



# Help Your Child Get Ready for Kindergarten

***Presented by Kristen DeVooght and  
Dorothy Heitjan  
Sponsored by***

***The Family Center of Grosse Pointe and  
Harper Woods***

***November 9, 2017***

# Presenters

- **Kristen DeVooght, Barnes Early Childhood Program and Monteith Elementary School Speech-Language Pathologist**
- **Dorothy Heitjan, Barnes Early Childhood Program Teacher, Speech-Language Pathologist**



# Goal for Tonight

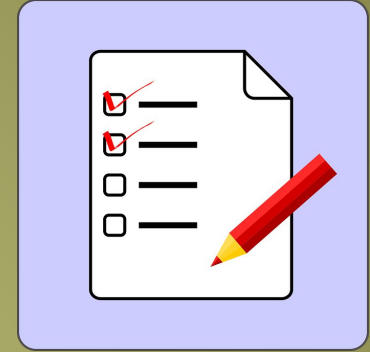
To provide parents with the knowledge and information needed in order to feel prepared for their child's Kindergarten year.



# Question: How Best to Impart Knowledge About Kindergarten Preparation to Parents?



# Answer: Create a Set of Tips



- Organized according to Developmental areas
- Created with Kindergarten Teachers
- Past Contributors: Deb Kraft and Kim Maddalena

# The purpose of the tips...

- Strategies
- Empower
- Validate





# Please know

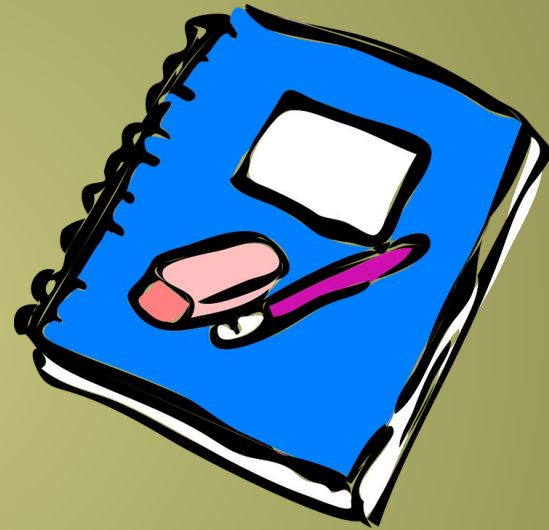


**These tips are intended to give parents and caregivers specific information regarding how to foster or maximize learning opportunities for their children. We respect the fact that all children have their own unique individual learning profile and may respond to the various activities differently. The skills presented in this presentation and handout are intended to be a guide for parents/caregivers. It is not expected that children will have mastery of all readiness skills. In the State of Michigan, children are eligible to go to Kindergarten if they turn 5 on or before September 1st of the year they are enrolling in school.**



# Before we get started...Resources

- Resources
- Handout









# Counting down and starting...

## Tip #10 Build a Strong Foundation

Know the importance of Healthy Habits--

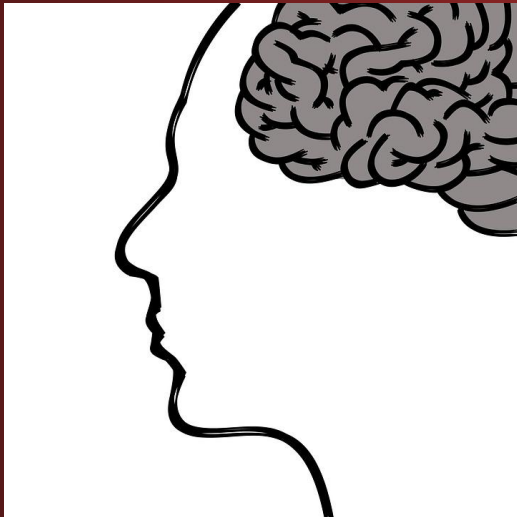
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- Sleep (10-12 hours per night)
  - Nutrition
  - Hydration

Because...



# Tip #10 Build a Strong Foundation

Growing Brain



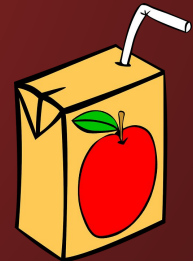
Full Day of learning!



