

# Great Start Collaborative Clare and Gladwin Counties



## *Strategic Plan 2016-2019*

*Clare and Gladwin County children are safe, healthy, happy, and ready to succeed in school and in life!*

# Table of Contents

<b>Letter to the Community</b>	3
<b>The Importance of a Great Start</b>	4
<b>Executive Summary</b>	7
<b>Profile and History</b>	9
<b>Community Needs and Strengths Assessment</b>	12
<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	18
<b>Early Childhood Action Agenda</b>	20
<b>Financing and Fund Development</b>	28

# Letter to the Community

October 1, 2015

Dear Community Members of Clare and Gladwin Counties:

As members of the Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative, we recognize the importance of supporting the development of every child in our community. It is the Great Start Collaborative's hope that this call to action will promote an understanding of the importance of investing in this generation, and provide community-based strategies to enable our youngest citizens to achieve success.

We share the vision to ensure that every child in Clare and Gladwin Counties will enter kindergarten safe, healthy, happy and ready to succeed in school and in life.

We have agreed to work collaboratively to maintain the highest level of commitment to children and families in our community.

Sincerely,

**The Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative**

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# The Importance of a Great Start

## One Thousand Days

That is all the time required to build the incredibly powerful yet highly impressionable web of neurons known as the human brain. During this short span of early life, a child learns to think, communicate, and develop socially as the brain becomes permanently “hardwired”. Never again will a child develop at such a rate exceeding that of the first five years of life, and never again will adults have a chance to make such a profound influence on a child’s life.

## The Human Brain...

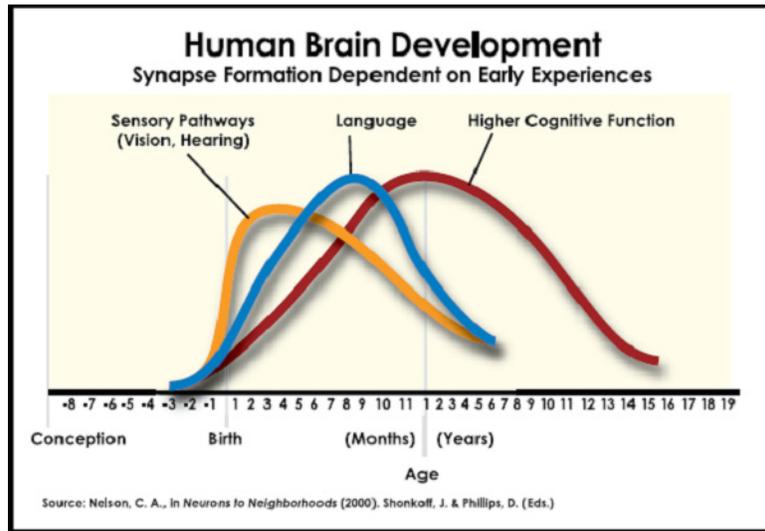
During the first five years of life, the set of intellectual and social skills that forms provides the foundation for learning throughout life.



Research has shown us when the brain grows, how the brain grows and why the brain grows. From this research we also know when important skill sets are optimally developed.

<b>Skill Set</b>	<b>Optimal Learning Period</b>	<b>Next Best</b>
Emotional Intelligence	0-24 months	2-5 years
Motor Development	0-24 months	2-5 years
Visual Recognition	0-24 months	2-5 years
Early Sound Recognition	4-8 months	8 months-5 years
Music	0-36 months	8 months-5 years

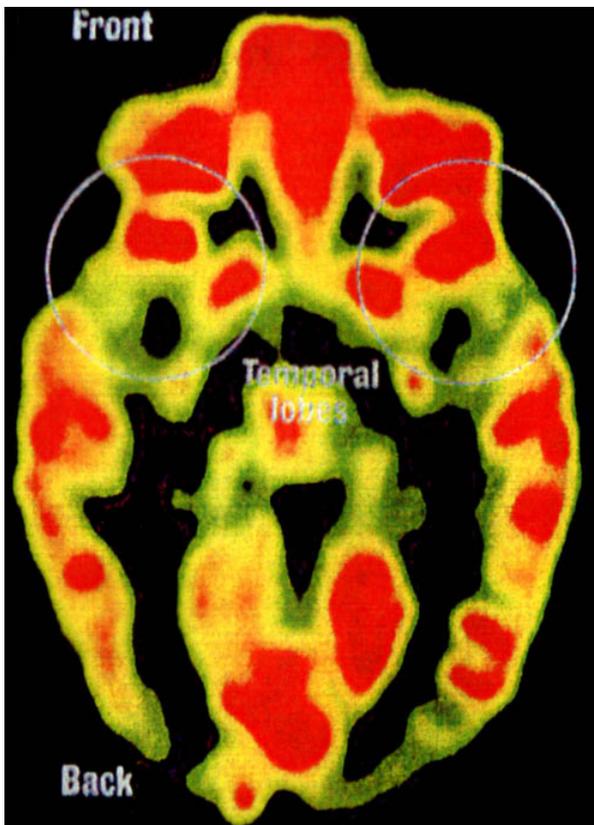
Studies show that a great start begins before birth. Brain research demonstrates that the synapse formation for language and higher cognitive functioning is highly impacted during the first two years of life, before most families even consider formal education for their child.



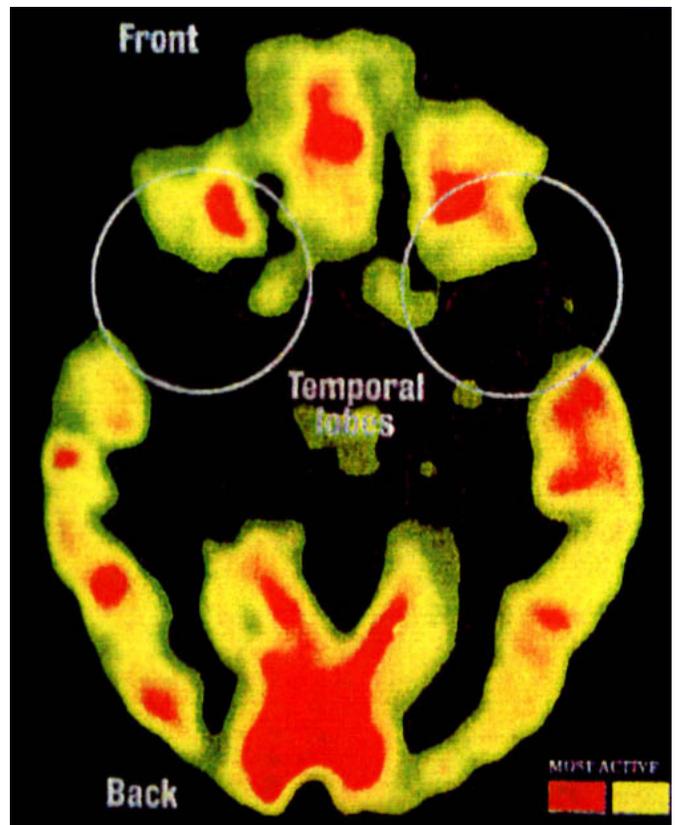
### The Effects of Neglect

Additional research studies utilized brain scans to determine the impact of lack of supportive conditions for young children.

