

Ingham Impact Episode 25 – Ingham Great Start Collaborative

Wendy Boyce: Ingham Great Start Collaborative is a coalition that works to improve the early childhood system, and support families with young children. And our online pre-school application helps connect families of three and four year olds to pre-school options. We know that when children are prepared to succeed in school at time of school entry, they are better prepared to read proficiently in third grade, and they're more likely to graduate high school and earn a higher income. The Kids Count Report is an annual report that highlights some of these child well-being indicators like: third grade reading proficiency, infant mortality, on-time high school graduation, and poverty; and give a local snapshot and a state snapshot on how families with young children are faring. The Kids Count Report is slated to be released on April 17th, so be on the lookout for that report to see how families in Ingham County are doing. The Ingham Early Learning Calendar is a resource and tool for parents to support them in preparing their children for kindergarten. The calendar has daily activities for families to use with children from birth, all the way up until kindergarten entry. Activities on the calendar are based on seven developmental domains of our Kindergarten Readiness Packet. Numbers have intentionally been left off the calendar; maybe they want to write the numbers in, check off activities as they do them with their children, and maybe they want to leave the calendar blank so that they can use it for years to come, or with children of multiple ages. The calendar also has monthly themes and tips for parents for use with infants, toddlers and preschoolers, based around each of those themes. The Kindergarten readiness packet is a resource for parents that gives them a list of skills, based off of seven developmental domains, being language, literacy, math, social development, emotional development, physical development, and approaches to learning. Children don't need to be able to do everything on the list to start kindergarten, but parents should be aware of these skills, and can be working with their children to accomplish those skills. Through a grant that the Ingham Great Start Family Coalition received, the Kindergarten Readiness Packet and the Ingham Early Learning Calendar have been translated into seven other languages than English; those languages include Arabic, Spanish, Nepali, Vietnamese, Swahili, Somali, and Burmese. Translation of the Ingham Early Learning Calendar is just finishing up, and hard copies should be available soon. The translation of these two resources is really increasing Ingham's capacity to reach all families with important messages about school readiness.

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