

Midland County Family Activity Guide



Spring 2017





TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	01
HEALTHY FAMILIES	02
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL	03
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	04
MATH	05
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE ARTS ..	06
EVENT CALENDAR.....	07

Hello Families!

Happy Spring Midland families! You've probably noticed your child has already learned so much this year. This guide provides some quick tips for learning at home and fun FREE Midland County events. In this guide you will find:



Kindergarten Readiness It is important in the early years to prepare children for Kindergarten. Kindergarten Readiness is the result of a partnership between teachers, community partners, and parents. Each page of this guide contains a checklist for the skills we are building to help your child prepare for kindergarten and beyond.



Home Connection A child's family is their first teacher. Families are busy, and preparing for kindergarten can be overwhelming. Each box labeled "home connection" has free, easy, and fun ideas that fit into your daily routine. Have fun learning while playing "I Spy" in the car, pretending to be a "clean up robot" or making a healthy snack together.



Community Connection Have you ever heard the African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child?" Midland County certainly understands that philosophy. In the bottom right hand corner of each page, you'll find FREE and low cost community activities and resources to help your child grow. Additionally, a complete list of this season's family fun activities is on page 7. Research shows children who participate in community events have higher achievement and school success. Have fun learning and explore all of the exciting resources Midland has to offer!



Home Connection

Big Body Play

Big body play is the very physical, vigorous, boisterous, and sometimes bone-jarring play style many children love and crave. Big body play is...

- When a child throws herself onto a sofa.
- When children wrestle.
- When friends jump off climbing equipment.
- When friends chase each other as they laugh, or race to a finish line.

This play can make adults nervous, but it's very important. The best things adults can do is supervise this play carefully and coach their child on what is safe. Below are a few of many benefits of big body play:

- Social skills are reading body language--while wrestling or playing tag children learn that laughing means "keep going" or if a friend holds up a hand it means "stop."
- Supports child's cardiovascular health
- Promotes brain connections that are essential for focus and learning

How you can support big body play:

- Supervise play closely. If your child needs help telling a playmate to stop or to do something in a different way, you'll be there to help.
- Talk with your child and set some ground rules for big body play. For example, show your child safe spaces to tumble and wrestle. Make a rule about how long each wrestling bout can last before time is called. You might also have a rule about all wrestling moves being between shoulders and waists, and not around necks or heads.

Kindergarten

Checklist



Healthy Families



- Stand on one foot for at least 8 seconds
- Do a somersault and hop
- Walk up and down stairs without help
- Walk forward and backwards easily
- Pedal a tricycle
- Copy a triangle, circle, square, and other shapes
- Stack 10 or more blocks
- Use a fork and spoon
- Dress and undress, brush teeth, and take care of other personal needs without much help

Cooking Matters Recipe: Fruit Tarts

Serves 6 - 1 tart per serving

- 6 slices whole wheat sandwich bread
- 4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons skim milk
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups cut-up fresh fruit



1. IN ADVANCE, Remove cream cheese from refrigerator and allow to warm to room temperature on counter top.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F.
3. Slice crust off bread. Flatten with a rolling pin or the bottom of a heavy skillet to about 1/8-inch thick. Place on a baking sheet and bake until crisp, about 10 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes.
4. While the bread is baking, in a small bowl, mix together cream cheese and milk with a fork until smooth. Stir in honey and vanilla.
5. Spread a generous Tablespoon of cream cheese mixture on each piece of cooled bread. Arrange about 1/3 cup of fruit on top of each tart.

MSU Extensions: Cooking Matters



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

Cooking matters is a free 6 week class that offer information on healthy snacks, shopping smart, planning balanced meals, and eating out

- Taught by a chef and nutritionist
- FREE GROCERIES-Make these recipes at home!
- FREE COOKBOOK

For information on current Cooking Matters classes, please visit greatstartmidland.org or visit the Midland County Great Start Collaborative Facebook page.

Get Out and Explore!

Chippewa Nature Center offers many FREE family events. Get out and enjoy some fun activities while exploring Midland! See page 7 for a full list of details.





Home Connection

Conscious Discipline:

How Can I Say, "No" and be heard?

