](http://eupkids.com) and click the Imagination Library link].

### Ring a Ring a Rosie

Songs with accompanying actions that require two or more people are great for social development. Ring a Ring a Rosie is perfect because the participants need to hold hands and work together to move around in a circle and fall to the ground at the end.



### Eat as a Family

Where possible, eat your meals as a family. This may take a little planning and coordination but for your toddler (and your other children), it is well worth the effort. Sit your toddler up in their high chair or seat so that they can see everyone in your family eating together. Make conversation about the events of the day, including what your toddler did. Toddlers will learn about language, conversation, manners, sharing and coming together as a family group.

Butler, E. (2010). *Activities to Promote Social and Emotional Skills in Toddlers*. Retrieved from <http://playhivetoys.com.au/Social/Emotional-Skills/activities-to-promote-social-and-emotional-skills-in-toddlers.html>

Photo Source: [www.thekitchn.com](http://www.thekitchn.com)

Questions, Concerns or Comments, Please Contact:

Becky Meyers, Early On Service Coordinator

[bmeyers@eupschools.org](mailto:bmeyers@eupschools.org)

906-322-6814 (Text only)

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)

Brittany Stabile, Early On Service Coordinator

[bstabile@eupschools.org](mailto:bstabile@eupschools.org)

906-322-6816

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)



# PRESCHOOL

## 5 Tips for Stopping Sibling Squabbles in Their Tracks

Article by Rebecca Gruber  
Source: [www.popsugar.com/moms](http://www.popsugar.com/moms)

When you welcome a younger sibling into your family, you have visions of your kids growing up together, leaning on each other, and being

each other's best friends. What you don't envision is mediating constant battles, contending with sibling rivalry, and the kids' outright disdain for each other.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Dr. Laura Markham, author of *Peaceful Parent, Happy Siblings*, says it starts with the environment parents create at home. "If you do the hard work to regulate your emotions, your children will, too," she says. "If you create a sweet, deep relationship with each child, they won't be threatened by their sibling. If you take the time to teach them to express their needs without attacking the other person and to find win/win solutions, they will have the skills to work things out with each other and to create rewarding relationships for the rest of their lives."

So how does a parent teach them those skills? Read on for Dr. Markham's five tips for fostering happy siblings.

### 1. There is no reason to yell at your kids.

When frustration levels reach their peak, yelling often feels like the only way parents can be heard. But Dr. Markham says yelling doesn't work — it only demonstrates bad behavior that children will follow. Rather than raise your voice, she offers three pieces of advice.

1. When you get upset, remind yourself that you're the role model and return yourself to calm.
2. Use a version of the golden rule or "be kind" as your number one family rule. Set limits on teasing and mean words as well as physical violence.
3. Allow all emotions; limit behavior. Kids are allowed to be angry and to express that to each other, but they aren't allowed to attack each other physically or verbally.

### 2. Teach kids empathy.

Dr. Markham emphasizes the importance of teaching kids empathy as the starting point for creating a peaceful home. "Children develop empathy by having the experience of feeling understood themselves," she says. So how do you do that?

Photo Source: [www.todayparent.com](http://www.todayparent.com)

Questions, Concerns or Comments, Please Contact:

Alicia Lawlor, Preschool Consultant

[alawlor@eupschools.org](mailto:alawlor@eupschools.org)

906-632-3373 ext. 141

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)

# Preschool

## 5 Tips for Stopping Sibling Squabbles in Their Tracks (*continued*)

"You soothe them when they're upset," Dr. Markham explains. "All humans have mirror neurons so we pick up other people's emotions. But sometimes we find another person's emotions too upsetting, particularly if we are uncomfortable with our own emotions. So when parents soothe an upset child, the child learns that emotions aren't dangerous, and becomes more comfortable with his own emotions — and more able to tolerate and empathize with the emotions of others."

But that's not all; consistency is key. She says it's imperative to talk about emotions as part of your daily conversation — what you see other people doing and what your own child is experiencing:

- "I see how disappointed you are."
- "Sage hurt her knee, ouch! Let's give her a hug to help her feel better."
- "I wonder what the baby is feeling when he looks like that?"
- "That little boy in the shopping cart is crying; I wonder what is going on?"
- "I'm feeling frustrated . . . I can't get this to work right. I'm going to take three deep breaths to calm myself down."



### **3. It's never too late to help your children form a relationship.**

Just because you're beyond the toddler years doesn't mean you've missed the window of opportunity to create a peaceful relationship between your kids. "It's true that you may have to undo some bad habits," Dr. Markham says. "But since your children are now more verbal, they're more able to express themselves in words. The only thing to remember is that if your child has built up resentment toward a sibling, you'll have to empathize with his feelings to help him express them to you, so that he can move beyond them and open his heart to his sibling."