Healthy Child



Neglected At Risk Child

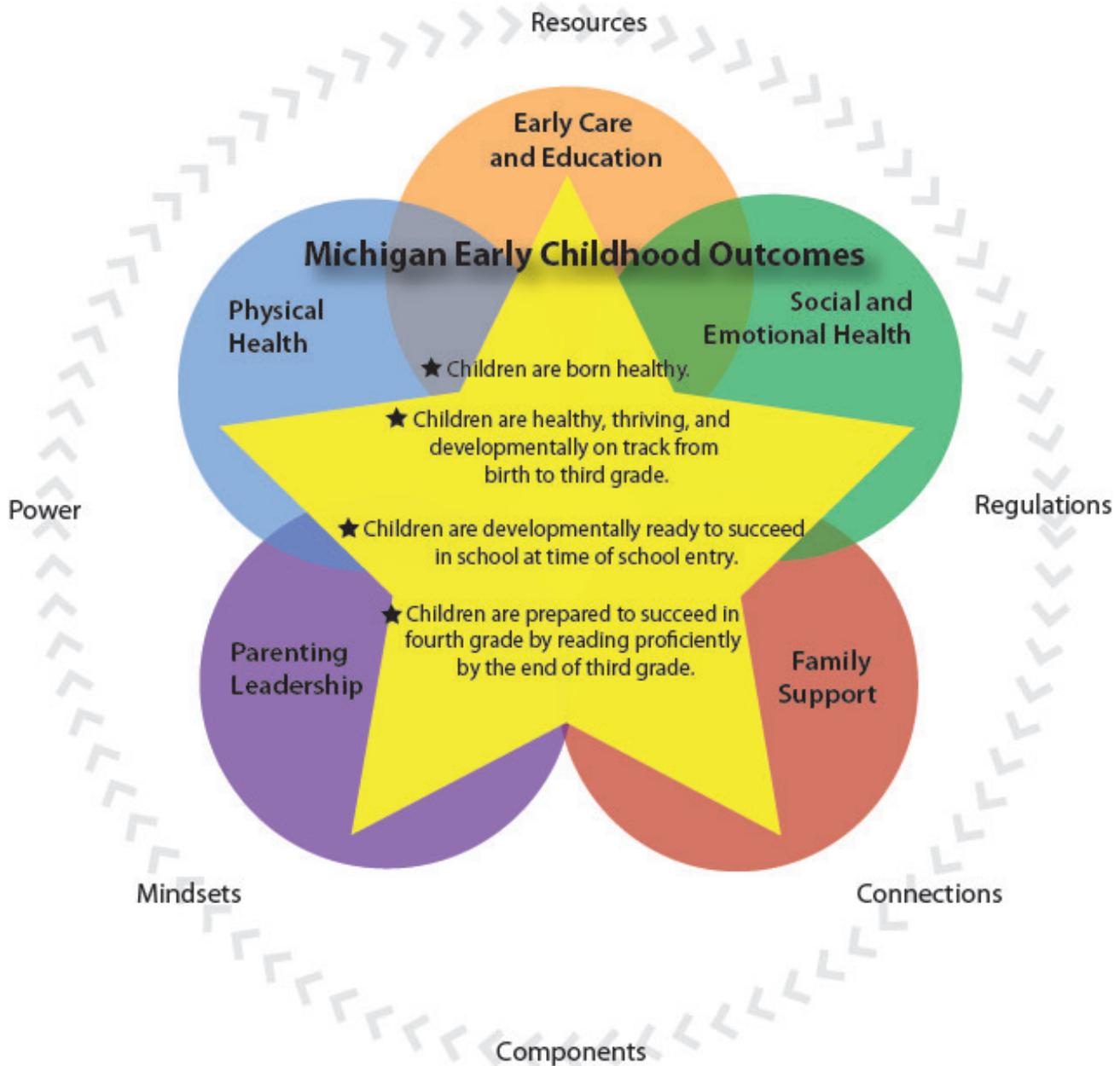


\*Source: H.T. Chugani, Wayne State University: Newsweek Special Edition, 1997

## A Comprehensive Approach

A comprehensive approach to providing services to children is critical. Research indicates that meeting the needs of the whole child and their family results in better health and educational outcomes. To maximize the success of young children and their families, the Office of Great Start encourages Great Start Collaboratives to build local early childhood systems that address the five component areas healthy families need in order to ensure all children are experiencing Michigan’s four early childhood outcomes.

The graphic below, provided by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, illustrates this approach.



Children need supportive conditions to succeed. Evidence of successful programs led the Early Childhood Investment Corporation to establish the five core areas that are the framework of Great Start Initiatives.

# Executive Summary

## About the Great Start Collaborative

We know now more than ever before about the importance of early childhood experiences and the impact the quality of those experiences can have on the child's lifelong health, happiness, and success. The Michigan Office of Great Start was created to ensure children birth to age eight have access to high-quality health, early learning, and child care programs so they are safe, healthy, happy, and ready to succeed in school and in life.

This initiative is guided by four desired goals (also known as Early Childhood Outcomes):

1. Children are born healthy.
2. Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.
3. Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.
4. Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

To help achieve these goals at a local level, every county in Michigan has a Great Start Collaborative - a group of local parents, service providers, business professionals, and community leaders who work together to build and continuously improve the network of supports and services for young children and their families.

Every three years, the Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative assesses what young children and their families in our communities need to work toward the Early Childhood Outcomes. The Collaborative then develops and implements a plan to address those needs.

## Identifying the Needs of the Community

Between November 2014 and August 2015, the Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative went through an extensive strategic planning process with guidance from the ABL Change Framework provided by Pennie Foster-Fishman, Ph.D. and Erin Watson, Ph.D. of Michigan State University's Department of Psychology, as well as consultation and support from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. This process included a comprehensive collection, review, and analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data of Clare and Gladwin counties. After evaluating the Kids Count Michigan Data Book 2015, the 2015 Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings, and the United Way ALICE Report for Michigan, we distributed surveys and conducted numerous small group discussions to determine to what degree the children in our two-county region are experiencing the Office of Great Start's (OGS) Early Childhood Outcomes.

Review of the data pointed to several important needs of the children and families in Clare and Gladwin Counties. Identified needs were prioritized based on the perception of "level of need" and "ability to impact" the issue.

### Trending Needs

- Local parents and educators feel there is a misalignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.
- Parents do not have a strong understanding of what skills their children need to be ready for kindergarten.
- Parents report they do not know how to support their children's learning at home to help them be ready for kindergarten.
- High quality early childhood opportunities are often limited to families who are high risk/low income.
- Pediatric and prenatal services are not easily accessible to families living in Clare and Gladwin counties.
- There is a lack of awareness of special education supports and services for young children and their families in Clare and Gladwin counties.
- There is not a community-wide understanding that the quality of early childhood experiences determines long-term health, success, and happiness.

As a result of these emerging trends, members of the Executive Committee of the Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative reviewed and analyzed the qualitative and quantitative data to develop three goals to work toward during the next three years to address these needs and ultimately increase the number of children in our communities who are experiencing the OGS Early Childhood Outcomes.

