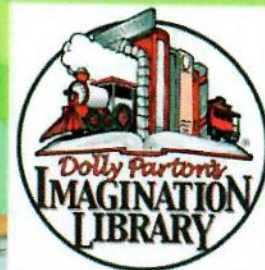


# EUP Great Start Connections

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

## EUP Dolly Parton Imagination Library

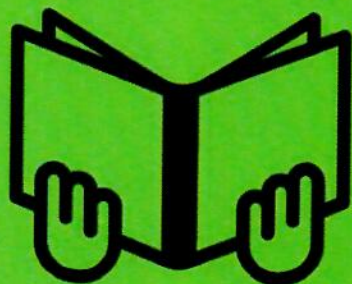


In January we received a generous donation from Mackinac County Child Protection Roundtable to enroll 30 children living in Mackinac County from wait-list.

Pictured are members of the Roundtable along with Cara LaFaver, GSC Coordinator



## MARCH is Reading Month!



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# Parent Coalition



EUP Great Start Parents & Collaborative

## Planting Seeds of Knowledge



Join 4-H and Friends for a morning of family fun and learning. Saturday, April 14th 9am-noon at Tahquamenon Area Schools

This free, new event is open to families and community members. Participants will be able to visit a large variety of booths and stations – all with hands-on, interactive activities. Some examples of the booths being offered include: survival kits, tracks and casts, sign language, 4-H photo booth, story time, early childhood zone and much, much more. Watch for more details and fliers coming soon.



## One Book One School

Thursday, March 1st boasted a fantastic event at the St. Ignace Elementary School! This event, One Book One School, was a partnership between the St. Ignace Elementary School, the Mackinac County Child Protection Round Table, St. Ignace Great Start Readiness Program, and EUP Great Start Collaborative. After a delicious meal, Principal Kerri Visnaw shared some important literacy information, followed by an amazing story teller. Literacy was further highlighted through a painting experience, facilitated by the Great Start Readiness Program. The Strengthening Families 5 Protective Factors were also a focal point for the evening. Well established Protective Factors build family strengths that promotes optimal child and youth development and also diminishes the likelihood of child abuse and neglect! Multiple community programs and agencies were also present to offer resources and fun family activities for all to enjoy. This event was certainly a fantastic evening that celebrated early literacy, strong families, and community connections!

Thank you to the following agencies who participated: Great Start Readiness Program, Great Start Parent Coalition, HOME of Mackinac County, Michigan State University Extension, Great Start to Quality, Diane Peppler Resource Center, and UP Kids. We certainly look forward to next year's event!



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# Parents as Teachers of the EUP



Parents as Teachers.  
*Affiliates*

**Parents As Teachers**

## Vision

"All Children will learn,  
grow and develop to realize  
their full potential"

**Parents As Teachers**

## Mission

"To provide the information,  
support and encouragement  
parents need to help their  
children develop optimally  
during the crucial early years  
of life"

## Sprinter

The calendar says that Spring is right around the corner, but mother nature says it is still Winter. I have decided that the Eastern Upper Peninsula needs a fifth season. We can call it SPRINTER! A little mix of spring and winter.

As the word Sprinter implies, It is a great idea to find ways to keep moving Indoors and Outdoors all year long. We don't have to move like a sprinter to reap the benefits of movement.

The following is a brief list of tips to get your family outside:

1. Make sure everyone likes the destination. If everyone is interested in the destination you will all have more fun.
  2. Start a tradition (this can be an annual hike, a Saturday bike ride, A monthly snowshoe excursion, etc).
  3. The right Gear. Make sure everyone has warm, breathable clothing that doesn't hinder movement during cold weather.
  4. Don't over do it. What matters is fresh air, sun light, grounding in nature, & a fresh perspective.
  5. Mix it up. There are more potential outdoor activities in your neighborhood than you probably think. Just taking a different way home can be interesting.
  6. Share your passion. Being in the outdoors makes people happy.
  7. Motivate. Be energetic, positive, and make it fun.
- Some outdoor activity ideas: Go sledding, play at the park, catch snowflakes, build a snow fort, create snow art, make snow angels, roll in the snow, experiment with freezing and thawing. The possibilities are endless!