# Tip #10 Build a Strong Foundation

Know the importance of:

- Well-established home routine...bedtime, morning, etc.
- Providing many opportunities to
  - practice following directions,
  - demonstrate responsibility
  - manage personal needs



***Unlike most typical Preschool Adult/Child Ratios,  
Kindergarten is one Teacher to a whole class!***

- ***Eat lunch at school***
- ***Take care of self and belongings***
- ***Be a learner in a group setting***





# Think about...

- Will you need before or after school care?
- Dietary, Allergy, and Medical Issues?
- See Website for Planning Checklists

## Tip #9 Importance of Understanding the Learning Process

- How do young children learn?
- How does your child learn?



Tip #9 How do young children learn?  
**Use whole body to learn!**





## Tip #9

# Need Hands on Experiences to learn

- “What has not been in the hand and mouth cannot be in the brain.”
- Using hands builds brain pathways
- Needed for fine motor, drawing and writing skills



## Tip #9 How does your child learn?

- Auditory?
- Visual?
- Kinesthetic?



***\*Knowing this can give valuable insights and can help parents communicate with educators.***

## Tip #8 Question

Do you know what the  
best exercise for the  
brain is?



# Answer: Exercise itself!

Tip #8 Know the Importance of safe *unstructured* physical activity and exercise as opposed to *organized* sports and activities.



# Why???



*Why?? Unstructured physical, especially on playground equipment...*



- Allows child to practice and refine movements
- Coordinates 2 sides of the body
- Internalize directional concepts
- Preparation for KG Academics

*Visit the Playground, move, walk!*

# Tip #7 Know the Importance of Talking with Your Child

## Brain needs language to grow!





# Why is building oral language so important?



**We learn everything through language!**

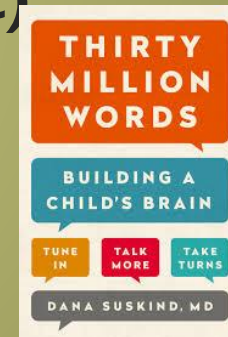
**Foundation for all academic subjects**





# Importance of Distraction Free Talking Time

- **Human Brain is wired for real life interaction!!**
- **Child learn conversational skills from real interactions**
- **Easy to remember 4Ts (see handout)**
  - **Tune In**
  - **Talk More**
  - **Take Turns**
  - **Turn off Technology and talk!**



# Turn off Technoglogy and Talk!

- Distraction of screens can impede real talking time  
“Turn off & Talk!”
- Importance of Real Human Interaction; brains are wired for real interaction
- The physical screen boundary is a small space. Developing Eye muscles need large spaces to track.



# Technology!

**However...**

**Children will interact with technology in KG**

- ☐ **Using mouse**
- ☐ **Clicking/dragging items**
- ☐ **Keyboarding Skills**



# So...

- Limit **PASSIVE** Screen Time!
- Make technology **INTERACTIVE!**
- Apps can be effective **SUPPLEMENTs.**
- Focus on **REAL LIFE HANDS ON**
- Teach children about **RESPONSIBLE** uses



# Tip #6 Visit Neat Places

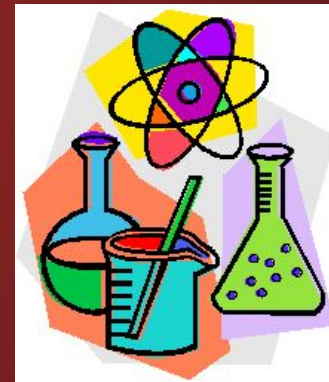
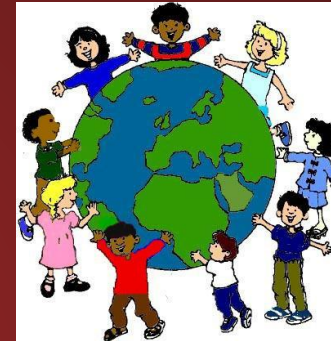
- **Take advantage of places and resources in the community**
  - Nature Places-Zoos, Lake, etc.
    - **VISIT SEASONALLY!**
  - Sciences and Arts-Museums
  - Performances-Music and Dance
  - Library-Story Hour