## The 2016-2019 Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative Action Agenda Summary

*Our Vision: Children are safe, healthy, happy, and ready to succeed in school and in life.*

Goal 1	Why is this a need?	Strategies to address this need:
<b>Parents, preschools, and elementary schools work together to ensure five-year-olds are ready to enter kindergarten.</b>	There is a misalignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the coordination and communication between pre-k and kindergarten entities.</li> </ul>
	Parents do not have a strong understanding of what skills their children need to be ready for kindergarten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen communication between pre-k/ kindergarten teachers and parents.</li> </ul>
	Parents report not knowing how to support their children's learning at home to help them be ready for kindergarten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and launch a "Teachable Moments" campaign to provide parents with simple but intentional everyday interactions that will encourage their child's learning.</li> </ul>
Goal 2	Why is this a need?	Strategies to address this need:
<b>Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs.</b>	High quality early childhood opportunities are often limited to families who are high risk/low income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize and promote current 4- and 5-Star childcare and preschool programs in Clare and Gladwin counties.</li> <li>Offer professional development and networking opportunities throughout the year for local childcare and preschool providers through the School Readiness Advisory Committee (SRAC).</li> </ul>
	Pediatric and prenatal services are not easily accessible to families living in Clare and Gladwin counties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with regional medical schools to recruit future physicians to practice in Clare and Gladwin counties.</li> <li>Incentivise attendance to Childbirth Preparation Education (CBE) class offered locally through MidMichigan health to illustrate need for OB/GYNs to practice in Clare and Gladwin counties.</li> <li>Assist local agencies in the promotion of the existing prenatal and pediatric health services and supports.</li> </ul>
	There is a lack of awareness of special education support and services for young children and their families in Clare and Gladwin counties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand community outreach efforts by the Clare-Gladwin RESD Special Education Department.</li> <li>Improve accessibility to community activities for families with children with special needs.</li> </ul>
Goal 3	Why is this a need?	Strategies to address this need:
<b>The community has a shared investment in providing a great start for families with young children.</b>	There is not a community-wide understanding that the quality of early childhood experiences determines long-term health, success, and happiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage the local and regional business community in early childhood initiatives.</li> <li>Create and implement GSC and GSPC awareness campaign.</li> </ul>

# Profile and History

## Great Start

The Great Start System is a holistic approach that identifies the importance of early childhood experiences in five core areas: Pediatric and Family Health, Social and Emotional Health, Early Care and Education, Parenting Leadership, and Family Support (basic needs).

Great Start recognizes that education begins at birth and that it is important to build an early childhood system in the spirit of collaboration and with common goals.

## Great Start Collaborative

The Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative was created in 2008 to partner with parents, community members, service providers and business leaders to oversee the development of a community-wide strengths and needs assessment, and an action plan for early childhood programs and services in Clare and Gladwin Counties. The members of the Great Start Collaborative continue in their work and the Collaborative remains an important part of the community. The Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative works to strengthen our local early childhood system by educating the community on the importance of the early years of a child's life, increasing local collaboration efforts, and using the Early Childhood Action Agenda to guide our work for the next three years.

The 2016-2019 Strategic Plan includes community data describing the current status of young children and their families in Clare-Gladwin in relation to the Office of Great Start's Early Childhood Outcomes, the results of the early childhood system scan, and the proposed Early Childhood Action Agenda (goals, objectives, and strategies). Information included in the Early Childhood Action Agenda is designed to help guide Clare-Gladwin to ensure that the systems in place are designed to improve the quality of lives for our children so they may experience the four Early Childhood Outcomes set forth by the Office of Great Start of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE):

1. Children are born healthy.
2. Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.
3. Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.
4. Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

## Great Start Parent Coalition

The Clare-Gladwin Parent Coalition was formed as a work and advisory group to the Great Start Collaborative. Parent Coalition members agree to take on a leadership role within the community, advocate for children, and provide the parent perspective.

The Parent Coalition works closely with the Great Start Collaborative toward the common goal of providing a great start for all children in Clare and Gladwin Counties and in assuring that Clare-Gladwin has an established and coordinated system of community resources and supports to assist families with young children.



## Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative and Parent Coalition Highlights

**FREE PRESCHOOL!**  
[www.claregladwinpreschool.org](http://www.claregladwinpreschool.org)



QUALITY PRESCHOOL PARTNERSHIP • CLARE-GLADWIN RESD

Expanded the Clare-Gladwin Quality Preschool Partnership (Joint Recruitment and Enrollment) for local Great Start Readiness and Head Start Programs to include an online pre-enrollment option.

**System Components:** *Early Care and Education*

Assisted the Gratiot-Isabella Great Start Collaborative and local partners in early childhood in the planning, coordination, and execution of the inaugural “The Heart to Shape a Mind Early Childhood Conference” with keynote speaker Dr. Thomas Haller. The conference featured numerous workshops about conscious discipline, the importance of outdoor play, mental health, and more.

**System Components:** *Early Care/Education, Physical Health, Social/Emotional Health, Parent Education, Family Supports/Basic Needs*



Obtained a \$2,200 grant from the Delta Dental Foundation to implement the McMillen Center for Health Education Brush! curriculum in the local Great Start Readiness Program preschool classrooms. All students were provided with a toothbrush and oral health resources to take home.

**System Components:** *Early Care/Education, Physical Health*

Multiple class series, full day training, and train the trainer in Conscious Discipline were provided for parents and providers to encourage best practice behavior modification strategies in childcares, schools, and homes.

**System Components:** *Parent Education, Social/Emotional Health, Family Supports/Basic Needs*

**Free!**  
**Conscious Discipline Training**

- What can you do to guide children effectively and successfully?
- What are the secrets and how do you learn them?



In this session, you will discover the basics of social-emotional development and key Conscious Discipline skills.

Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive social and emotional intelligence program that empowers both teachers and children.

Based on brain research, child development information, and developmentally appropriate practices.

The goal is to provide you with the skills they need to guide children's behavior.

Friday, Jan. 11, 2013  
 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Lunch provided)  
 Presenter: Kendra Curtiss-Tomaski

Register by calling (989) 386-8618




Collaborated with the Clare County Youth Council (the local child abuse and neglect prevention council) to host a Superhero Dance for families with young children. In addition to snacks, a photo booth, and two hours of kid-friendly dance music, local ‘superheroes’ such as law enforcement and firefighters also attended to partake in the fun.

**System Components:** *Social/Emotional Health, Family Supports/Basic Needs*



Utilized local grant funding to purchase hundreds of infant/toddler oral health packets to distribute to families at community events.

**System Components:** *Physical Health*

Partnered with community agencies to provide annual Community Baby Showers to provide supplies, resources and education to parents who are pregnant or have children under the age of one year.

**System Components:** *Physical Health, Parent Education, Family Support/Basic Needs*



Partnered with local Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Councils to plant annual Pinwheel Gardens during child abuse and neglect prevention month.

**System Components:** *Physical Health, Social/Emotional Health, Parent Education*

Partnered with community agencies to provide annual Health and Safety fairs to help families meet physical health evaluation requirements for early childhood programs.

**System Components:** *Physical Health*



While enrolled in the Teen Parent Program, a number of parents graduated from high school or earned a G.E.D., enrolled in Mid Michigan Community College, secured housing, completed driver's training, and found employment.

**System Components:** *Early Care/Education, Physical Health, Social/Emotional Health, Parent Education, Family Supports/Basic Needs*

Established an annual Sensory Friendly Family Movie Day at Celebration Cinema in Mt. Pleasant. With the lights turned up and the sound turned down, children affected by sensory sensitivities are free to sing, clap, or walk around as they enjoy the movie. Every attendant gets free admittance, popcorn, and a beverage!

**System Components:** *Social/Emotional Health, Family Supports/Basic Needs*



Increased participation in the locally-offered Childbirth Preparation Education classes through MidMichigan Health by developing an incentive program for at-risk moms.

**System Components:** *Physical Health, Family Supports/Basic Needs, Parent Education*

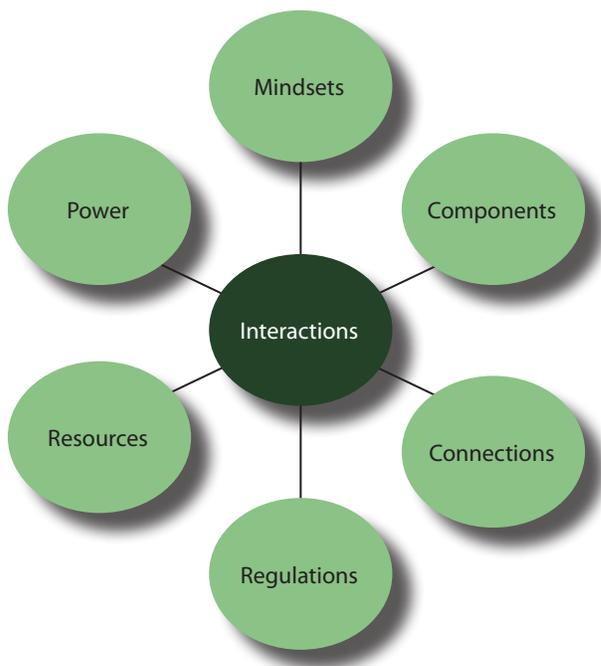
# Community Needs and Strengths Assessment

The Community Needs and Strengths Assessment included a comprehensive collection, review, and analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data of Clare and Gladwin counties.