\* The snow fort pictured was built by one of our Parents as Teachers home visiting program families. They use their fort daily for physical activity, pretend play, snack time, and to share with their friends. Thank you for sharing your fort with us!



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# Infants & Toddlers Early On



EUPISD Early On

## Literacy Activities for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

by: Raising Children Network

A child's journey towards literacy involves learning to speak, listen, read, understand, watch, draw and write. The foundation for building these skills begins at birth. Here are some literacy activities to get you and your child started.

Talking, singing, playing sound and word games, reading, writing and drawing with your child are great ways to set up a good literacy foundation.

The great news is that everyday activities, like going to the local shops or library, all offer lots of fun opportunities for literacy development.

And you don't need lots of time for literacy activities – five minutes a few times a day is often enough. The key is to use different times and opportunities to help your child learn. It can be as simple as writing a shopping list, playing a rhyming game or reading a story before bed.

Talking and singing activities  
Talking and singing with young children helps them to develop listening and speaking skills. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Use rhyme whenever you can. Use phrases like 'snug as a bug in a rug' or make up nonsense rhymes about things you're doing – for example, 'putting fish in the cat's dish'.
- Sing nursery rhymes with your child. Nursery rhymes teach your child language, rhyme, repetition and rhythm. You could try 'Baa baa black sheep' or the 'Alphabet song'.
- Repeat sounds your child makes, or make up sounds and see whether your child can copy them. For example, 'Cows say moo. Can you say moo?'.
- At mealtimes, talk about the food you're preparing, what you're doing to it, how it tastes and what it looks like.
- Talk about objects outside the house – for example, the rustling of leaves, or the sounds of the birds or traffic. Ask your child if she can make the sounds for wind, rain, water, airplanes, trains and cars.
- Play games like 'I spy' using colors. This can be lots of fun, especially for preschoolers. For example, 'I spy with my little eye, something that's green. What's something green I might be looking at?'.



For each **30-min** increase in handheld screen time, researchers found a **49%** increased risk of expressive speech delay. AAP News 5/4/2017

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# Infants & Toddlers

## Early On



EUPISD Early On

## Literacy Activities for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers (cont.)

### Reading and book-based activities

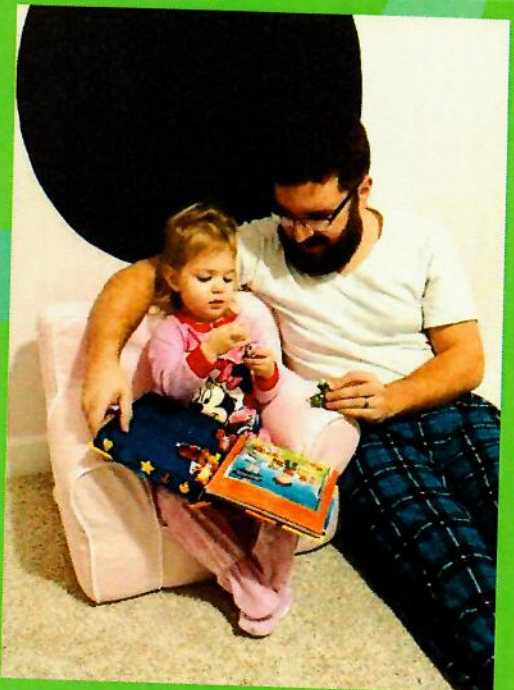
Reading with children develops their vocabulary, ability to listen and understand, and ability to connect sound and words. Your child might like these activities:

- Read with your baby – it's never too early to start! When you're reading, make sure your baby can see your face and the book you're sharing.
- Try books with rhyme, rhythm and repetition. Dr. Seuss books are a hit with many children – for example, *The Cat in the Hat* or *Green Eggs and Ham*.
- Encourage your child to turn the pages and talk about what he sees. Use your finger to guide your child's eyes from left to right across the page as you read, and point out certain words or phrases.
- Choose lift-the-flap books, touch-and-feel books or books with rhyming or repeating words. You could even make your own book with objects your child likes to look at and touch.
- Encourage your child to take the lead with reading – for example, 'Where do we start from?'. Every so often, stop reading and ask your child what she thinks will happen next.
- Link books with real life. For example, if you've read a book about playing in a park, you might like to take your child to the local park and point out swings that look like the ones in the book.
- When you're out with your child, take a book to keep him entertained, as well as a toy or an electronic device.
- Follow your child's lead with reading – encourage her, but don't push her. Experiment with different books to see what she likes, and just have fun!

### Drawing and writing literacy activities

Scribbling and drawing help young children develop fine motor skills for writing with pencils and pens later in childhood. Here are some activities to try:

- Encourage your child to draw and write using pens, pencils, crayons and markers. He'll probably be excited to add a scribble or drawing on birthday cards or letters in a big swirl of color.
- Encourage your child to try some letters or write her name on all the artwork she creates.
- Help your child use playdough to make the letters of the alphabet or numbers.
- Give your child opportunities to use letters of the alphabet in different forms – on blocks, magnetic letters that stick on the fridge, and puzzle pieces.
- Cut out or draw pictures of basic household items – chair, table, TV, wall, door and so on – then write the items' names on separate pieces of paper. Ask your child to match the name of the item to the picture.
- Encourage your child to tell you about his drawings and help your child write down the words he uses to describe them.



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# Preschool

## Pre-reading Skills at Home and School

Alicia Lawlor, EUPISD Preschool Consultant, M.Ed.

In a high quality preschool, teachers are continuously working on pre-reading skills children need in order to grow into successful readers who can not only read with ease and comprehend what they are reading, but also learn to LOVE reading. Over the years, the way in which children are taught to read has evolved after research has shown the most effective ways to help children acquire the knowledge they need to become proficient readers. As more is learned about the way children learn, practices are adapted to ensure that children are getting the most they can out of the time they spend in preschool. The ways in which children (and many of us) were taught to read have been proven to be less effective than the ways in which high quality preschools are approaching it now. This may make it more difficult for you to recognize the instructional practices being used in the classroom to help children develop pre-reading skills.

Traditionally, children were taught to read using a "letter of the week" strategy that has children spending a week focusing on one letter and doing activities related to that letter. The theory is that over the course of a week, children should have that letter firmly cemented in their brain and ready for the next letter. The problems with this approach are numerous but the main problems are that all children learn at different pace and this learning method isolates the letter and removes it from the context in which it is useful (i.e., a word).

One child may need to be exposed to a letter 25 times to firmly grasp it, while another may need 100 or more exposures. There are also children who already know the "letter of the week" and quickly become bored with the slow pace of learning. With 26 letters in the alphabet, it takes 26 weeks to introduce all the letters (double that if we teach upper and lowercase letters separate!) and we now know that children are capable of so much more! They don't need 26 to weeks to be introduced to letters. They need continued, repeated exposure to all letters in a context that is useful and that they can relate to.

When letters are pulled out of words and taught in isolation, they lose some of their meaning. It becomes a much more abstract concept for children to grasp. Once they spend a month learning letters A, B, C, and D, they still can't do anything meaningful with them (unless they want to spell "bad" or "cab"). Teaching letters within the context of meaningful words such as their name, words that have importance them (mom, dad, love, dog, cat, etc...), and environmental print gives them the "glue" they need to help make it stick in their brains for future use.

In high quality classrooms, teachers are supporting children as they develop:

- Alphabetic knowledge
- Phonological awareness
- Concepts of print
- Oral Language

All of these are factors that help determine future literary success. There are many activities that are taking place in the classroom that you can do at home to help support your child's development.