**Discuss the experience!**



# Why is this important?

- Stimulates interest and curiosity!
- Real life experience
- Relates directly to the KG Curriculum—"STEAM"





# With Creativity and Imagination...



**Make ordinary places into neat places by focusing on an interesting aspect**

- **Take a walk and notice the leaves**
- **Go to the grocery store and find fruits and vegetables that are the colors of the rainbow.**

*Since children are “new” to the world, they often find things fascinating that we adults take for granted.*



# Tip #5 The Importance of Pretend Play and Imagination

- Mental Representation
- Abstract Thinking
- Plain Items are best!



# *Make Play Dates*

Great opportunity for developing social skills  
needed in Kindergarten!





## Tip #4 Frustration, Conflict, and Disappointment can be Valuable Learning Opportunities



- Teach valuable life lessons.
- Think and solve Problems.
- Develop a healthy sense of self





# Examples



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- Frustration: When something does not work
  - Disappointment: Losing a turn or a game
  - Conflict: A child and a friend/sibling want the same item

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- ❑ Help children think and work through problems.
  - ❑ Discuss and strategize afterwards.

***Embrace these opportunities for growth!***  
***Build resilience and perseverance.***



*from Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood  
by Jim and Charles Fay, Ph.D.*

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- **Struggle**
  - **Encouragement from others**
  - **Accomplishments**
  - **Others focusing on effort \***
- = Healthy Sense of Self**



# \*Effective Praise focuses on Effort not inherent qualities

- Also encourages children to take risks
- Taking risks is necessary for learning
- Just describe what you SEE the child doing!





***A child's ability to manage his/her feelings is vital for working together and developing relationships in Kindergarten and Beyond!***





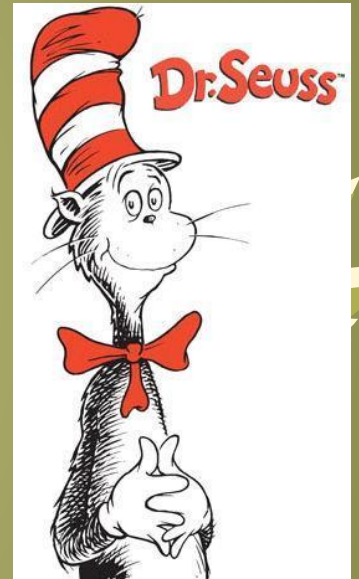
# Tip #3 It's Important to Sing, Dance and Move to Music

- Dance to music with a strong beat.
- Sing in the car!
- Sing while in the bath!
- Sing and do finger plays with your child. Use arm and hand movements, cross midline (“Wheels on the Bus”, “Itsy-bitsy Spider”) to strengthen brain connections.
- These types of songs and fingerplays often contain many words that rhyme.



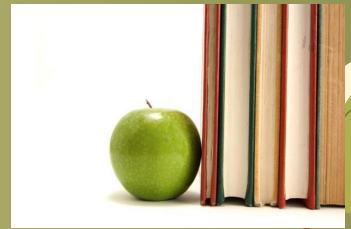
# Why are rhyming words important?

- **Develops phonological awareness and phonemic awareness skills.**
- **Phonological Awareness: Rhyming Discrimination, Rhyming Production, Segmenting words into syllables, segmenting sentences into words, etc.**
- **Phonemic Awareness: the conscious awareness that words are made up of sounds and that they can be manipulated to alter a word.**