## The System Scan

After evaluating the Kids Count Michigan Data Book 2015, the 2015 Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings, and the United Way ALICE Report for Michigan, we engaged hundreds of parents, care givers, service providers, and educators through electronic and paper surveys, as well as small group discussions to understand to what extent and why children in Clare and Gladwin counties are not meeting the four early childhood outcomes set forth by the Office of Great Start.

During this process, also known as a system scan, we encouraged participants to critically evaluate the local system of programs and services available for families with young children in the two-county region. According to the ABLLe Change Framework, a system is a set of six interacting characteristics (shown below) that has a shared purpose and functions as a whole. We asked a multitude of questions to ultimately help identify aspects of our local system's characteristics that are successfully supporting families with young children, and those that are hindering them.



- **Mindsets:** Attitudes, values, and beliefs that shape behavior.
- **Components:** Range, quality, effectiveness, and location of services, supports, and opportunities in the community.
- **Connections:** Relationships and exchanges between and across different actors, organizations, and system characteristics (e.g. information, referrals, resources, and learning).
- **Regulations:** Policies, practices, procedures, and daily routines that shape the behavior patterns of individuals, groups, and organizations.
- **Resources:** Human, financial, and social resources that are used within the system.
- **Power:** How decisions are made, who participates in decision-making, whose voice matters, and the structures available to support inclusive voice.

## Community Strengths

Through the system scan, we discovered Clare and Gladwin counties have many strengths related to the well-being of families with young children. These strengths include:

- In both Clare and Gladwin counties, the percentage of low birthweight babies and occurrence of preterm births is below the state average.
- The majority of parents surveyed reported reading to their child(ren) on a daily basis.
- The infant mortality rates in Clare and Gladwin counties could not be calculated due to the low incidence of the event.
- In Gladwin County, the percentage of fully immunized toddlers exceeds the state average.
- Approximately 80% of parents surveyed agreed they play an important role in getting their child ready for school.
- More than 80% of parents surveyed reported children need to go to preschool to be ready for kindergarten.

## Community Needs

However, the system scan also revealed a number of gaps in the system that are preventing children in Clare and Gladwin counties from experiencing the four early childhood outcomes. Of those gaps, the following were prioritized as needs to be addressed during the next three years:

- A. There is a misalignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.
- B. Parents do not have a strong understanding of what skills their children need to be ready for kindergarten.
- C. Parents report they do not know how to support their children's learning at home to help them be ready for kindergarten.
- D. High quality early childhood opportunities are often limited to families who are high risk/low income.
- E. Pediatric and prenatal services are not easily accessible to families living in Clare and Gladwin counties.
- F. There is a lack of awareness of special education supports and services for young children and their families in Clare and Gladwin counties.
- G. There is not a community-wide understanding that the quality of early childhood experiences determines long-term health, success, and happiness.

## Root Cause Analysis

Following the prioritization of the needs, both the Executive Committee and the Clare-Gladwin GSC Board members spent time analyzing the gaps to understand the underlying reasons as to why these problems exist. With each root cause identified, the system characteristic related to that cause was specified in order to guide the goal, objective, and strategy development process. Based on the ABL Change Framework, the following process was used to complete a root cause analysis for each prioritized need.

1. Identify a Problem or System Scan Condition	2. Start Digging	3. Dig Deeper	4. Get Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your targeted problem? Who is experiencing it, where, and in what ways?</li> <li>• What system conditions are influencing this problem? Who is experiencing them, where, and in what ways?</li> </ul>	For this problem or system condition, ask... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is this happening?</li> <li>• Could this have been prevented? If so, what should have been in place but wasn't?</li> </ul>	For this condition, ask... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are these conditions in place?</li> <li>• What is causing them to occur?</li> <li>• Could this condition have been prevented? If so, what should have been in place but wasn't?</li> </ul>	For each cause generated in step 3, ask... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is this happening here in our community or setting?</li> </ul>

**PRIORITIZED NEED A:**

**There is a misalignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.**

**System Scan Highlights:**

- Service providers reported that kindergarten expectations are too high and developmentally inappropriate for five-year-olds.
- Service providers reported the partnership between pre-k and kindergarten teachers needs to be strengthened.
- 68% of providers reported that state regulations and grant requirements create expectations which lead to inappropriate teaching methods/strategies.



Root Causes	Unaligned System Condition
Pre-k and kindergarten teachers and leaders could communicate more effectively with each other.	Connections
State mandates result in pre-k and k-3 teachers feeling alignment in programming is unrealistic.	Mindsets, Regulations, Power, Resources
Pre-k and kindergarten curriculums are written in “two different languages,” impeding potential alignment work.	Regulations
Different interpretations of curriculum sometimes leads to curriculum implementation in a developmentally inappropriate way.	Regulations
There are numerous kindergarten round-up/assessment processes at schools in the two-county region.	Connections, Regulations
Lack of time.	Resources

*Did You Know?*

“Aligning standards, curricula and assessments ensures that young children engage in the right sequence of learning experiences at the right time. Alignment also ensures children are working toward building the set of skills and knowledge they will need as they move from a high-quality preschool to a high quality full-day kindergarten and the early elementary grades.”

Sarah Daily, *Initiatives from Preschool to Third Grade: A Policymaker’s Guide* (Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, October 2014), <http://www.ecs.org/docs/early-learning-primer.pdf>.



**PRIORITIZED NEED B:**

**Parents do not have a strong understanding of what skills their children need to be ready for kindergarten.**

**PRIORITIZED NEED C:**

**Parents report not knowing how to support their child’s learning at home to help them be ready for kindergarten.**

**System Scan Highlights:**

- While approximately 80% of parents surveyed agreed they play an important role in getting their child ready for school, additional survey data indicated the majority of those same parents were unable to identify the skills their child needed to have to be ready for kindergarten.
- Parents surveyed also reported not knowing what to look for to ensure their child was developmentally on track.
- 55% of service providers surveyed reported that early care and education providers need guidance in how to teach families what is needed for kindergarten.
- Parents reported the need for everyday ways to support their child’s early learning to help them be ready for kindergarten.

