

# Midland County Family Activity Guide



Holiday 2018





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Hello Families!

Season's Greetings! 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 or low cost 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 exploring all of the exciting resources Midland has to offer!



# Home Connection

## Winter is a Great Time to Play Outside!

Did you know your preschooler needs at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day? Running through the snow, building snowmen, climbing snow piles, and exploring what nature has to offer are great ways to give your child the physical activity they need to grow into happy and healthy adults. Aside from physical activity, there are other benefits too! Being outdoors boosts your child's immune system, stimulates their imagination, promotes problem-solving and provides essential Vitamin D that promotes memory, mood, and healthy energy levels.



### What about wind chill?

According to [www.ahealthiermichigan.org](http://www.ahealthiermichigan.org) as a rule of thumb, use the wind-chill as the best judge if it's too cold to play outside. In general, when the wind-chill is 32 degrees and above, it's safe to be outside. In temperatures 13 degrees to 31 degrees, indoor breaks should happen every 20-30 minutes. For wind-chills of 13 degrees and below, you should move activities indoors and outside of the cold as frostbite can set in very quickly.

# 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:

#### White Bean Basil Chicken Chili

Serves 6, 1 1/2 cups per serving

- |                              |                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 lb boneless chicken pieces | 2 (15½-oz) cans great northern beans |
| 1 medium onion               | 2 Tablespoons canola oil             |
| 2 cloves garlic              | 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth      |
| 1 medium tomato              | 1½ teaspoons chili powder            |
| 1 large lime                 | 1½ teaspoons ground cumin            |
| ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves  | ½ teaspoon dried oregano             |
| 1 Tablespoon fresh basil     | ¼ teaspoon each salt & pepper        |

#### Instructions:

--1-- Remove any skin and excess fat from chicken pieces. Cut chicken into ½-inch cubes. --2-- Rinse, peel, and finely chop onion. Peel and mince garlic. --3-- Rinse tomato. Remove core and seeds. Chop. --4-- Rinse lime. Cut in half. In a small bowl, squeeze juice from one half. Discard seeds. --5-- Rinse and chop cilantro and basil. --6-- In a colander, drain and rinse beans. --7-- In a large pot over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion and garlic. Cook until onion is tender, about 5 minutes. If onion or garlic start to brown, lower heat. --8-- Add chicken, beans, broth, spices, tomato, lime juice, basil, and cilantro. Stir. --9-- Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

#### Chef Notes:

- Use any canned beans you like in place of great northern beans.
- Serve over a bed of cooked greens like spinach, kale, or chard. Or, serve over brown rice.
- For a different flavor, use Thai basil instead of regular basil.
- Add red pepper flakes for extra spice

### 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**

[www.greatstartmidland.org](http://www.greatstartmidland.org)  
or visit the Midland County Great Start Collaborative Facebook page.

## Get Out and Explore!

Midland has many fun places to explore and things to do this holiday season! For more details on these and other FREE events, see page 7:

**Harry Potter Event @ Barnes & Noble**  
SAT 11/17 @ 2PM, Midland Mall

**Holly Jolly Days @ Downtown Midland**  
December 1 & 2, 8 & 9, Noon-4PM

**Families in Nature: Nature Detectives**  
SAT 12/8 2:00PM-3:00PM





# Home Connection

## Are you saying, "No!" to your children and not being HEARD?

Then it's time to learn how to give an assertive command! In its simplest terms, saying "no" and being heard is called "assertiveness." It is a key skill adults and children need to have healthy relationships. Assertive commands focus on what you want to have happen, give clear information about what to do, and are given in a tone of voice that says "just do it." Follow these Conscious Discipline Tips for Giving Assertive Commands and start being heard:

### 1. Focus on what you want your child TO DO.

When you are upset, you are always focused on what you don't want. Use active calming techniques to regain your composure and focus on what you want to have happen. Here are some don'ts turned to do's:

*"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."**

*"Don't hit your brother"* focuses on what you don't want (hitting).

**Pivot and reframe it in the positive, "When you want your brother to move say, 'move please'."**

### 2. Give the command assertively

There are three tones of voice we use when we communicate: passive, aggressive and assertive. Our goal is to be assertive.

#### Examples:

Passive: Are you almost ready to leave the park?

Aggressive: You better be ready to leave the park soon and don't make me remind you again.