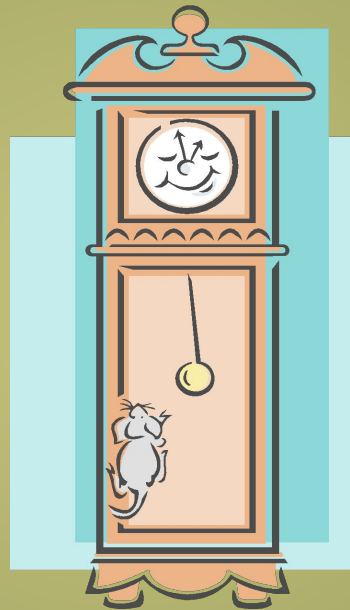
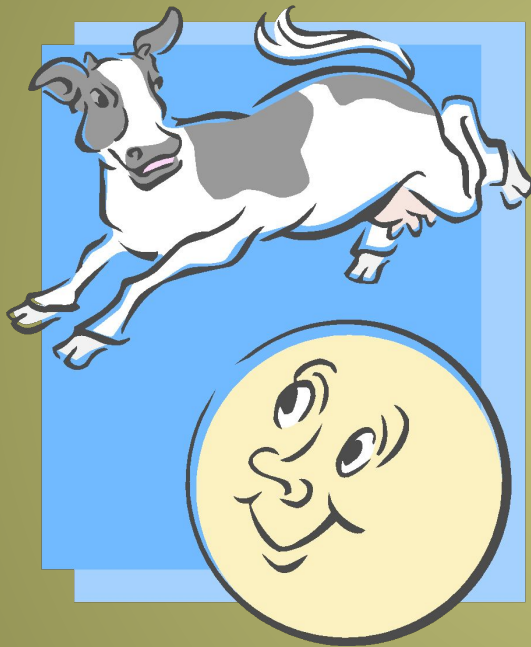


# Research on Phonemic Awareness

- **“When learning to read, both phonological and phonemic awareness are fundamental concepts that must be taught. In fact, children who do not adequately develop these skills at the end of kindergarten are more likely to become poor readers” {sighted from Rath, L.K., Ed.D & Kennedy, L. (2004)}**
- **According to Research-Based Methods of Reading Instruction, “Children who enter school with phonemic awareness have a very high likelihood of learning to read successfully.” Alternatively, “Children who lack phonemic awareness have a great deal of difficulty learning to read.”**



# Recite Nursery Rhymes!



# Tip #2 Importance of Providing Opportunities for Drawing, Writing, and Fine Motor Experiences



- Model writing in everyday life.
- Demonstrate Proper Mechanics, letter formation and usage
- Having a safe “In Home” writing corner stocked with pencils, scissors, crayons, paper, unlined paper and glue.

# Kindergarten

- Dynamic Tripod Grasp
- Letter Formation; Top to Bottom, left to right
- Name in Title Case (but don't worry if all caps)
- See Handout



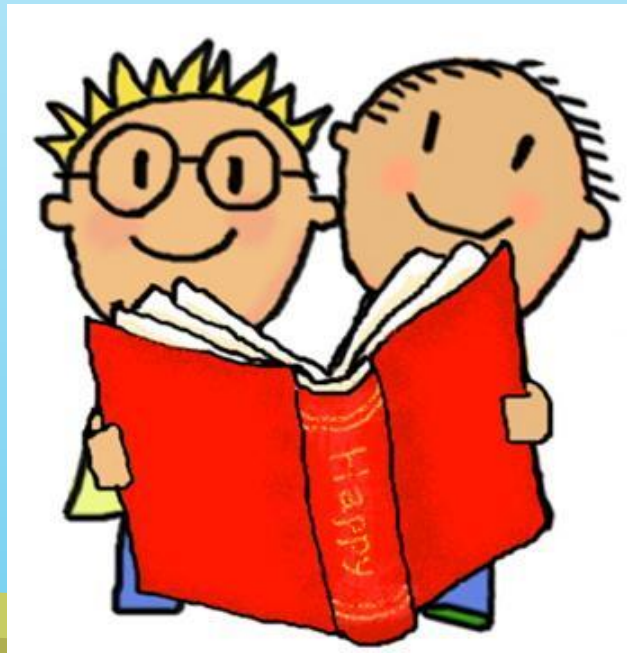
# Top Tip








Tip #1

**READ!**





# “Did You Know...?”

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1. Did you know that preschoolers whose parents read to them, tell them stories and sing songs with them tend to develop larger vocabularies, become better readers and perform better in school?
  2. Did you know that reading proficiently by the end of the third grade is considered a “make it or break it” benchmark?
  3. Did you know that 83 percent of children who are not reading on grade level by the beginning of fourth grade are at risk of failing to graduate from high school on time?
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# **Tip #1 READ! READ! READ!**

- **Read to your child**
- **Read with your child**
- **Read for yourself (great modeling)**
- **Read on a regular basis (Daily!!!)**
- **Read favorite stories over and over again (its OK if a child “memorizes a book”)**



# What's so great about books?

Text provides more variety of vocabulary  
than spoken language!