Focus on what to do: When you are upset, you are always focused on what you don't want. Use active calming techniques to regain your composure as necessary, and then shift your focus away from what's wrong. Instead, focus on what you want to have happen. Have you ever heard an Olympic athlete visualize "not losing?" No! They focus on diving their cleanest dive or running their fastest race in order to achieve their goal. You must do the same with your goal is to paint a picture with your words and gestures of exactly what you want the child to do.

"Don't you dare touch anything in this store" focuses on what you don't want (don't touch). Pivot and reframe it in the positive, "Keep your hands in your pockets." All assertive commands give usable information. "Don't ____" is not usable information because it doesn't tell what to do. "Don't hit your brother" becomes: "When you want your brother to move say, "move please." An assertive approach says, "Do this," in a clear and respectful manner with a voice of no doubt. With children, follow these steps to deliver an assertive command:

Be Assertive: An assertive approach says, "Do this," in a clear and respectful manner with a voice of no doubt. With children, follow these steps to deliver an assertive command:

1. Establish eye contact by approaching the child, getting down on his/her level and moving closer until s/he notices you. For easily distracted children, you may need to get as close as six inches.
2. Verbally tell the child what you want him/her to do. State your expectations clearly and simply. Be certain that the statement is formulated in the positive... focus on what you want them to do and paint a clear picture with your words. "Hold my hand so you are safe when we cross the street." "Give me the scissors. They are sharp and could cut you." "Use a quiet voice while we are in the museum." "Pick up the markers and put them in the shoe box."
3. Give visual, auditory and tactile cues as often as possible. Demonstrate a gentle touch, gesture in the direction you wish the child to move, practice what a soft voice sounds like, etc.
4. Send the nonverbal message "just do it" with the tone of your voice and with your nonverbal stance as you give the command. If your nonverbal cues are passive, your child may easily refuse. If your nonverbal cues are aggressive, your child will resist in self-defense. When nonverbal and verbal communication both say, "Just do it," you let the child know your command has meaning.
5. Celebrate your child's success. The minute the child begins to show any degree of compliance, jump in with praise. Even if s/he wasn't really going to comply, s/he likely will comply once you begin to praise him/her. "Good for you," "You did it," and "way to go" followed by a description of the child's action are great ways to celebrate them without judging. "Way to go! You're reaching for my hand so we can cross the street safely!"
6. If your child chooses not to comply, repeat the request and say, "I'm going to show you what to do." Lead the child gently and instructively in completing the request. Say, "I'm going to show you how to cross the street safely" and take the child's hand in yours.

To register for upcoming Conscious Discipline classes please visit www.greatstartmidland.org or visit the Midland County Great Start Collaborative Facebook page.

Kindergarten

Checklist



Social Emotional



- Controls strong emotions in an appropriate manner most of the time
- Manages classroom rules, routines, and transitions with occasional reminders
- Engages with familiar adults as resources, to share ideas, and interests
- Identifies basic emotions of others and their causes accurately
- Initiates, joins in, and sustains positive interactions with a small group of 2-3 children
- Initiates the sharing of materials in the classroom and outdoors
- Suggests solutions to social problems

Your Community

Community events are fun and exciting opportunities for children to learn, make friends, and practice the social-skills they're working to develop at home and school. Check out some of the free upcoming events below and page 7 for a full list of events.

3/11/17 Families in Nature: Season of Syrup
Chippewa Nature Center

4/22/17 12:00PM-4:00PM Story Day Downtown Midland
Local businesses will create spaces in their shops to provide free dramatic readings of children's books.

(Apr-Oct) Midland Area Farmer's Market Stroll through the Farmers Market and check out free performances and demonstrations by local artists and vendors.





Home Connection

Fall In Love with Reading By Yi-Chan Lan

There are many ways to enjoy reading with your child. Here are a few ways to make reading a fun part of your everyday life.

1. Develop family reading routines and rituals

Find a regular time of day when you can dedicate story time into your day. You can read in the morning, after school, or before bedtime! Making story time a cozy routine makes reading an essential and pleasant activity.