**Assertive: We are leaving the park in five minutes. Go do your favorite thing one last time and meet me back at this tree.**

### 3. Take these actions when delivering an assertive command:

- **Establish eye contact** by approaching the child, getting down on his/her level and moving closer until he/she notices you
- **Give visual, auditory and tactile cues as often as possible.** Examples are: demonstrate a gentle touch, gesture in the direction you wish the child to move, practice what a soft voice sounds like, etc.
- **Send the nonverbal message "just do it"** with the tone of your voice and with your nonverbal stance as you give the command.
- **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!"
- **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.

**DID YOU KNOW....we offer FREE Conscious Discipline classes for parents? For current classes visit [www.greatstartmidland.org](http://www.greatstartmidland.org) to learn more.**

# 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

Adapted from Teaching Strategies Gold

## 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.

#### Winter Solstice Celebration

**SAT 12/22 6:00PM-8:00PM**

Chippewa Nature Center

#### Dow Gardens Christmas Walk

**THU-SAT 12/6-12/8, & FRI/SAT 12/14 & 12/15**

Dow Gardens, 1809 Eastman Ave, Midland

#### Little Midland, indoor play city

**(0-6 years) \$4/child, under 1yr free**

The Loft @ Ashman Plaza





# Home Connection

The Lending Library

## Holiday Spotlight

### THINGS THAT RHYME

The Lending Library has many activity bins designed feed young minds and prepare them for Kindergarten and beyond. In this edition we are highlighting the "Things That Rhyme" tub.

This tub includes many rhyming activities and learning games like Rhyming Bingo, Read & Rhyme Long Vowels and Short Vowels games. Plus, play games like Memory Match and Go Fish using the set of Picture Rhyming cards. Rhyming games like these will increase your child's vocabulary, letter sound recognition, literacy and problem solving skills.

Make rhyming fun and engaging! Consider checking out a Lending Library activity bin this season and keep the learning happening through the rest of the year!



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

# 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

## Story Time and Reading Activities

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

**Chippewa Nature Center - Story Hour**  
1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month  
9:30AM & 11:00AM

**Barnes and Noble @ Midland Mall - Story Time**  
Mondays @ 7:00PM and Wednesdays @ 11:00AM  
Saturdays @ 11:00AM



## 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 Madison Schwind at 989-492-7702 ext. 1101.



# Home Connection

## Teaching Symmetry with LEGO bricks

This hands-on math activity is perfect for teaching symmetry to preschoolers and young kids. It makes learning symmetry fun and playful!

### Materials

#### Needed:

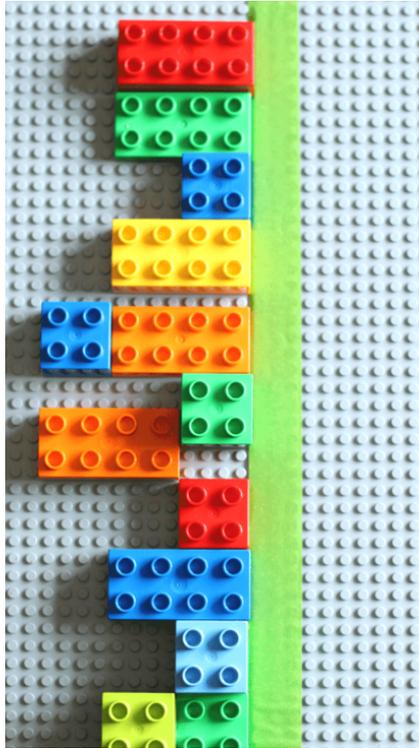
- LEGO Duplo Bricks
- Painter's Tape
- LEGO baseplate (optional)

#### Set Up:

1. Place a piece of tape down the middle of a LEGO baseplate or your work surface.

2. Place LEGO bricks on one side of the tape line and leave the other side blank.

*\*Tip:* Make sure you have a matching piece for every one you use.



#### Directions:

Show your child the LEGO grid you've set up and explain how to mirror copy the grid onto the other side of the tape. Help them with the first two or three LEGO bricks until they pick up on the idea of the game.



Once your child is able to recreate simple symmetrical patterns easily, try it again making the design harder. Add more bricks or stack blocks of different colors on top of each other.