# You read...



- **Want to instill an authentic interest and love of reading!**
- **It is important for your child to see you reading whether it is the newspaper, magazine, or book.**
- **When you demonstrate how you read then you validate the importance of this activity in both acquiring information and for leisure!**

# “Expert Advice”

- **Dr. Mary Bigler, PhD** asks: “How old should your child be when you stop reading with them once per day?”



**Answer:**

**Until they  
move out  
of your  
house!**

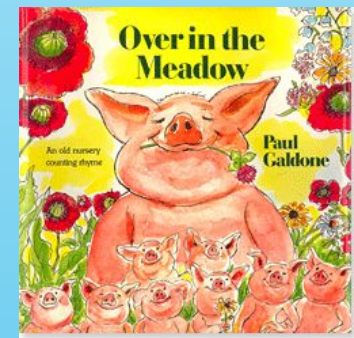
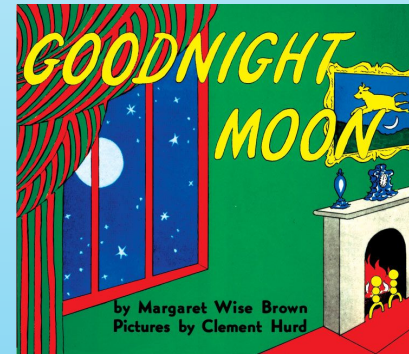
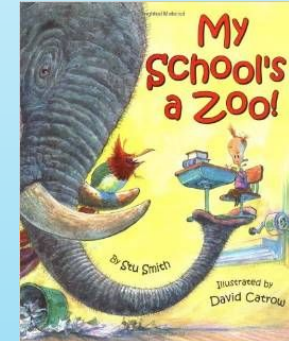
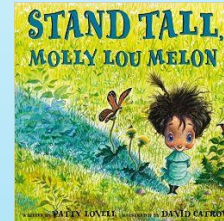
**Surprised?**





# Mrs DeVooght's Favorite Books

- Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Levell
- How Much Is That Doggie in the Window by Iza Trapani
- Come Rhyme With Me by Hans Wilhelm
- Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- The Kid Who Invented the Popsicle by Don Wulffson
- Click, Clack, Moo, Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin
- The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown
- The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka
- My Schools a Zoo! by Stu Smith
- Charlie the Caterpillar by Dom Deluise
- Over in the Meadow: An Old Nursery Counting Rhyme by Paul Galdone
- The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
- Are You My Mother? By P. D. Eastman



# Must Haves!!!

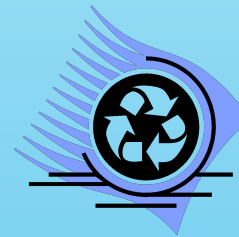
- Local Public Library Card
- Child's own personal book basket



# Environmental Print is an opportunity to read too!

## (Signs and Logos)

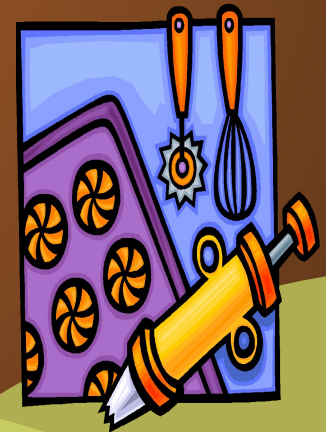
- Read for Information.
- Read/Interpret Signs and Logos.
- Show your child the real life meaning of print and pictures.
- Spell! Look at the letters/sounds.



