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Upcoming Events

April 25 12pm	Parent Meeting
May 18 10a-4p MCC	MayFest
May 30 6:30pm	Parent's Night Out
June 27 12pm United Way	Parent Meeting

Muskegon Parents Quarterly Newsletter

www.greatstartmuskegon.org

What a Show!

The night of February 28, Muskegon Parents for a Great Start and the Muskegon Area District Library partnered to welcome over 70 parents and children to enjoy the musings of puppeteer and entertainer, Kevin Kammeraad. Kevin engaged the children in reading, dancing, singing and having a good time with their parents.

Allowing children to express themselves through moving their bodies, using their voices and reading are integral to their development and sense of self. Muskegon Parents for a Great Start loves to provide families time to

come together and simply enjoy each other's company, eating a meal and being entertained.

"Molly Dixon, one of our Muskegon Core Parents, suggested presenting Kevin's show to the group when we met for our "Steer the Year" meeting in August. If becoming involved with event planning sounds interesting to you, please contact Miss Cathy at ccurtis@ccwestmi.org or 231-726-1224



MEMBER SHOUT OUT

Can we get a round of applause? For Ms. Chrissy Vines and her lovely daughter for helping us out at the show with chair set up and tear down!! Our events would not be possible without the help of our hard-working core parents!

Easter Tip of the Month

You'll spend hours slaving in the kitchen making a scrumptious Easter brunch—and get about two bites down before the kids start whining to hunt for Easter eggs. Have your Easter brunch outside (weather permitting)—that way, when the kids have finished their food, they can get up and look for eggs while you linger over strawberry shortcake. Hide a bunch of extra eggs and you might even get to finish a cup of coffee with dessert.

Brewing Happy Children.

Muskegon Parents for a Great Start

Began hosting Muskegon's first ever Parent Cafes in the beginning of February 2013. Parent Cafes are a new and exciting way to get parents together, share our family story and learn from each other about important parenting issues, such as developing emotionally healthy children, growing concrete and social supports in our lives, parental resilience and child development.

Each Cafe comes equipped with family dinner and lim-



ited free child-care, so we can have "adult-parent time" to discuss these issues with fewer interruptions. Parents in attendance, range from parents of older children to younger, from married parents to divorced parents and everything in between. We have all made some new friends, taken some great tips to implement at home and experienced some great "A-HA" moments about our home-lives. If you've ever wished for an outlet for your parental voice, this is the place. Call 231-726-1224 if you are interested in attending.

The Nitty Gritty of Night-time Snacking

- 1) Plan a bedtime snack 45 minutes - 1 hour before bedtime. This way you will make sure the food has time to settle, and there is ample time to brush their teeth!
- 2) A good bedtime snack should have a carbohydrate and a protein. The carbohydrate will help boost serotonin production, and the protein will help keep them full.
- 3) You should keep the snack small. This isn't another meal, just a snack to tide them over and help get them to sleep.
- 4) Only give them a snack if they are hungry, not out of habit.

Bedtime 101

Here are a few things to keep in mind when establishing the elusive routine:

- Include a winding-down period during the half hour before bedtime.
- Stick to a bedtime, alerting your child both half an hour and 10 minutes beforehand.
- Set fixed times for going to bed, waking up, and taking naps.
- Keep consistent playtimes and mealtimes.
- Avoid stimulants, such as caffeine, near bedtime.
- Make the bedroom quiet, cozy, and conducive to sleeping.
- Use the bed only for sleeping — not for playing or watching TV.
- Limit food and drink before bedtime.
- Allow your child to choose which pajamas to wear, which stuffed animal to take to bed, etc.
- Consider playing soft, soothing music.
- Tuck your child into bed snugly for a feeling of security.

Cooking up a Healthy Heart and Home

Muskegon Parents for a Great Start went back to the basics in January. Jane Hart from Michigan State University-Extension program joined us at the Smith Ryerson building in Muskegon to teach us a little about nutrition, home-cooking and involving our children in the kitchen.

We started out in the kitchen, cooking a delicious casserole with ingredients picked out by our parents. We even got to enjoy our meal together,

while we learned more about how we can grow our young children into healthy, well-adjusted adults.

We were also lucky enough to win some fun door prizes and take home a bag of groceries, complete with the ingredients needed to make this recipe for our families at home. We all had a great time getting to know each other and discussing healthy tips we all use in our own homes.



To Find out when your local district's Kindergarten Round-Up is taking place, please call 231-767-8300



Kindergarten Entry Date is Changing!

A new Michigan law changes the eligibility date for children entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2013. To be eligible for Kindergarten entry this fall, a child must be five years old as of November 1st (the prior cut off date was December 1st). In the fall of 2014, the cut off date will be October 1st and moved to

September 1st for the fall 2015.

During this transition period, the legislation allows a parent to choose to enroll their child in Kindergarten if the child turns five on or before December 1st. However, a parent must request in writing that their child be allowed to enter Kindergarten, and the request or "waiver" must be presented

to their school district by June 1st.

In the event a family moves into the district after June 1, the "waiver" must be received by August 1. If a parent is considering enrolling their child into Kindergarten "early," it is advisable one contacts your local Superintendent's office for more details.





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And:



Catholic Charities West Michigan

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Introducing Muskegon Area District Library's new foreign

Language Program, Mango. All you have to do is go to www.Madl.org, click on the Mango link and type in your library card number to use the service.

It is an online language learning system that can help you learn languages like Spanish, French, Japanese, Brazilian, Portuguese, German, Mandarin Chinese, Greek, Italian and more. Choose from 60 languages.



Would you like to contribute to our newsletter?
Contact Cathy Curtis at ccurtis@ccwestmi.org

Make your kids *Book worms*, one book at a time

Be Quiet Mike

by Leslie Patricelli
Age Range 3-7

The beat of Mike's heart drives him to tap, slap and bang all the time. Readers will love keeping the beat with Mike as he drums with rattles, pencils and even bananas. They will also have fun joining with Mike's family, neighbors and friends as, over and over, they tell him to "BE QUIET MIKE!" Amazingly, no matter how many times they try to shush him, this funky little Monkey just has to keep drumming. His passion for rhythm finally drives him to create his very own drum set out of boxes, pots, pans, tape, glue and anything he can find in his room. Finally he has just the right outlet for his energetic tapping. With a "Diggety, Diggety, Zat, Zoom, Crash! Coffee Can, Coffee Can, Pot Can Splash," Mike 's family suddenly appears at his door, and what do you think he hears them say? Rejoice with Mike as he finally hears the response he deserves! Filled with simple acrylic illustrations and rhythmic rhymes, this book will delight both parent and child, time and time again.

by Allison Keessen
Muskegon Area District Library
Children's Program Leader