Adapted from: [www.funlearningforkids.com](http://www.funlearningforkids.com)

# Kindergarten

## ⊕ Checklist 1 2 3

### 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](http://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.*

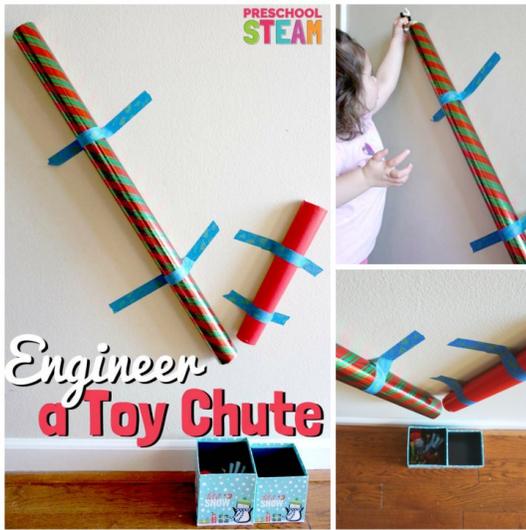


## Home Connection

# Engineer a Toy Chute!

## A Preschool STEM activity

Use leftover wrapping paper rolls and boxes or gift bags to help your child build and design their own toy chute this holiday break. This simple and low prep preschool stem activity will help engage your young learner as they discover, experiment and problem solve to find the best way to build a toy chute.



### Materials:

**Wrapping paper tubes, Painter's tape, a variety of small size toys, Small Gift Box**

### Step 1: Build and Design your toy chute.

**This first step is optional but does make it fun!**

**Wrap empty cardboard tubes with leftover wrapping paper.**

### Step 2: Tape your cardboard tubes to a wall using painter's tape (regular tape will pull the paint off your walls).

### Step 3: Test your chute!

**What toys fit in your chute? Experiment with different size toys to see which toys fit in the chute and slide the fastest. Try repositioning your cardboard tubes. Do the toys slide faster or slower?**

### Step 4: Place a small gift box at the bottom of your toy chute.

**How fast can you fill the gift box with toys? Use a stop-watch or timer to see how fast your child can fill the box with toys using their chute.**

# 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 fall! (See page 7 for a full list and details.)

### LEGO @ the Library

#### Grace A. Dow Memorial Library

Drop by the Story Room to create a masterpiece with our collection of LEGO bricks and mini-figures! They'll be DUPLOs for our littlest builders too! No registration is necessary.

### Tuba Christmas, Downtown Midland

Join the Midland Concert Band for a FREE Christmas concert in the H Hotel courtyard, during downtown Midland's Holly Jolly Days.

### Decorate a Tree for Wildlife

#### Chippewa Nature Center

Make ornaments to hang outside that birds, squirrels and other animals will enjoy eating this winter.

# Free & Low Cost Community Events

## November

### Barnes & Noble STORY TIME

**Mondays @ 7PM**

**Wednesdays @ 11AM**

Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall

### Little Midland, Indoor play city (ages 0-6 years)

**\$4/child, under 1yr free**

**Winter Hours – M/TH:10:30AM-12:30PM,**

**T: 4:30PM-6:30PM, SAT hours vary 2x/month**

Kid-sized city, giant-sized imagination! Visit

Facebook: Little Midland for more information

The Loft @ Ashman Plaza 713 Ashman St, Midland

### LEGO @ the Library (all ages)

**SAT 11/17 10:30AM-12:00PM**

Drop by the Story Room to create a masterpiece with our collection of LEGO bricks and mini-figures!

They'll be DUPLOs for our littlest builders too! No registration is necessary.

Dow Library 1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland

### Explore the Magic of Harry Potter Event

**SAT 11/17/18 @ 2:00PM**

Live the adventure of Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts! Join us for activities, games, LEGO building, special offers, and giveaways!

Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall

### Great Nature Race: Going Geocaching

**SAT 11/17 10:00AM-2:00PM (FREE, all ages)**

Geocaches are small containers hidden in nature that can be found using GPS units and the coordinates that we provide you. Join the hunt as you work at your own pace to conquer as many of the geocache series as you desire!

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd, Midland

### A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving Feast & Movie

**SUN 11/18 2:00PM-3:00PM (All ages)**

Join us for a fun afternoon watching the classic A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving. Snack on a delicious and traditional Charlie Brown Thanksgiving meal of popcorn, toast, and pretzels.

Dow Library 1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland

### Turkey Talk & Walk

**SUN 11/18 1:00PM-2:00PM (FREE, all ages)**

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, so we'll be talking everything turkey! Join CNC staff to look for wild turkeys, make turkey sounds and learn about these unique birds.

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd, Midland

### LEGO WeDo FOR TWO\*

**MON 11/19 (ages 5-8 w/ adult caregiver)**

**4:30-5:15PM OR 6:00-6:45PM**

Work together with a parent, grandparent, or adult caregiver to build a Lego model that uses drag-and-drop programming to move, make sounds, and light up! Ignite your child's curiosity while enhancing skills in science, engineering, technology, and coding.