# That's the 10!

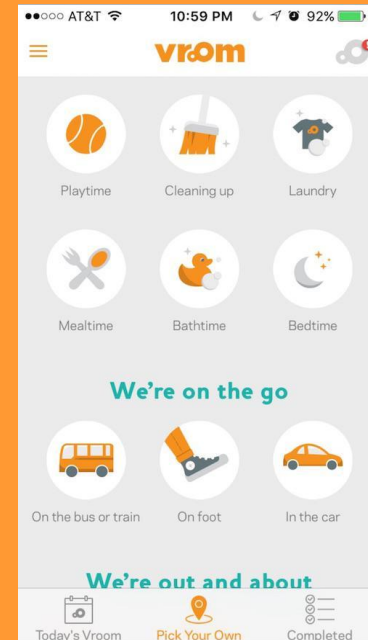
Put it all together: Turn everyday experiences into learning opportunities!

- See routines in a different way;
- Seize everyday moments for learning incidentally,
- How can you incorporate many of these ideas into what you are doing already?
- Possibilities are endless; see handout








# vroom

Brain building moments





Again please remember...

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- Tips are intended to be a guides and ideals to maximize learning opportunities. Each child has his/her own unique learning profile.
  - Skills are focus areas- **NOT** requirements for Kindergarten!
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**Never underestimate the power of spending time and attuning to your child. These valuable learning moments help prepare your child for school.**





Just a few more things...



# Logistics...Public, Private, Parochial

- ❖ Contact the School or School's Website to begin the enrollment process! Register EARLY! Ask if you can request a tour.

- ❖ Typical Documentation Needed:

- Original Birth Certificate,
- Health and Immunization Forms,
- Proof of Vision Screening,
- Residency Verification (Public Schools)



- ❖ Find out important upcoming meeting dates for prospective Kindergarteners

# For Example...GP Schools

**Visit [gpschools.org](http://gpschools.org)  
Click on Kindergarten  
for more information!**

**District Wide Kindergarten Information  
Night is Thursday January 18, 2018 at all  
Elementary Schools.**



# The Summer before..

- Think about separation: Have a plan if you anticipate separation difficulty.
- Visit the school and grounds.
- If possible connect with future classmates.
- Read children's books about kindergarten (see handout)
- Talk to your child about and role play being in Kindergarten.
- Adjust bedtimes and wake up times so your family is ready for the school schedule. Do early (July/August)
- Fun idea: Start a Kindergarten Year Scrapbook.



# Questions



## Is my child ready?

- Only parent can make decision
- If child is in preschool, talk to child's preschool teacher
- Talk with an Elementary School Principal
- Remember children can grow and change over the summer
- Alternatives (Young Fives)



# Resources





- Slide show, handout and materials will be available on the Family Center's Website

or on

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- [www.gpschools.org](http://www.gpschools.org), select Barnes and Heitjan
  - email: [Heitjad@gpschools.org](mailto:Heitjad@gpschools.org)
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# References and Resources

- Bailey, B. *Conscious discipline*. Oviedo, FL: Loving Guidance, 2000.
  - Bov, B. *Current, best strategies for creating an outstanding preschool program*. Bellevue, WA: Bureau of Education and Research, 2006.
  - Cullinan, Bernice. *Read to Me*.
  - Fay and Fay, Ph.D. *Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood*.
  - Fay and Funk, *Love and Logic in the Classroom*.
  - Fay and Fay, *Helping Parents and Teachers Raise Responsible Kids*.
  - Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers: The Story of Success*.
  - Kasper, Ted. *Accountability Equation*. GP News, Family Center 11-2-11
  - Lucy Calkins and Leah Mermelstein. *Units of Study for Primary Writing: A Yearlong Curriculum*.
  - Dana Suskind. *30 Million Words*
  - Kathy Collins. *Reading for Real*
  - Debbie Miller. *Reading with Meaning*
  - Gail Boushey & Joan Moser. *The CAFÉ Book*
  - US Common Core Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/>
  - State of Michigan - Michigan Department of Education <http://www.michigan.gov/mde> **Family Fundamentals – At Home Activities**
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# References and Resources

- Conscious Discipline by Becky Bailey, Ph.D.
  - Parenting from the Inside out by Dan Siegel, M.D. and Mary Hartzell, M.Ed.
  - The Whole Brain Child by Dan Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
  - Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood by Jim Fay and Charles Fay PhD.
  - Great Kids by Stanley Greenspan, M.D.
  - Getting Ready for Kindergarten: Tips from Teacher For What Your Child Really Needs to Know by Becky Mansfield and Jenae Jacobson
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