



in Macomb

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Volume IV, Issue 4

### *Early On sheds light on issues of infants and toddlers with special needs*

This publication is for families with infants and toddlers up to 36 months of age who have special needs.

Early Edition is published by Early On families for Early On families and to shine a little light on the many services and resources available in the county.

### *MIPP Social Workers Helping Families, One by One*

Social Worker Christine Kerney works at the Rockwell site of the Macomb Infant Preschool Program. On any given day, you see her running around Rockwell, doing doing doing! With approximately 165 families under her wing, she makes sure they know she is there, *for them*. She is not just concerned with the children in the program, entire families are her concern.

So what exactly is it that Christine does? What doesn't she do is more the question. Her responsibilities start with providing resources to help parents. Not only is she there to refer parents to other services which they may be in need of, she is there to just talk to you

Christine also develops programs and activities that benefit the entire family. She oversees monthly parent meetings and specific parenting classes. On the lighter side, Christine also coordinates special events such as Grandparents Week, the Halloween Safety Fair, this years Santa and Me Pancake Breakfast as well the Holiday Assistance Program. In addition to all that, she also provides support to Rockwell's teachers and therapists.

When asked what her favorite part of social work is, she said, "I love that I can make a difference in people's lives." A stock answer? Usually. But those fortunate enough to have worked Christine know that it's from the heart, and that she means it. She truly treats us all like her "blended" family.

**All MIPP programs have social workers available to assist families. Parents are encouraged to contact their particular programs social worker for information or services that could benefit their families.**

# Early edition

*A parent-to-parent newsletter*

## Parent to Parent

Last month, a parent asked: *I have a daughter who is five years old and I was wondering how to explain disability to her. Any suggestions?*

The following suggestion was received:

- My youngest son has down syndrome. There is a book called, *We'll Paint the Octopus Red*, that I read to my other children when he was born. It is about a little girl whose mother just had a baby with down syndrome and what the sister can and can't expect. My daughter is now nine and it's still one of her favorite books. There are quite a few children's books at the bookstore or library that address the issue of having a brother or sister with a special need.

The question we received for the next issue is: *I have three children and they don't like to visit my mother-in-law who lives in the nursing home. They say they don't like the smell or the noise, but I feel it is important for them to visit their grandmother. Do you have any suggestions?*

If you have any suggestions or ideas, please send them to:

Michele Kraski  
35139 Kensington  
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Or, e-mail your comments to:

[Jwilliams@misd.net](mailto:Jwilliams@misd.net)

Go to [www.MISD.net](http://www.MISD.net) for Early On Macomb's new website!

## Sensory Easter Egg Coloring

Take a 5" by 5" piece of tin foil and lay it flat. Place a few layers of paper towel (5" by 5") and place it on top of foil. An adult can squirt (or the child can help) food coloring on different areas of the paper towel. Place a hard boiled egg in the middle of the paper towel/tin foil and wrap the egg in it. Crinkle or gently squish the tin foil around the hard boiled egg. When you remove the egg from the tin foil, the egg should look tie-dyed.

## Banana Pudding Recipe

You'll need:

- 3 medium sized ripe bananas (sliced)
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- 2 teaspoons peanut butter
- ¼ cup orange juice

Combine all of the above in a blender. Process until smooth. Serve in a small bowl or cups. Makes four ½ cup servings.

## Parent Exchange

*The PE is a place for parents to share with other parents. If you have or need advice, are looking for play dates, you cleaned out your basement and have some stuff that could benefit someone else, found a great new kid-friendly spot, GIVE US A SHOUT! Pretty much anything goes! Parents are one, if not THE, best resource around, and here is the place to share those resources!*

### \*\*\*POTTY TRAINING 101\*\*\*

Face it! Potty training can be difficult. Combine that with the challenges that some of our kids face and the frustration mounts. I recently attended a workshop presented by the Autism Society of Northwest Ohio. It had great ideas on how to potty train any child (not just those with special needs) having difficulty with this transition. If you'd like a copy of the information and materials I received, I would love to share them with you! Feel free to call Karen at (586) 945-6715, or e-mail me at Lasz1268@aol.com.

### \*\*\*LOOKING FOR MOMS & DADS\*\*\*

My 3 year old son was recently diagnosed with Autism. I am looking to connect with moms (or dads) in similar circumstances to form an *unofficial* group where we can share our experiences, frustrations, happiness, tears, and anything else with each other, as well as getting our kids together for play dates, and maybe even a night out here or there for us! If anyone is interested contact Karen at (586) 945-6715, or e-mail me at [Lasz1268@aol.com](mailto:Lasz1268@aol.com).

To submit to the "Parent Exchange" call Karen at (586) 945-6715, e-mail [Lasz1268@aol.com](mailto:Lasz1268@aol.com), or send your request to Parent Exchange, 11456 Hanford Drive, Warren, MI 48093.

## The Rainbow Connection

A listing of conferences, workshops, classes and events happening in and around Macomb County along with useful web-sites.

### Conferences/Workshops/Classes:

- **Every Child Ready to Read!** – at the Macomb County Library March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Parents, you can help your child get ready to read! This program is designed to help parents of birth to two year olds learn how to share books with their young ones. Call (586)286-6660 to register or for more information.
- **Introduction to Baby Signs** – MSU Extension will present this workshop at the Macomb County Library on April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Call (586)469-5180 for more information or to register.
- **Month of the Young Child Weekend at Macomb Mall** – April 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. Sponsored by Great Parents Macomb and Macomb AEYC.

### Things to Do:

- **Library Lil', Chesterfield Theatre Company** – March 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm at the Macomb County Library. What do a young, muscular, super strong librarian and a motorcycle gang have in common? Come and find out. Call (586)286-6660 for reservations.

### Websites:

- [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com) – up-to-date information about special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities.
- [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) – largest and most visited site on the web providing doctor-approved health information about children from before birth through adolescence.

## Early On Activities

- **Watch Me Grow Crafts** – March 14<sup>th</sup>. Flyer will be mailed with further details.
- **Sterling Heights Parks & Recreation Parent & Tot Playgroup** – begins March 22<sup>nd</sup> and run every Wednesday through May 17<sup>th</sup>. Various time slots. Call (586)446-2704 to register.
- **Parents Night Out – Let's Talk About Nutrition** - March 30<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the MISD Building. Pizza, pop, great discussion. Reimbursement up to \$20 for childcare.
- **Parents Night Out – Let's Talk About Transition** – April 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the MISD Building. Pizza, pop, great discussion. Reimbursement up to \$20 for childcare.
- **Carnival & Ice Cream Social** – April 27<sup>th</sup> – watch for flyer for further details.

For more information about any of these events, call Julie Williams at (586)228-3524.