**\*Registration is required.**

Dow Library 1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland

### Fall Exploration Days

**FRI-SUN 11/23-11/25 Open during regular**

**Visitor Center hours (all ages, under 18 w/ adult)**

Enjoy your break from school while exploring the wonders of nature in Michigan! This indoor program includes a variety of self-guided, hands-on exploration stations such as experiments, fun facts, crafts and scavenger hunts.

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd, Midland

### Mickey Mouse Goes Christmas Shopping:

**Storytime & Activities**

**SAT 11/24/18 @ 11:00AM**

Join us for Storytime and get a coupon from our Café for a grilled cheese sandwich with milk or juice for \$4! Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall

## December

### How to Catch a Snowman: Storytime & Activities

**SAT 12/1/18 @ 11:00AM** Join us for Storytime and

get a coupon from our Café for a grilled cheese sandwich with milk or juice for \$4!

Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall

### Holly Jolly Days, Downtown Midland

**TWO WEEKENDS! SAT/SUN 12/1 & 12/2**

**SAT/SUN 12/8 & 12/9 12:00PM-4:00PM**

FREE horse drawn carriage rides, festive activities, and FREE hot chocolate at participating locations. See [www.downtownmidland.com](http://www.downtownmidland.com) for more details.

### Story Hour: One Wolf Howls (ages 3-5 w/ adult)

**THU 12/6, 9:30AM & 11:00AM**

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### Dow Gardens Christmas Walk (FREE admission)

**THU-SAT 12/6-12/8, 5:00PM-7:30PM**

**FRI/SAT 12/14\* & 12/15\*, 5:00PM-7:30PM**

Stroll a gently-illuminated pathway, listen to choirs singing, meet Santa's reindeer, and sip cocoa in the historic barn. On Dec 8th ONLY, view a special display of fireworks celebrating our 35th annual event (fireworks begin at 7:00PM.)

**\*no choirs on these dates**

Dow Gardens, 1809 Eastman Ave, Midland

### The Polar Express: Storytime & Activities

**FRI 12/7/18 @ 7:00PM**

Free hot chocolate and a cookie from our Café, and don't forget to wear your favorite cozy pajamas! Barnes and Noble at Midland Mall

### Tuba Christmas, Downtown Midland

**SAT 12/8 2:00PM (all ages)**

Join the Midland Concert Band for a FREE Christmas concert in the H Hotel courtyard. See [www.downtownmidland.com](http://www.downtownmidland.com) for more information.

### LEGO @ the Library (all ages)

**SAT 11/17 10:30AM-12:00PM**

Drop by the Story Room to create a masterpiece with our collection of LEGO bricks and mini-figures! Dow Library 1710 W St Andrews Rd, Midland

### Families in Nature: Nature Detectives

**SAT 12/8 2:00PM-3:00PM (all ages)**

Calling all nature detectives! CNC has a mystery and we need your help to solve it! Test your observation skills as we venture out in search of subtle clues left behind by creatures that call the Nature Center home.

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### Decorate a Tree for Wildlife

**SUN 12/9, 2:00PM-3:00PM, (all ages)**

Make ornaments to hang outside that birds, squirrels and other animals will enjoy eating this winter. We'll string popcorn and fruits for garlands and create suet cakes to decorate a tree in the Wildlife Viewing Area. You can make some decorations to take home too!

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### Holiday at the Homestead

**WED 12/12, 6:00PM-7:30PM, (all ages)**

Join CNC staff for a lamp-lit evening at the Homestead cabin for 19th century holiday fun! Help decorate the cabin, do some holiday chores and make a holiday ornament to take home.

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### Winter Exploration Days, DEC 19th – JAN 2nd

**(all ages, under 18 w/ adult)**

**MON-SAT 8:00AM-5:00PM**

**SUN & holidays 12:00PM-5:00PM**

**(closed Christmas Eve & Day and New Year's Eve & Day)** This indoor program includes a variety of self-guided, hands-on exploration stations during your school break. Experiments, fun facts, crafts, scavenger hunts and more! Each day is the same, but feel free to come back again and again!

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### Story Hour: The Shortest Day (ages 3-5 w/ adult)

**THU 12/20, 9:30AM & 11:00AM**

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

**SAT 12/22 6:00PM-8:00PM, (all ages)**

Take part in earth-friendly traditions as you roll a beeswax candle and make a small evergreen wreath to take home. Learn how seasons change through interactive solstice stories and Winter Exploration Station activities.

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

### Nature's New Years Eve MON 12/31, 6:30PM-8:00PM, (all ages, under 18 w/ adult)

Venture out for some family fun as we watch for nocturnal animals looking for a late night snack, play games, roast marshmallows for s'mores and enjoy a light snack of our own!

Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S Badour Rd Midland

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