2. Read what interests your child

The nutrition facts on the milk box, newspapers, recipes, maps, and game instructions all make great reading material if your child is interested.

3. Try books that reflect your daily experiences

Making connections to topics you read about is a fun way to keep children engaged. For example, you can read Dr. Seuss's *In a People House* and then ask your child if they see any similar items, how they work, or even create a new book based on what's inside your own home.

4. Let your child select books

When you visit the library, let your child select books. Try both fiction and informational books, and ask the librarian for recommendations based on your child's interests.

5. Reread your child's favorites

It's common for young children to request the same book again and again. Re-reading familiar stories offers children a chance to absorb information over time and lets them master the whole story.

6. Encourage storytelling

Encourage your child to tell you a story from time to time or to retell a story after you've read it several times. Don't feel the need to correct how she's telling the story. Let her enjoy the experience of storytelling.

7. Have fun while reading

- ~ Act out the story while reading by using facial expressions, gestures, body movements, and voices to make the story come to life.
- ~ Make the story relevant to your child's life by adapting the story to include their name, a friend's name, or your pet's name. For example, surprise your child by saying "Olivia, Olivia, what do you see?" when you read Eric Carle's *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*
- ~ Find props to go along with favorite stories and offering them to your child to use in her play.

8. Change your setting!

It can be fun to read books in different places in and around your home. Try reading Eric Carle's *The Very Lonely Firefly* in a dark room with a flashlight. I've read *The Lamb and the Butterfly* (written by Arnold Sundgaard, illustrated by Eric Carle) to a group of four-year-olds on the grass, and when they saw a butterfly fly by, they associated it with the one in the story! You can even ask your child where she wants to read a particular story.

Kindergarten Checklist



Language and Literacy



- Follows directions of two or more steps (ex. put your food in the trash and rinse off your plate)
- Uses complete 4-6 word sentences
- Tells stories about places and past events in a logical order that includes major details
- Matches beginning sounds of some words
- Recognizes name and as many as 10 letters
- Produces correct sound for 10-20 letters
- Orients book correctly, turns pages from front to back, recognizes familiar books by their cover
- Identifies story-related problems, events, and resolutions during conversations with an adult
- Pretends to read using some of the language from the text, describes action across pages using pictures
- Writes strings of letters, not necessarily words

Adapted from Teaching Strategies Gold

Free Story Time!

Check out page 7 for more details on the events listed below:

Chippewa Nature Center - Story Hour
Thursdays 9:30AM & 11:00AM &
Saturdays 9:30AM

Barnes and Noble @ Midland Mall - Story Time
Every Saturday @11:00AM

Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
Little Listeners, Michigan Reads: Story Time, and more!



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a nonprofit organization that promotes early childhood literacy by giving free age-appropriate books to children through age 5.

To enroll your child in Midland County Imagination Library or for more information please call Christine Rutledge at 989-492-7702 ext. 1101.



Home Connection

Math is Everywhere!



At the Park

Simply count the cracks in the sidewalk while you on a walk, or turn your nature observations into simple math problems. Try something like this:

"I see two ducks on this side of the pond and three ducks on this side of the pond, how many ducks are there all together?" and count the ducks along with your child.



Grocery Store

Have your child count all of the blue tiles as you walk through the grocery store aisles. Children love to help pick out produce. Try involving your child, a conversation might go something like this:

Child asks, "Can we get apples?"

Parent: "How many should we get?"

Child "A hundred!"

Parent: "Wow, that's a lot of apples! How many do we need so Mommy, Daddy, your sister, and you can have one?" Child proceeds to think, count, and problem solve as the parent continues to prompt him to use math to decide how many apples to purchase.



In Your Cupboard

Take out a few cans of food of different sizes from the cupboard. Talk about the shape of the whole can (they are cylinders) and the shape of the top and bottom of the cans (circles). Together with your child, trace each can on a piece of paper. Shuffle the papers and help your child match the cans to the traced circles.