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# Preschool



## Pre-reading Skills at Home and School (continued)

Alicia Lawlor, EUPISD Preschool Consultant, M.Ed.

- Use your child's name as an avenue for increasing alphabet knowledge. Children love to talk about their name so start with identifying those letters and the sounds they make. (Keep in mind that in some names, letters don't make the sounds they do in most words!)
- Use the names of people your child loves to further expand their alphabet knowledge once they have begun to master the letters of their name.
- Use environmental print to increase awareness. Talk about what letter spell their favorite cereal, restaurant, store, or toy. Talk about road signs when you are driving. Point out letters and words on menus.
- Read to your child. Often. While reading talk to them about concepts like the front and back cover of the book, the title, the author, and the illustrator and what they do.
- While reading, use you finger to track where you are reading. This helps children understand the directionality of how we read (left to right, top to bottom, sweeping to the next line and when to move to the next page).
- Have discussions with your children about what they think might happen in the book, what did happen in the book and what could have happened in the book. Talk about how characters may be feeling and how your child feels when reading.
- Choose reading material that interests your child. Children's books, comic strips, sports magazines, newspapers, history books, ANYTHING that grabs their attention and makes them want to read with you!
- Play word games with your child. Children this age love to rhyme and is it a pre-reading skill that helps them hear the different parts of the words. Have fun with rhyming! Say things like "I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with hall, you bounce it up and down, it's called a \_\_\_\_\_!"
- Help children learn to break words apart by clapping out the syllables. Say a word slowly and clap on each part of the word such as ba/nan/a.
- Let your child see you enjoy reading! If they see it is a valuable adult activity that you enjoy doing and not a task that children must learn, they are more likely to want to learn to read and become avid readers themselves.

Remember to make learning fun and to maximize the number of opportunities you provide children. Children need to become fluent in their letter recognition and sound relationships to be strong readers, but it takes time. Just as it takes an athlete time to develop good muscle memory, it takes children time to commit these things to memory and to become fluent at using them. If you moved to a foreign country, you wouldn't expect to be fluent in their language without many repeated experiences where you were able to practice. Children need many opportunities to practice these new skills too.

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# Community Calendar



## March

1st - One Book, One School @ St. Ignace Elementary  
5:00pm-7:00pm

2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th - Great Start Playgroup @ Big  
Bear Recreation Center 9:00am-10:00am

10th, 24th - Totzone @ Big Bear Recreation Center  
10:00am-12:00pm

10th - Family Fun Day @ Little Bear Arena St. Ignace  
12:00pm-2:00pm

12th - EUP Reads @ LSSU 6:00pm-8:00pm

16th - PAT Socialization @ Three Lakes Academy  
10:00am-11:30am

16th - 4H Family Game Night @ Luce Co. MSU Extension  
Office 5:00pm-7:00pm

16th - Explore, Play, Learn Preschool Playgroup @ Luce Co.  
MSU Extension Office 1:30pm-2:30pm

17th - 1st Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade (downtown Sault  
Ste. Marie) 12:00pm

17th - Family Fun Fair @ Sault Area Middle School  
1:00pm-3:00pm

26th-30th - SPRING BREAK

31st - Community Egg Hunt @ Bud Cooper Gym LSSU  
12:00pm-2:00pm

## April

6th, 13th, 20th, 27th - Great Start Playgroup @ Big Bear  
Recreation Center 9:00am-10:00am

14th - Spring Craft Show @ Sault Area Middle School  
10:00am-2:00pm

15th - Dolly & Me High Tea @ LSSU Cisler Center  
2:00pm-4:30pm

19th - Planting Seeds of Knowledge @ Tahquamenon Area  
School 9:00am-12:00pm

20th - Explore, Play, Learn Playgroup @ Luce Co. MSU  
Extension Office 1:30pm-2:30pm

28th - Community Baby Shower @ TBA



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