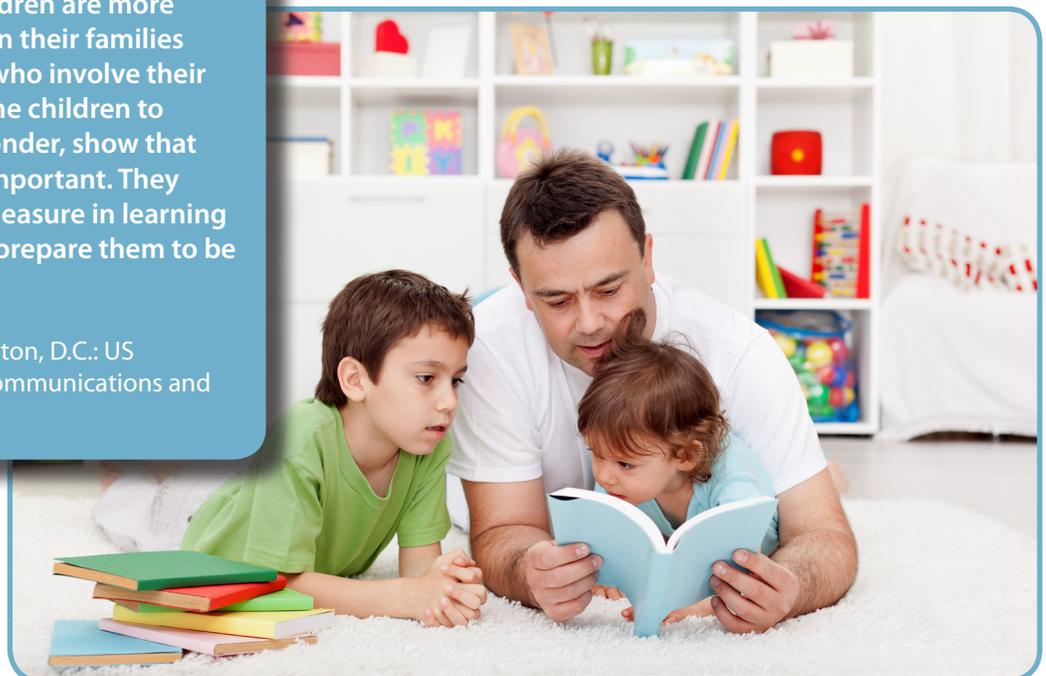


Root Causes	Unaligned System Condition
Kindergarten expectations are not clearly communicated to parents.	Connections
Because pre-k and kindergarten curriculums do not align, parents are unclear of kindergarten expectations and how they can support their child’s learning at home.	Regulations
There is a lack of awareness among parents of the importance and long-term benefits of simple, yet intentional everyday interactions with their child.	Resources
Parents report they do not have the time they think is required to support their child’s learning at home.	Mindsets, Resources
Some parents believe the school is solely responsible for teaching their child.	Mindsets

*Did You Know?*

“Research shows clearly that children are more likely to succeed in learning when their families actively support them. Families who involve their children in activities that allow the children to talk, explore, experiment and wonder, show that learning is both enjoyable and important. They motivate their children to take pleasure in learning and to want to learn more. They prepare them to be successful in school-and in life.”

*Helping Your Preschool Child* (Washington, D.C.: US Department of Education Office of Communications and Outreach, 2005).



**PRIORITIZED NEED D:**

**High quality early childhood opportunities are often limited to families who are high risk/low income.**

**System Scan Highlights:**

- 45% of parents surveyed indicated they feel there aren't enough high quality early care and education options in Clare and Gladwin counties.
- In Clare County, 28% of the total population above the poverty line is struggling to afford basic needs, including child care. (United Way ALICE Report for Michigan, September 2014)
- In Gladwin County, 27% of the total population above the poverty line is struggling to afford basic needs, including child care. (United Way ALICE Report for Michigan, September 2014)



Root Causes	Unaligned System Condition
There are limited tuition-based preschool programs in Clare and Gladwin counties.	Components
Only a few of those tuition-based preschool programs participate in the Star Rating System offered by Great Start to Quality, supported by MDE's Office of Great Start.	Components, Resources, Mindsets
There is not enough space to add slots to current Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP) in Clare and Gladwin counties.	Resources

*Did You Know?*

**"Children who have access to high-quality P-3 educational experiences demonstrate better academic outcomes and fewer behavioral problems than children who do not."**

Ellen S. Peisner-Feinberg and Margaret R. Burchinal, *Relations Between Preschool Children's Child-care Experiences and Concurrent Development: The Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 451-477.

**PRIORITIZED NEED E:**

**Pediatric and prenatal services are not easily accessible to families living in Clare and Gladwin counties.**

**System Scan Highlights:**

- 41% of expectant moms in Clare County and 35% of expectant moms in Gladwin County received less than adequate prenatal care. (Kids Count Michigan Data Book 2015)
- 62% of service providers surveyed reported that parents feel health care for their children is not easily accessible or affordable.
- 59% of service providers surveyed indicated that new moms get their information from their parents and friends instead of listening to new research and recommendations.
- The rates of birth to teens ages 15-19 in both Clare and Gladwin counties far exceed the state's teen birth rate.



Root Causes	Unaligned System Condition
The hospitals in both Clare and Gladwin counties do not deliver babies.	Components
There are no practicing pediatricians in Clare or Gladwin counties.	Components
The rate of medical provider turnover is high in both counties.	Resources, Mindsets
Although limited, the pediatric and prenatal services available in Clare and Gladwin counties are not well-known.	Connections, Resources

**PRIORITIZED NEED F:**  
**There is a lack of awareness of special education supports and services for young children and their families in Clare and Gladwin counties.**

**System Scan Highlights:**

- 53% of service providers surveyed indicated that parents believe delays will be caught when the child enters school (early intervention is not important).
- Community members report that many parents only seem to be able to get services for their child when the child starts kindergarten, which is not early enough.
- Service providers reported need for better coordination/communication among services so they can direct families accordingly.
- Parents reported there are no extra-curricular activities or sports available to children with special needs.
- Parents reported needing assistance with IEPs.
- Parents reported an interest in support groups.
- 54% of service providers surveyed reported that school districts are unaware of other organizations and services and therefore do not share this with families.
- 46% of service providers indicated that doctors do not know what services are available to share with families.



Root Causes	Unaligned System Condition
Parents of children with special needs are unaware of the current supports and services.	Connections, Resources
Lack of knowledge among parents, health care providers, and childcare providers of available services and when to refer.	Connections, Resources
Services that assist a broad age range of children, such as Project Find, are not well-known in the community.	Connections, Resources



**PRIORITIZED NEED G:**  
**There is not a community-wide understanding that the quality of early childhood experiences determines long-term health, success, and happiness.**

**System Scan Highlights:**

- There are a limited number of business leaders actively engaged with the GSC Board.
- The Great Start Collaborative is not well-known beyond the local system of human services.



Root Causes	Unaligned System Condition
Many local entities outside of the early childhood network (i.e. businesses) are unfamiliar with the benefits of investing in early childhood.	Connections, Mindsets

*Did You Know?*

“Economists from the Minnesota Federal Reserve agree: ‘Dollars invested in ECD [early childhood development] yield extraordinary public returns.’ Estimates of returns vary, ranging from a cost savings of \$2.50 to \$17 for every dollar invested.”

*Great Start, Great Investment, Great Future: The Plan for Early Learning in Michigan* (Lansing, MI: Michigan Department of Education, 2013).

# Goals and Objectives

With these seven prioritized needs and the supporting system scan data in mind, measurable objectives were developed to describe the improvements we plan to make to those needs during the next three years. The objectives were then sorted into three comprehensive goals to summarize the ultimate purpose of our efforts.

The goals and objectives are listed below. To verify their power and feasibility, we ensured each goal and its corresponding objectives, strategies\* and activities\* align/address components of the following:

- The Office of Great Start's Early Childhood Outcomes
- The principles and recommendations from the Great Start, Great Investment, Great Future report
- The five star components – pediatric and family health, social and emotional health, early care and education, parenting leadership, and family support
- The levers for change identified by the 2012 Michigan State University Evaluation Report

*\*Note: Strategies and activities are listed in detail in the Early Childhood Action Agenda.*

## **GOAL 1: Parents, preschools, and elementary schools work together to ensure five-year-olds are ready to enter kindergarten.**

### **Objectives:**

- Improve the alignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.
- Clarify kindergarten readiness expectations for parents.
- Improve parents' confidence in their ability to support their child's learning at home.

