



**Cheboygan-Otsego-  
Presque Isle Counties**

# **Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028**



**Cheboygan-Otsego-  
Presque Isle Counties**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Together, fostering the growth of  
healthy communities to support  
children and families.*



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*This program is funded through a grant provided by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential*



# VISION STATEMENT



*We are inclusive of all families and  
community members beginning prenatally  
extending throughout life.*

## LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

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December 2023

Dear Partners and Community Members of Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties,

Investment in early childhood is vital to the well-being and development of healthy, thriving children and strong communities. A strong foundation, built through positive early experiences, and continuous quality support systems provide a solid beginning and are strong predictors of later academic and life success. With this knowledge and opportunity, we know that it is vital that we all come together to help build and sustain a comprehensive and inclusive early childhood system for the well-being and future of Michigan's children and families!

The Great Start Collaborative and Family Coalition members of Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle counties (GSC COP) are honored to present our five year strategic plan for 2024-2028. This Strategic Plan is the foundation upon which we will continue to create a strong early childhood system, promoting the physical and emotional well-being of children and families; in addition to creating strong, supportive communities.

The focus of our plan is to ensure that every family with young children has access to a comprehensive and collaborative system of community based early childhood programs, services and supports. This plan has been developed to align with Michigan's Collective Early Childhood Plan; which is focused on attaining the Michigan's 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 the time of school entry.
- ★ Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

With your continued investment and partnerships, we can nurture every child's potential, build a sustainable early childhood system, and create a caring and engaging community where all children can feel a sense of belonging and are able to thrive.

We invite you to join the local collaborative, and encourage you to share your voice in support of children and families by encouraging others to keep early childhood issues in the forefront. Together, we truly can provide every child in our community with a Great Start in life.

Sincerely,  
*Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Leadership Committee*



*Photos on this page are courtesy of St. John Lutheran Preschool in Rogers City, MI*

## **GREAT START COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE**

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### **Melinda Hambleton**

Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties Great Start Collaborative Coordinator

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### **Dawn Fenstermaker**

Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties Great Start Family Engagement Specialist

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### **Cheree Riley**

Child Care Licensing Consultant MiLeap

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### **Heidi March**

Parent Representative

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### **Kym Narayana**

Quality Improvement Coach Northeast Regional Resource Center

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### **Brooke Donker**

Head Start Area Manager Northeast Community Service Agency

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### **Amanda Gascho**

Head Start Area Manager Northeast Community Service Agency

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### **Ann Thompson**

Social Worker LMSW District Health Department #4 Maternal Infant Health Program

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### **Katie Parr**

Program Instructor; Child and Family Development Team Michigan State University  
Extension

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### **Karyn Rauch- Smock**

Early Learning Services Supervisor Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle ESD

## GREAT START COLLABRATIVE MEMBERS AND WORKGROUP PARTICIPANTS

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Cheboygan County Friends: Children's Trail

Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District (COPESD)

District Health Department #4 Cheboyboygan and Presque Counties

Early On/COPESD

Forest Township

Friends of the Library: Millersburg, Indian River and Otsego County

COP Great Start Family Coalition

Great Start Readiness Program

Great Start to Quality Resource Center

Indian River District Library

McLaren Health Services

Michigan Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential

Michigan State University Extension; Cheboygan and Presque  
Isle Counties

North Central Michigan College

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency; Head Start/Early Head Start

Northwest Health Department/ Otsego County

Northeast Literacy Hub

Otsego County Library

Parents of COP counties

Power! Book Bags

Alpena/Presque Isle Child Abuse and Neglect Team

Presque Isle District Library

Tapestry/COPESD

Tuscarora Township

United Way of Northeast Michigan

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE  
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS. YOUR INPUT IS APPRECIATED AND VALUED!**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005, all across Michigan, the Great Start initiative was launched with the mission of ensuring that all Michigan families have the resources and supports they need to provide a great start for their children from birth to age five. In 2005, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) was created as a public/private initiative to take the lead in developing Michigan's comprehensive early childhood system. At the core of this system are the local Great Start Collaboratives, which are extended throughout the state's Intermediate School Districts.