### **4. Don't make your kids apologize - right away.**

One of the most jarring tips to come out of Dr. Markham's book is her belief that we should discourage apologies. Rather, she says parents should encourage children to repair the situation instead. "Research indicates that apologies right after a fight, while the apologizer is still angry, don't repair the relationship," she says. "In fact, they create resentment. So I encourage parents to help children work through their upset at the sibling, and calm down. Then, once the child is no longer

Photo Source: [cdn.vogue.com.au](http://cdn.vogue.com.au)

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Alicia Lawlor, Preschool Consultant

[alawlor@eupschools.org](mailto:alawlor@eupschools.org)

906-632-3373 ext. 141

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)

# Preschool

## 5 Tips for Stopping Sibling Squabbles in Their Tracks (*continued*)

upset, the parent can observe that some repair work is needed, and support the child in coming up with something to reconnect and make things better with the sibling. That may well include an apology, but it might also include repairing a broken toy, giving a hug, helping rebuild the tower that was knocked down, making a card, or a promise to handle things differently in the future."

### **5. To create a peaceful home, parents must remain calm.**

We've all been there. You leave the room for one second and the next thing you know, your kids are tearing each other's hair out. They're blaming each other for starting the incident, and you just can't take it anymore. Frustration levels are high, and you're about to explode. But you know that won't solve anything. Dr. Markham says remaining calm is the key to teaching your kids what they did wrong and how they can make it better. But how do you remain calm when you've reached your boiling point? She offers five tips.

1. Stop. Drop (whatever you're doing). Breathe.
2. Remind yourself that it isn't an emergency. No one is dying. Use whatever mantra works to calm yourself.
3. Decrease your own anxiety by reminding yourself that you don't have to fix this. You don't have to decide who is right (which is always a mistake because it fosters resentment in the child who "loses"). You just have to prevent any violence (by getting between the kids) and restore a sense of safety with your calm presence.
4. Connect physically with both children, listen to both so they feel heard, and acknowledge the views of both children.
5. Then, help the kids sort out a solution: "Wow! No wonder you're upset. Sofia wants to play the game this way . . . Victoria wants to play the game that way . . . This is a tough problem . . . How will you work this out?"



Photo Source: [www.nashvilleparent.com](http://www.nashvilleparent.com)

Questions, Concerns or Comments, Please Contact:

Alicia Lawlor, Preschool Consultant

[alawlor@eupschools.org](mailto:alawlor@eupschools.org)

906-632-3373 ext. 141

[www.eupkids.com](http://www.eupkids.com)



## EUP Child and Family Activities

- September 1-7 Chippewa County Fair  
Location: Chippewa County Fair Grounds on Fair Rd. in Kinross, MI  
For more information visit [www.chippewafair.com](http://www.chippewafair.com)
- September 1-7 Awaiting Adoption Exhibit  
Location: Chippewa County Fair  
For more information visit [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) or call U.P. Kids at 906-281-3276
- September 3, 10, 17, & 24 Newberry Farmers Market  
Location: 1001 Newberry Ave., Newberry, MI  
Time: 3p.m.-6p.m.  
For more information call 906-440-6377
- September 8 Family Fun Night  
Location: Sault Tribe Elders Building (2076 Shunk Rd., Sault Ste. Marie, MI)  
Time: 5:30p.m.-7p.m.  
For more information call 906-203-2807
- September 12 9th Annual Honoring the Waters Newberry Powwow  
Location: Newberry Tribal Center  
For more information call 906-293-8181
- September 19 2nd Annual Mosquito Dash  
Location: Moran, MI  
For more information see page 5 or contact Cara LaFaver at [clafaver@eupschools.org](mailto:clafaver@eupschools.org) or 906-632-3373 x113
- October 1 Newberry Farmers Market  
Location: 1001 Newberry Ave.,  
Newberry, MI  
Time: 3p.m.-6p.m.  
For more information call 906-440-6377
- October 13 Family Fun Night  
Location: Sault Tribe Elders Building (2076 Shunk Rd., Sault Ste. Marie, MI)  
Time: 5:30p.m.-7p.m.  
For more information call 906-203-2807



COMMUNITY RESOURCES SPOTLIGHT

# CLMCAA

**You are your child's most important teacher!**



## Home Based Program

**Chippewa Luce Mackinac Community Action**

Now recruiting children  
Ages: Birth – 3 years

Families will receive weekly educational home visits, twice monthly playgroups, parenting information, access to community resources and learn how to turn your home into a classroom!

**Call 1-800-562-4963 for more information!**



EUP GREAT START CONNECTIONS



SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2015

Photo Sources: [www.almostafarmer.com](http://www.almostafarmer.com),  
[naturemoms.com](http://naturemoms.com), [www.whattoexpect.com](http://www.whattoexpect.com)