### **Early Childhood Outcomes**

- Children are born healthy.
- Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.
- Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.
- Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

### **Great Start, Great Investment, Great Future**

#### **Recommendations**

- Build Leadership within the System
- Support Parents' Critical Role in Their Children's Early Learning and Development
- Assure Quality and Accountability
- Ensure Coordination and Collaboration
- Use Funding Efficiently to Maximize Impact
- Expand Access to Quality Programs

### **MSU Levers for Change**

- Strong Relational Networks
- Intentional Systems Change Action
- Interdependent Organizations
- Readiness for Change
- Local Champions
- Parent Leadership and Voice
- Effective Partnerships
- Shared Goals
- Active Constituents
- Root Cause Focus
- Equity Orientation

### **Five Star Components**

- Pediatric and Family Health
- Social and Emotional Health
- Early Care and Education
- Parenting Leadership
- Family Support

**GOAL 2: Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs.****Objectives:**

- Increase parent awareness of what high quality childcare and preschool means and looks like.
- Assist local childcare and preschool providers in improving the quality of their programs.
- Increase awareness among the healthcare community of the high need for more medical providers in Clare and Gladwin counties.
- Increase participation in existing local prenatal and pediatric health services and supports.
- Increase awareness of existing special education supports and services available locally for families with young children.

**Early Childhood Outcomes**

- X Children are born healthy.
- X Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.
- X Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.
- X Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

**Great Start, Great Investment, Great Future Recommendations**

- X Build Leadership within the System
- X Support Parents' Critical Role in Their Children's Early Learning and Development
- X Assure Quality and Accountability
- X Ensure Coordination and Collaboration
- X Use Funding Efficiently to Maximize Impact
- X Expand Access to Quality Programs

**MSU Levers for Change**

- X Strong Relational Networks
- X Intentional Systems Change Action
- X Interdependent Organizations
- X Readiness for Change
- Local Champions
- X Parent Leadership and Voice
- X Effective Partnerships
- X Shared Goals
- X Active Constituents
- X Root Cause Focus
- X Equity Orientation

**Five Star Components**

- X Pediatric and Family Health
- X Social and Emotional Health
- X Early Care and Education
- X Parenting Leadership
- X Family Support

**GOAL 3: The community has a shared investment in providing a great start for families with young children.****Objective:**

- Strengthen community-wide belief that high quality early childhood programs and services are vital to building and maintaining a thriving community.

**Early Childhood Outcomes**

- X Children are born healthy.
- X Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.
- X Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.
- X Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

**Great Start, Great Investment, Great Future Recommendations**

- X Build Leadership within the System
- X Support Parents' Critical Role in Their Children's Early Learning and Development
- X Assure Quality and Accountability
- X Ensure Coordination and Collaboration
- X Use Funding Efficiently to Maximize Impact
- X Expand Access to Quality Programs

**MSU Levers for Change**

- X Strong Relational Networks
- X Intentional Systems Change Action
- X Interdependent Organizations
- X Readiness for Change
- X Local Champions
- X Parent Leadership and Voice
- X Effective Partnerships
- X Shared Goals
- X Active Constituents
- X Root Cause Focus
- X Equity Orientation

**Five Star Components**

- X Pediatric and Family Health
- X Social and Emotional Health
- X Early Care and Education
- X Parenting Leadership
- X Family Support

# Early Childhood Action Agenda

Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative 2016-2019

## GOAL 1: Parents, preschools, and elementary schools work together to ensure five-year-olds are ready to enter kindergarten.

### PRIORITIZED NEED A:

There is a misalignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.

**Objective 1:** Improve the alignment of kindergarten readiness expectations between preschool and kindergarten programming.

**Strategy a.** Enhance the coordination and communication between pre-k and kindergarten entities.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
The Transition Committee (a subgroup of the SRAC consisting of pre-k and k teacher leaders and administrators) meets regularly throughout the year.	School Readiness Advisory Committee (SRAC), Early Childhood Contact (ECC) for Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP)	Oct. 2015, ongoing	Staff time.	Transition Committee will be established. Communication opportunities between pre-k and kindergarten entities will increase.
Data is used to determine goals and work of the Transition Committee.	SRAC	Dec. 2015, ongoing	Staff time to review data and develop goals.	Data will be reviewed and goals will be established annually.
A common kindergarten assessment process is used by all districts in the two-county region.	SRAC, ECC-GSRP	2017	Staff time, time for training	Assessment process will be utilized. Increased coordination and expectations among parents, pre-k staff, and kindergarten staff.
Preschool assessment data and kindergarten assessment data are integrated.	ECC-GSRP, Early Childhood Specialist, RESD Data Coordinator	Sept. 2019	Staff time to develop outcome report.	The coordination and communication between pre-k and kindergarten will improve. Data will be integrated into and annual outcome report and presented to relevant entities.

**GOAL 1: Parents, preschools, and elementary schools work together to ensure five-year-olds are ready to enter kindergarten. (continued)**

**PRIORITIZED NEED B:**

Parents do not have a strong understanding of what skills their children need to be ready for kindergarten.

**Objective 1:** Clarify kindergarten readiness expectations for parents.

**Strategy a.** Strengthen communication between pre-k/kindergarten teachers and parents.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Schools have a common set of kindergarten readiness expectations.	Transition Committee, SRAC	Aug. 2017	Staff time	Consistent messaging of kindergarten expectations.
Materials with the common set of kindergarten readiness expectations are distributed to parents through local preschools, childcares, elementary schools, and human service providers.	SRAC, GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison	Oct. 2017	Funding for printing, support and participation of schools/providers	Consistent messaging of kindergarten expectations. Decreased confusion among parents and providers about readiness expectations.

**PRIORITIZED NEED C:**

Parents report not knowing how to support their child's learning at home to help them be ready for kindergarten.

**Objective 1:** Improve parents' confidence in their ability to support their child's learning at home.

**Strategy a.** Develop and launch a "Teachable Moments" campaign to provide parents with simple but intentional everyday interactions that will encourage their child's learning.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Campaign brochures, posters, flyers, etc. illustrate ways to turn everyday activities into "Teachable Moments." (e.g. In the grocery store, in the car, while making dinner, etc.)	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, Parent Coalition, ECFS Director, SRAC	May 2016	Staff time to create materials, parent input to develop content, and funding for printing	More parents will use everyday opportunities to support their child's learning. Communication between parents and children will increase.
Doctors, childcare providers, preschool providers, etc. share "Teachable Moments" resources with families.	Parent Liaison, GSC Coordinator	June 2016, ongoing	Support and participation of doctors/early care providers	All GSRP/Head Start programs, at least 2 doctors, and 2 early care providers in each county will participate.
"Teachable Moments" are provided on a weekly and monthly basis via social media and parent newsletters.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, Pre-k teachers, elem. principals	June 2016, ongoing	Coordination with preschool teachers and elem. principals	More parents will use everyday opportunities to support their child's learning.
Promoted by "Teachable Moments," literacy will be supported through the continuation of the Imagination Library and annual literacy nights.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, ECFS Coordinator, SRAC	Ongoing	Funding for long-term sustainability of program	Funding will maintain program through FY19. Parents will continue to read with their children at home.
Early childhood agencies share "Teachable Moments" resources at community events (when applicable).	GSC Coordinator, Partnering agencies	June 2016, ongoing	Participation of partner agencies	Agencies will have the tools needed to guide parents in supporting learning at home.
GSC, GSPC, and Teen Parent Program model developmentally appropriate activities at community events and while homevisiting.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, Teen Parent Program Provider	Ongoing	Staff time	Parents will gain activity ideas to repeat at home.

## GOAL 2: Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs.

### PRIORITIZED NEED D:

High quality early childhood opportunities are often limited to families who are high risk/low income.