Fast forwarding into 2023, the Great Start Collaboratives have since evolved in many different ways and have expanded the focus to include children up to age 8, in support of third grade reading attainment/competence, but continue to focus on ensuring that Michigan's Four Early Childhood Outcomes are being met through setting local systems level goals, objectives and activities that help lead our children towards the path of success.

## THE "WHO"

The Great Start Collaboratives (GSC's) are the early childhood systems building bodies in Michigan. The GSC's are locally driven based on the needs and data of their community, set forth in their Strategic Plans, Early Childhood Action Agenda and through family voice and engagement. At the table, are organizations that serve children and families prenatal to age 8 including: Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District staff, Early On Providers, Tapestry, businesses, parents and caregivers, philanthropy, faith-based community, Health and Human Services, Mental Health Services, literacy focused groups/organizations, early childhood education staff, preschool including Head Start, Early Head Start, Great Start Readiness Program staff, child care providers, elected officials, local Health Departments, Michigan State University Extension, and many more who have the best interest of children and families at heart.

The purposes of the Great Start Collaboratives are to:

- ★ **Work to understand the communities' strengths and challenges** within their local early childhood systems, and create a strategic plan.
- ★ **Work together with the Family Coalitions to build and reform the local early childhood system** to achieve better outcomes for young children and their families.
- ★ **Build the local system** that can address the implementation of recommendations provided in "Michigan's Collective Early Childhood Action Plan."
- ★ **Work in local communities to ensure** that the entire state is making significant progress toward the four early childhood outcomes.
- ★ **Consist of community leaders and includes parents** of young children involved in the Great Start Family Coalitions (GSFCs).

## GREAT START FAMILY COALITION

The Great Start Family Coalition (GSFC) are the family body to the local Great Start Collaboratives. The GSFC's come together as group of volunteer parents and caregivers, to provide their voice to the larger early childhood systems work and help to engage more families in early childhood services, programs and opportunities within the local mixed delivery system in order to ensure that parents voice informs the work of the GSC. Of the GSC membership, 20% are parents/caregivers of young children, particularly those who are currently engaged in the mixed delivery system. Members of the GSFC include parents, foster parents, step parents, adoptive parents, guardians, grandparents and others who are primary care-giving family members. GSFC members are representative of their community in race, socio-economic status, gender, family structure/status, and other factors in order to provide the voice of as many families within the community as possible

to inform the work and systems building efforts. (MiKidsMatter. www. Great Start Collaboratives and Parent Coalitions (michigan.gov).2023.

The Purpose of the Great Start Family Coalitions are to:

- ★ Provide a customer/beneficiary perspective for the Great Start Collaborative.
- ★ Educate community members about the importance of early childhood.
- ★ Support the Great Start Collaborative’s work toward achieving Michigan’s early childhood outcomes.
- ★ Provide information, education and resources to parents raising young children.

## THE “WHY”

*Why are we so important?*

We know that during the early years, 700 new neural connections are made per second. These neural connections are the result of genes, interactions, and the environment. (Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University). How these connections are made are a direct result of family and community interactions and supports that come from positive family interactions, community support, opportunities, resilience, experiences, care, love, as well as community services, quality care and education. Everything children see, every word they hear, everything they do, from the time they take their first breath, shapes the rapidly developing architecture of their brains.

Community leaders in Cheboygan, Otsego, and Presque Isle counties recognize the importance of connecting families with the services and supports that are needed to provide a healthy and supportive environment for their children. Access to these services is a direct result of coordination, investment, and continuous quality attention, review and improvement by all partners and providers who have an investment and focus on the children and families in Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties.

In order to help strengthen families and assist parents and caregivers in understanding how important the “why” and “how” is, it is vital that the leaders in the Cheboygan, Otsego, and Presque Isle counties continue to work on building a quality and effective early childhood system that supports all of our children and families.

Due to our commitment to children and families in the COP communities, the Great Start Collaborative of Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties (GSC COP) continues our dedicated work on behalf of the children and families in our communities. The Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Great Start Collaborative has worked collaboratively to develop an updated Strategic Plan focused on the needs, gaps, strengths, concerns, and suggestions of families.