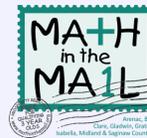
Kindergarten

⊕ Checklist ¹²₃

Math

- Identifies numbers to 10 by name and connects each number to an object when counting
- Counts groups of 6-10 objects and labels which groups have less, more, or the same number of objects
- Uses and responds appropriately to positional words indicating location, direction, and distance (under, over, between, close, far, behind, in front, etc.)
- Identifies 2 and 3 dimensional shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle) and describes them (round, has four sides, has 3 corners, etc.)
- Compares and orders a small set of objects according to size, length, weight; knows usual sequence of basic daily events
- Uses numbers to compare, knows the purpose of standard measuring tools
- Extends and creates simple repeating patterns

Adapted from Teaching Strategies Gold



Math in the Mail

Math in the Mail is FREE to families who qualify*, and focuses on developing math skills in three-year-olds by providing tools needed for families. Math in the Mail packages include:

- Materials designed for hands on play
- A book
- Ideas for hands-on activities using the provided materials
- Ideas for extension activities using items found in any home
- "Tools for Talking", a guide on how to use the materials provided

To enroll in Math in the Mail:

- Visit www.mathinthemail.org
- Call (989)737-9532 to enroll over the phone
- Ask home visiting partners, Head Start, and GSRP Preschool teachers and staff for help

**If families do not meet eligibility requirements to receive Math in the Mail for free, they may subscribe for a fee.*



Home Connection

The Lending Library Spring Spotlight



"LIFE CYCLES 1"

As the weather continues to warm up and spring gets into full swing, so do the opportunities to explore nature and observe all the signs of life that are beginning. Greens sprout from the earth, baby chicks hatch, butterflies emerge from their cocoons, and tadpoles abound in ponds and vernal pools.

The "Life Cycles 1" tub from the Lending Library is a great way to reinforce learning of these concepts and connect the happenings of this season at home.



Kindergarten

Checklist

Science, Technology, Art

- Explores dance and movement concepts
- Explores the visual arts
- Explores drama through actions and language
- Demonstrates knowledge of characteristics of living things (pretends to feed a baby doll or animal, puts baby doll to sleep, etc.)
- Understands physical properties of objects (heavy, light, rough, smooth)
- Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment (seasons, weather, day and night)
- Demonstrates scientific inquiry skills (observing, planning, predicting, sharing ideas about what happened, using tools such as magnifying glasses, rulers, scales to make observations)

Explore Science and the Arts!

Midland has many FREE opportunities for you and your child to explore science and the arts. Check out some of the events happening this spring at Dow Gardens, the library, and Chippewa Nature Center! (See page 7 for a full list and details.)

Butterflies In Bloom

(Free for 5 and under, kids 6-17 \$1.00)

Dow Gardens

1809 Eastman Avenue, Midland, MI 48640

Lego at the Library (ages 4+)

Grace A. Dow Memorial Library

1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

An Afternoon @ the Sugar House

Chippewa Nature Center

400 S Badour Rd, Midland, MI 48640

Canvas & Cupcakes (ages 5 - 1st grade)

Grace A. Dow Memorial Library

1710 W St. Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640



For more about the Lending Library and all the educational materials they have to offer, contact the Central Resource Center at (989) 492-7102.

Free & Low Cost Community Events

March

3/3/17-4/16/17 Butterflies In Bloom
(Free for 5 and under, kids 6-17 \$1.00)
Dow Gardens
1809 Eastman Avenue, Midland, MI 48640

Wednesdays, March 15, 22, & 29 @ 9:45AM
OR Thursdays, March 16, 23, & 30 @ 9:45AM
"Little Listeners", ages 2-3 (3 week session)*
Grace A Dow Memorial Library
***Registration Required: (989) 837-3466**

WEDNESDAYS & SATURDAYS @ 11:00AM & MONDAYS @ 7PM, Barnes & Noble Story Time
Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall
6800 Eastman Ave, Midland, MI 48642

MONDAYS, March 13, 20, & 27 @ 7:00PM
Family Fun Nights
Grace A Dow Memorial Library
1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

THURSDAYS in March, Wiggle Worm, \$2/child 10:30AM-12:00PM (free play 0-5 years)
The Loft @ Ashman Plaza
713 Ashman St, Midland, MI 48640

SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS in March 1:30-4:30PM An Afternoon @ The Sugar House
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

3/10/17 Wee Stroll (6mos-2yrs w/ adult) 9:30AM-10:30AM
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

3/11/17 1:00PM-2:00PM
Families In Nature: The Season of Syrup
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

3/16/17 9:30AM & 11:00AM (ages 3-5 w/ adult)
Story Hour: Maple Trees
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

3/29/17 MICHIGAN READS! Story Time 2:00PM (families w/ children age 2-7)
Grace A Dow Memorial Library
1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

April

4/1/17 9:30AM Story Hour: A Wood Frog's Life (ages 3-5 w/ adult)
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

4/1/17-10:30AM-12:00PM
Lego at the Library (ages 4+)
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

3/3/17-4/16/17 Butterflies In Bloom
(Free for 5 and under, kids 6-17 \$1.00)
Dow Gardens
1809 Eastman Avenue, Midland, MI 48640

4/1/17-4/9/17 Spring Break Exploration Days Mon-Sat 8AM-5PM, Sunday 12PM-5PM
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

THURSDAYS in April, Wiggle Worm, \$2/child 10:30AM-12:00PM (free play 0-5 years)
The Loft @ Ashman Plaza
713 Ashman St, Midland, MI 48640

Apr 4, 6, 11, 18, 20 & 25 1:00PM-2:00PM
Eat Healthy, Be Active!
FREE Nutrition Education Program
Midland MSU-E office (3rd floor County building)
220 W Ellsworth St, Midland, MI 48640
Call to register: Melissa Pavlik 989-832-6713

4/8/17 1:00PM-2:00PM
Families in Nature: Vernal Pools
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

THURSDAYS 4/13 & 4/20, 6:00PM-7:30PM
Spring Frogs
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

4/18/17 9:45AM, 10:15AM, 10:45AM, & 11:15AM
Parachute Play for Toddlers (walking-24mos)*
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
***Registration Required (989) 837-3466**

4/18/17 1:00PM Parachute Play for Babies (babies not yet walking)
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

4/20/17 9:30AM & 11:00AM (ages 3-5 w/ adult)
Story Hour: A Wood Frog's Life
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

4/21/17 6:00PM-8:00PM Underground Disco (ages 6 mos-7yrs; older sibs welcome)
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

4/22/17 10:00AM-4:00PM Experience Earth Day!
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

4/22/17 12:00PM-4:00PM
Story Day Downtown Midland
Local businesses will create spaces in their shops to provide free dramatic readings of children's books.

4/25/17 4:15PM-5:00PM OR 6:30PM-7:15PM
Canvas & Cupcakes (ages 5-1st grade)*
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
***Registration Required (989) 837-3466**

May

WEDNESDAYS & SATURDAYS @ 11:00AM & MONDAYS @ 7PM, Barnes & Noble Story Time
Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall
6800 Eastman Ave, Midland, MI 48642

THURSDAYS in April, Wiggle Worm, \$2/child 10:30AM-12:00PM (free play 0-5 years)
The Loft @ Ashman Plaza
713 Ashman St, Midland, MI 48640

5/4/17 9:30AM & 11:00AM (ages 3-5 w/ adult) & 5/6/17 9:30AM
Story Hour: An Egg is Quiet
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640 4

5/4/17 FREE admission 3:00PM-7:00PM
Great Start Day @ The Saginaw Zoo
1730 S Washington Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48601

5/6/17-10:30AM-12:00PM
Lego at the Library (ages 4+)
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland, MI 48640

5/6/17 Discovering Vernal Pools 1:00PM-2:30PM
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

5/7/17 Spring Wildflower Walk 2:00PM-3:00PM
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

5/12/17 Wee Stroll (6mos-2yrs w/ adult) 9:30AM-10:30AM
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

5/13/17 Families in Nature: Birds on the Move 1:00PM-2:00PM
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

5/18/17 9:30AM & 11:00AM (ages 3-5 w/ adult)
Story Hour: Birds Build Nests
Chippewa Nature Center
400 S Badour Rd Midland, MI 48640

These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Education and Great Start Parent Coalition