



Early edition

November/December 2008

Volume VII, Issue 2

A parent-to-parent newsletter

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 including:

- ❖ An established condition (a diagnosed physical or mental condition with a high probability of a developmental delay); or
- ❖ A developmental delay in at least one of the following skill areas: physical, motor, thinking, communication, social/emotional or self-help.

Local agencies representing education, health care, and community services have banded together through a federal program called Early On. The purpose of Early On Macomb is to put families in touch with the local agencies best suited to assist the family with its specific 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.

Parent to Parent

Last month, we had a mom who wrote: *"I think my child is experiencing night terrors. He seems to be only half awake but screaming. I'm not sure what to do or how to comfort him. Any ideas?"* We received the following suggestions.

- My son has night terrors off and on also. From what I have read and by asking my doctor about it, I learned that they are in fact still sleeping. You don't necessarily want to go in and wake them up to comfort them. I usually will go into the bedroom to make sure they are in fact still asleep. If they are still moaning or crying and asleep, I will usually just rub their backs gently and maybe hum a lullaby very softly.
- I have learned that night terrors are a sleep disturbance. One thing you can do to help prevent them is to make sure your child is getting enough sleep. Another thing that has helped us is a calming bedtime ritual like taking a bath and then reading a book.

For the next issue, we have a parent who asks: *"How can I help my child to understand the concept of giving others gifts at this young age? Each time I tell him to look for a gift for his sibling, he wants to buy something for himself."*

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

Julie Lagos
MISD-Early On
44001 Garfield, Clinton Twp, MI 48038

Or, e-mail your comments to:

Jwilliams@misd.net

Parents Night Out

Early On's "Parents Night Out" is an adult evening out where we discuss a different subject each month. We plan to make it fun & lively and filled with lots of useful, interactive discussion focusing on the five Family Outcomes: families understand their children's strengths, abilities and special needs; families know their rights and advocate effectively for their children; families help their children develop and learn; families have support systems; and families are able to gain access to desired services, programs and activities in their communities. Families are reimbursed up to \$20 to cover the cost of childcare.

Visit www.misd.net

Sweet-Potato Fries

1-1/2 lbs. Sweet potatoes
2 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp chopped fresh Italian parsley
1 tsp chopped fresh thyme
1 minced garlic clove
salt and pepper
cooking spray

Heat oven to 475 degrees. In a large bowl, toss the potatoes (peeled and cut into 1/2" strips) with olive oil, parsley, thyme, and garlic. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Spread sweet potatoes in single layer on large baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Bake until tender and golden brown, turning occasionally, 20 to 25 minutes.

Feather Turkeys

You will need:

- Construction paper
- Feathers
- Tempera paint
- Paint brush
- Glue

Cut out a large turkey shape from tan or brown construction paper. Set out feathers and red, yellow and orange tempera paint. Have the children dip the feathers into the paint and brush it all over the paper turkey. Or, you can put some Elmer's glue mixed with a little bit of water in a pie tin. Let the children paint the glue on the turkey with a paintbrush. Then they can stick the feathers all over the turkey. Helpful hint: whenever using tempera paint, always add a little bit of dish soap to the paint. It makes cleaning hands and clothes much easier.

Need Toy Ideas?

When selecting toys for a child with disabilities, try the following resources:

- Toys-R-Us Differently-Abled Toy Guide. You can ask for it at the service desk of any Toys-R-Us store.
- Lekotek Toy Resource Helpline. Call 1-800-366-PLAY for assistance in selecting toys or play activities. www.lekotek.org
- www.drtoy.com has great holiday gift ideas.

Did you know ?

Your child has an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) that must be reviewed at least every six months or whenever it needs to be changed.

The Rainbow Connection

Good Websites:

- www.smart-estore.com/gift – free software for the whole family. Great educational titles. You only pay for shipping and handling.
- www.parentsandchild.com – this is from the Scholastic Company. All kinds of good stuff.
- www.parents.com – from Parent Magazine. A wealth of good things
- www.govbenefits.gov – you answer 100 questions and it lists what government benefits you may be entitled to.
- www.jonandcompany.com – designs and manufactures clothing made especially for children with special needs.

Early On Activities

The Family Fun Program is continuing with more events planned. All families will receive a flyer in the mail approximately two weeks before the event. You must call the phone number on the flyer and register to attend.

- **Dinner with Disney** – November 11, 2008 from 5-6:30 pm at the MISD.
- **Parents Night Out** – Let's Talk About Stress – November 18, 2008 6:30-8:00 p.m.

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

Family Voices

The thing I remember the most about Ethan's first IFSP for Early On is the warmth and caring of the people we met. I can vaguely remember helping to write his first plan. Ethan was nine weeks old at the time and had just come home from the hospital a few weeks earlier.

Through our years in Early On, I felt more and more involved with each IFSP and Review. When Ethan was about 2 1/2 years old, our service coordinator offered me the pen to help write the plan. At first I was very nervous—they were the professionals! As I put that pen to the paper and began to write my thoughts about Ethan's strengths and needs, I felt empowered and a true member of the team.

Julie Lagos

Early On strives to provide outcomes for families. The outcomes are: families understand their child's strengths, abilities and special needs; families know their rights and advocate effectively for their children; and families help their children develop and learn.