**Objective 1:** Increase parent awareness of what high quality childcare and preschool means and looks like.

**Strategy a.** Recognize and promote current 4- and 5-Star childcare and preschool programs in Clare and Gladwin counties.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
'Star Celebrations' are held for each 4- and 5-Star program in the two-county region.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, and Provider Director	June 2016	Funds to purchase cake and certificate with frame.	Increased parent, community, and provider awareness of GSQ and high quality programming. Increased provider interest/participation in GSQ Star Rating System.
A news release is sent to local newspapers and media outlets following the 'Star Celebration'.	GSC Coordinator	June 2016	Staff time to compose news release.	News releases sent to 3 local papers within two weeks of each program's 'Star Celebration.' Increased awareness among community of GSQ/high quality programming.
Pictures from 'Star Celebrations' are shared on GSC social media pages, website, and through electronic communications.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison	June 2016	Staff time to take photos and share online.	Within one week of 'Star Celebration' photos and highlights will be shared on social media, websites, etc.
A brochure is created for each county with a brief description of Great Start to Quality (GSQ) and the Star Rating System, as well as a list of all local preschool and childcare providers with their associated star ratings (if applicable).	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, Early Childhood Administrative Assistant	Jan. 2016	Staff time to design, edit, and print brochures. Glossy paper for brochures.	Increased parent, community, and provider awareness of GSQ and high quality programming. Increased provider interest/participation in GSQ Star Rating System.
Brochures and GSQ promotional materials are shared at community events, with local agencies, and during home visits.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, Early On Coordinator	Ongoing following the creation of the brochure.	Staff time to distribute materials.	Increased awareness of GSQ/high quality programming. More parents will value and look to GSQ when choosing early care and education programs.
All Quality Preschool Partnership (QPP) marketing materials indicate programs' star ratings.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison	Nov. 2015	Staff time to update current marketing materials.	The Star Rating System will become familiar among parents with children in GSRP/Head Start preschool programs. GSRP/Head Start preschool programs will maintain their high program ratings.

**GOAL 2: Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs.** *(continued)***Prioritized Need D** *(continued)*:

High quality early childhood opportunities are often limited to families who are high risk/low income.

**Objective 2:** Assist local childcare and preschool providers in improving the quality of their programs.

**Strategy a.** Offer professional development and networking opportunities throughout the year for local childcare and preschool providers through the School Readiness Advisory Committee (SRAC).

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Peer-to-Peer trainings are offered to all local providers on a regular basis.	SRAC	Ongoing	Funds for trainer, training materials, and food (when applicable)	Providers will learn from each other and expand their professional network.
Trainings are listed on the GSQ website and marketed directly to local providers via mail and email.	Regional Resource Center (RRC), Early Childhood and Family Services (ECFS) Director, GSC Coordinator, ECFS Administrative Assistant	Ongoing	Staff time to post on GSQ website and mail flyers to local providers.	Increased provider awareness of trainings offered and increased attendance.
Trainings are offered in Clare or Gladwin counties.	ECFS Director, RRC, GSC Coordinator	Ongoing	Staff time to plan and promote trainings. Funds for trainer, training materials, and food (when applicable).	Transportation barriers will be reduced for providers. Increased attendance at trainings.
An annual tour of local high quality preschool and childcare programs is offered to all local providers.	SRAC, ECFS Director	April annually	Funding for participant transportation.	Providers will have an improved understanding what high quality looks like in a real early care/education setting.
A network of local childcare and preschool directors meets on a regular basis with the RESD Early Childhood and Family Services (ECFS) Director to share information and resources related to program quality improvement.	ECFS Director, GSC Coordinator, Local Program Directors	March 2016, ongoing	Staff time to plan meetings and recruit participants. Funds for food and materials (when applicable)	Network meets at least 4 times annually. More providers will participate in the Star Rating System. Quality of local programs will increase.

**GOAL 2: Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs.** *(continued)***PRIORITIZED NEED E:**

Pediatric and prenatal services are not easily accessible.

**Objective 1:** Increase awareness among the healthcare community of the high need for more medical providers in Clare and Gladwin counties.

**Strategy a.** Partner with regional medical schools to recruit future physicians to practice in Clare and Gladwin counties.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Medical students in the Rural Community Health Program (RCHP) at the Michigan State University (MSU) School of Medicine participate in GSC community events and programs (e.g. Health Fairs, Teen Parent Program).	RCHP Coordinator, GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison, Teen Parent Program Provider	Ongoing	Staff time to coordinate collaboration opportunities.	Future physicians will have an increased understanding of the need for more local practicing providers and the unique health needs of rural communities.
GSC and the Central Michigan University (CMU) School of Medicine continuously communicate.	GSC Coordinator	Ongoing	Staff time to establish and build relationships with medical schools.	Opportunities to collaborate will be identified as relationship is built. Future physicians will have an increased understanding of the need for more local practicing providers and the unique health needs of rural communities.
Representatives from CMU and MSU medical schools are members of the Great Start Collaborative Board.	GSC Coordinator, MSU and CMU medical school representatives	Jan. 2016	Staff time to recruit reps. Participation of reps.	Regional medical schools will have an inside look at the specific health care needs of children and families in the two-county region.

**Strategy b.** Incentivise attendance to Childbirth Preparation Education (CBE) class offered locally through MidMichigan health to illustrate need for OB/GYNs to practice in Clare and Gladwin counties.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Expectant moms receiving health department services are referred to register for the local CBE classes.	Health Dept. (HD) staff, Teen Parent Program Provider	Ongoing	Staff time to refer and register.	More at-risk moms will gain valuable pre/postnatal info and support.
Moms who complete the class receive a new pack and play or car seat.	GSC Coordinator, HD staff, MidMichigan Health staff	Items given following completion of class.	Funding to purchase pack and plays, car seats	An increase in class attendance. At-risk moms get new/safe baby care items.
The maximum number of participants register and attend the CBE classes.	HD staff, Teen Parent Program Provider, MidMichigan Health staff	Ongoing	Staff time to refer and register participants. Funding for incentive items.	An increased number of moms receive vital prenatal/postnatal support.
Additional classes are offered locally as a result of the high demand.	MidMichigan Health staff	Jan. 2017	Additional classes offered by MidMichigan Health	An increased number of moms receive valuable pre/postnatal info and support. Medical providers see need for more local prenatal and pediatric supports.

**GOAL 2: Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs. (continued)****Prioritized Need E (continued):**

Pediatric and prenatal services are not easily accessible.

**Objective 2:** Increase participation in existing local prenatal and pediatric health services and supports.

**Strategy a.** Assist local agencies in the promotion of the existing prenatal and pediatric health services and supports.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
211 cards and marketing materials are distributed at community events and shared via GSC social media pages and parent email lists.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison	Ongoing	211 cards and marketing materials.	More families will turn to 211 when in need.
The QPP application asks moms to indicate if they are pregnant or have a child under age 1. When answer is 'yes,' referrals are made to Early Head Start (EHS).	QPP enrollment staff, GSC Coordinator, ECFS Administrative Assistant, EHS Staff	April 2016	Staff time to update paper and online applications.	A referral process between QPP and EHS will be established. An increased number of families will receive EHS services.
Additional homevisiting funds offer temporary services to families on the Early Head Start waitlist.	ECFS Director, Teen Parent Program Provider, EHS Staff	Jan. 2016	Additional funding for evidence-based homevisiting programs.	Families waiting for EHS services still receive necessary supports.
The Clare-Gladwin Teen Parent Program continues to provide homevisiting services and supports to local parenting teens under age 21.	Teen Parent Program Service Provider	Ongoing	Continued funding to provide services.	Unique needs of parenting teens are supported. More referrals for early intervention.

**PRIORITIZED NEED F:**

There is a lack of awareness of special education support and services for young children and their families in Clare and Gladwin counties.

**Objective 1:** Increase awareness of existing special education supports and services available locally for families with young children.

**Strategy a.** Expand community outreach efforts by the Clare-Gladwin RESD Special Education Department.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Presentations about CGRESD special education services are given to civic, business, and human service groups in two-county region.	GSC Coordinator, Project Find Coordinator, Special Ed Admin.	Ongoing	Staff time to prepare presentations.	Increased public awareness of available special ed services. At least two presentations will be given each program year.
Timely and appropriate special education service referrals are made due to strengthened relationships with family doctors/pediatricians and local childcare/preschool providers.	Project Find Coordinator	June 2016	Staff time to build relationships. Doctor/provider support and commitment.	Increased early intervention referrals. Increased provider knowledge of available supports. Partnerships formed with 3 providers.
A Parent Advisory Council (PAC) made up of parent representatives from local school districts meets regularly with CGRESD Special Education Administration to continuously improve special education offerings.	CGRESD Supervisor/Monitor, parent representatives, GSC coordinator (when needed)	October 2015	staff time to recruit parents. Parent commitment to group.	Increased parent input regarding local services for children with special needs. Current services better address children's needs.

**GOAL 2: Families have access to high quality services that support their children's needs. (continued)****Prioritized Need F (continued):**

There is a lack of awareness of special education support and services for young children and their families in Clare and Gladwin counties.

**Objective 1(continued):** Increase awareness of existing special education supports and services available locally for families with young children.

**Strategy a. (continued)** Expand community outreach efforts by the Clare-Gladwin RESD Special Education Department.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
A special education resource table is set up at community events.	Project Find Coordinator	Ongoing	Staff time to host table. Funding to print Project Find and other special education resource materials.	Increased awareness of special ed supports and services available locally. Increased early intervention opportunities. Increased number of families receiving supports they need for child with special needs.
The GSC Board has representation from the CGRESD Special Education Department.	GSC Coordinator, CGRESD Special Ed Administrators	Scheduled GSC Board meeting dates 2016-2019	Staff time to invite Spec. Ed. Administrators.	Increased awareness among GSC Board of Special Ed services. Increased knowledge of community health and education needs of families with young children.

**Strategy b.** Improve accessibility to community activities for families with children with special needs.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Promotional materials for local family events indicate families with children with special needs are welcome. Materials also provide contact information for families to request accommodations if necessary.	GSC Coordinator, Partnership Agencies, Community Workgroups	Ongoing	Community workgroup participation	Increased attendance at community events by families with children with special needs. Families can attend events and feel at ease knowing accommodations can be made.
The extra-curricular activities offered through the Clare-Gladwin Area School are open to all students with special needs attending one of the five local school districts.	GSC Coordinator, Area School principal	Nov. 2016	Staff time.	More children with special needs in community can participate in extra-curricular activities.
Marketing materials for the Area School extra-curricular activities are shared with the Children's Special Health Care Services office.	GSC Coordinator, Children's Special Health Care staff	Nov. 2016, ongoing	Staff time to develop flyer. Funding for printing.	More children with special needs in community can participate in extra-curricular activities.

### GOAL 3: The community has a shared investment in providing a great start for families with young children.

#### PRIORITIZED NEED G:

There is not a community-wide understanding that the quality of early childhood experiences determines long-term health, success, and happiness.

**Objective 1:** Strengthen community-wide belief that high quality early childhood programs and services are vital to building and maintaining a thriving community.

**Strategy a.** Engage the local and regional business community in early childhood initiatives.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
The Clare-Gladwin GSC participates in the efforts of the Great Lakes Bay Region (GLBR) Early Childhood Business Advisory Group.	GSC Coordinator, ECFS Director	Ongoing	Staff time to attend meetings.	Clare-Gladwin GSC increases network of business professionals.
Clare/Gladwin County businesses attend the GLBR Early Childhood Business Advisory Group meetings regularly.	GSC Coordinator	Oct. 2016	Staff time to recruit business leaders. Commitment of leaders to attend meetings.	At least one business rep. attends the meetings regularly.
Clare/Gladwin County business representatives regularly attend the GSC Board Meetings.	GSC Coordinator	Jan. 2016	Staff time to recruit business leaders. Commitment of leaders to attend meetings.	3 new business reps. will begin attending Board meetings. An increased awareness of local family/child needs among business community.
Community presentations about the GSC, early childhood initiatives, and the return on investment benefits are given to local business group (e.g. Rotary Clubs, Business Associations, Chambers of Commerce, etc.).	GSC Coordinator, ECFS Director	Ongoing	Staff time to present to community groups.	Two or more presentations will be given to local business groups annually. An increased awareness of local family/child needs among business community.
Funding from regional businesses provides 3-year-old preschool scholarships for local families.	ECFS Director, GLBR Early Childhood Business Advisory Group	Aug. 2016, Aug. 2017, Aug. 2018	Funding for scholarships	At least two scholarships will be awarded at beginning of school year. More children will access high quality pre-k.

**Strategy b.** Create and implement GSC and GSPC awareness campaign.

Activities	Responsible Entities	Target Dates	Resources Needed	Performance/Progress Measures
Local early childhood events and achievements are published in local newspapers and shared via social media and electronic communications.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison	Ongoing	Staff time to write news releases. Connections to local media outlets.	Increased awareness among public of early childhood events, accomplishments, services, and their benefits.
The GSC and GSPC develop and distribute new marketing materials that clearly define our goals, how to get involved.	GSC Coordinator, Parent Liaison	Jan. 2016, Ongoing	Staff time to create new materials. Funding for printing when necessary.	New materials will be developed by Jan. 2016. The distribution will be ongoing. Increased engagement in Parent Coalition.

# Financing and Fund Development

The Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative is committed to utilizing current resources to implement the strategic plan, and to creating additional resources with the intent of sustainability.

In order to successfully implement the Clare-Gladwin Early Childhood Action Agenda, we, as a collaborative body, know and agree that the following will be necessary:

## Staff Time

The Great Start Collaborative Coordinator, Co-Coordinator, and Parent Liaison are funded through the Michigan Department of Education Office of Great Start.

The Great Start Collaborative Coordinator and Co-Coordinator will oversee all operations of the GSC including:

- Funding and reporting requirements of the Michigan Department of Education Office of Great Start
- Establishing and maintaining community collaborative partnership
- Ensuring the completion of the work outlined in the Early Childhood Action Agenda

The Great Start Parent Liaison will guide the work of the Great Start Parent Coalition and will be the link between the Parent Coalition and the Great Start Collaborative.

## Prioritized Action Agenda Activities

The Michigan Department of Education 32p Block Grant partially or fully supports the following Clare-Gladwin GSC activities:

- The Teen Parent Program
- Professional Development
- Printed Marketing Materials
- Imagination Library
- Parent Honorariums
- Provisions to Eliminate Barriers (e.g. transportation costs, childbirth preparation class incentive items, childcare costs, etc.)

## Commitment to Workgroups

The members of the Great Start Collaborative must be committed to the early childhood workgroups. The commitment to the workgroups includes the time and resources that can be committed by each partner agency, organization or business. The early childhood workgroups offer:

- Funding to support childbirth preparation class incentive items
- Coordination of community-wide family events
- Materials for community-wide family events
- Promotion of health and wellness initiatives, such as safe sleep
- And more!

## Additional Grant Funding

In order to build a strong, quality early childhood system in Clare-Gladwin, the Great Start Collaborative is committed to research and securing grant funding for our efforts. These efforts and potential funding sources include:

**Imagination Library** - *United Way of Clare and Gladwin Counties, Consumer's Energy Foundation*

**Childbirth Preparation Class Incentive Items** - *MidMichigan Health*

**Teen Parent Program Homevisiting Partnership with Early Head Start** - *Section 32p(4) Funds identified for homevisiting*

## Clare-Gladwin Great Start Collaborative

*Children are safe, healthy, happy, and ready to succeed in school and in life.*



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