We are devoted to continuing The Great Start Collaborative of Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle worked collaboratively to develop an updated Strategic Plan focused on the needs, gaps, strengths, concerns and suggestions of families. We are devoted to continue the efforts in building and sustaining a comprehensive early childhood system that works for our children and families.



## THE "HOW"

*How do we know what the status of our children and families is and how can we make positive changes?*

Many of the problems that families and communities face are incredibly complex because they typically have multiple or unknown causes, and often the same solution will not work for everyone. Issues such as poverty, health inequities and children not being ready for school require more than one strategy to address them. The COP GSC has worked to understand these complex problems by engaging those who are most impacted by the problems, to help identify the root causes and explore potential solutions that will address the underlying issues. This broad and inclusive approach to solving complex problems is the foundation of the GSC systems change work. When working to create effective strategies to address problems, the GSC uses the following six system characteristics to identify the type(s) of problems they are trying to solve:

- ★ **Mindsets:** The attitudes, values, and beliefs that shape behavior.
- ★ **Program Components:** The range, quality, effectiveness, and location of services, supports and opportunities in the community.
- ★ **Connections:** Relationships and exchanges between and across different organizations, and system characteristics (i.e.: 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.



## CHEBOYGAN, OTSEGO, PRESQUE ISLE GREAT START COLLABORATIVE PROFILE AND HISTORY

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The Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District was awarded a Great Start Planning grant in 2008, through the Early Childhood Investment Corporation in an effort to facilitate delivery of early childhood outcomes put forth by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (established in February of 2005). Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Great Start Collaborative (COPGSC), along with 54 other Great Start Collaboratives across Michigan, are charged with implementing a coordinated system and tracking progress toward the following outcomes.

### MICHIGAN'S 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 the time of school entry.
- ★ Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

The Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Great Start Collaborative (COPGSC) is mainly comprised of human service organizations, agencies and parents/caregivers who have a focus on children, families and strong communities. Part of the design plan was to ensure Great Start Collaboratives were implemented in every community throughout Michigan to help examine and make system changes that are beneficial to children and families throughout Michigan.

Over the last fifteen years, the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District (COPESD) has remained committed to overseeing and incorporating the Great Start Collaborative in the early childhood sector of the ESD, ensuring early childhood has a seat and voice at the table. Without the support and input of parents through the Great Start Family Coalition we could not have made the remarkable changes, grown in partnerships, or provided a platform for parent voice, which all has contributed to making valuable system changes for the benefit of children and families in Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle counties.

The Early Childhood Action Agenda (ECAA) provides a written work plan where we examine root causes, set goals, objectives and activities that help us achieve those goals aimed at system change; which in turn benefits children and families in our Cheboygan, Otsego and Presque Isle communities. The ECAA can be found at the end of this document.

Having a positive impact on children and families requires action, funding, time and commitment. Through our goals, objectives and actions steps over the last 15 years, the COPGSC and Family Coalition has dedicated thousands of dollars, hours and manpower so that we can best serve and impact our children and families that will continue through multiple generations to come.

## HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPACTS OF THE WORK WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE

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- ★ Provided funding for individuals to be trained as Doulas for our COP area which aides in increased access to prenatal care, ensuring babies are born healthy and parents receiving in home support during the months of pregnancy and during birth. In partnership with a neighboring GSC, in total we were able to provide training for a total of 23 Doulas who will now be serving Northern Michigan.
- ★ Provided Preschool Scholarships to our area families to help increase access to preschool to families who may not otherwise be able to send their child to preschool.
- ★ Increased access to Great Start Readiness Preschool programs by assisting local school districts with funding and licensing processes.
- ★ Implemented Talking is Teaching throughout the COP Counties, including building a network of Trusted Messengers and increased awareness of building literacy skills.
- ★ Designed and secured funding for two book walks in two communities that will help increase literacy skills, socialization opportunities and physical development.
- ★ Disbursed over 4,000 free books to local children through our Read Cycle program, little libraries and family events. Added an additional two little libraries.
- ★ Partnered with the Children's Trail In Cheboygan to build a handicap accessible pavilion at the Children's Trail in Cheboygan to help increase equity, diversity, and inclusion in family literacy events.
- ★ Partnered with neighboring GSC and Northeast Community Great Start to Quality Resource Centers to bring annual Early Childhood Literacy Conferences to Northeast Michigan.
- ★ Implemented regular Lunch and Learn Educational Sessions to local families to help promote and embed the Strengthening Families framework.
- ★ Hosted Pop Up Beach Parties to help get books into the hands of local children to increase literacy skills so that kids can read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade.
- ★ Partnered with PoWer! Book Bags; to put books, writing materials, and manipulatives in the hands of over 3,000 children to help children learn through play and develop strong literacy skills.
- ★ Planned and hosted Project Connect events for local families to help families connect with local resources.
- ★ Assisted in bringing semi-trucks full of food into the area for local families to help with food insecurities.
- ★ Partner with many local agencies and organizations to increase access to programs, services and activities such as, Cheboygan County Family Fun day, Otsego Family Fun Fair, Lunch & Learn educational sessions.
- ★ Assist with recruiting child care providers and maintaining preschool programs in the COP communities to help increase child care and preschool educational opportunities.
- ★ Provided funding and assistance to help train car seat technicians for the COP area, which resulted in additional car seat technicians in our area that will help increase car safety knowledge and practices.
- ★ Worked collaboratively with local Child Abuse and Neglect teams (Children Trust Michigan) to supply car seats, pack and plays, provide safe sleep classes and materials, safe summer and water safety materials, offered teen babysitting classes, and provided Summer Safety tips and materials to help ensure our children are safe in the many waterways in Michigan.
- ★ Partnered with local hospitals to ensure parents have access to car seats and Talking is Teaching materials to help educate and engage parents with literacy materials and safe practices.
- ★ Provided funding and support for a preschool child tracking system that assists in joint enrollment and parent/preschool enrollment communication for Head Start and Great Start Readiness Programs.
- ★ Supported social and physical development activities such as bringing child musician Jim Gill to the community.
- ★ Provided a safe and accessible viewing area at the Otsego Community Center for families with strollers, people with disabilities, and elderly people in partnership with the Otsego County Parks and Recreations.
- ★ Provided learning materials and tools for parents to use in a home setting.

- ★ Increased knowledge of Talking is Teaching teachable moments materials and books by adding reading corners in local laundromats that offer an inviting area for kids to read and play while parents/caregivers are doing laundry.
- ★ Engaged medical providers in literacy education and book distribution for children receiving well child checkups.
- ★ Brought multiple human service organizations and agencies to the table, along with parents, together throughout the year to work on completing goals and objectives through activities that best support and enhance the early childhood system in the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District.
- ★ Partnered to bring trauma speakers and professional educational sessions to COP area staff, teachers and child care providers, to help increase trauma knowledge, supports and best practices.
- ★ Worked collaboratively with the Northeast Great Start to Quality Resource Center to help increase access to child care and to increase the quality of licensed child care providers.
- ★ Increased positive experiences for families through participation at local events at the Cheboygan Children's Trail, where children and their caregivers/parents can participate in literacy activities such as book walk events, including hands on interactive activities along the trail, learning about community service agencies and organizations.
- ★ Partner with local business and other organizations to offer free family events.
- ★ Partnered to offer two network evening events to bring teachers, business owners, child care providers and educators together to help strengthen working relationships.

The above accomplishments have brought so much value to our families and communities; however, we know that there is still so much work that needs to be done. In the following pages, data is presented to help paint the picture of the work that lies ahead.



## COMMUNITY NEEDS AND STRENGTHS ASSESSMENT

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Beginning in March of 2023 the COP GSC began the work of identifying key concerns and issues that our children and families face within the three counties. The following are the top issues that were identified as key challenges that are keeping some of our children and families from being successful and that the GSC and its partners could address over the next several years.

Beginning in March of 2023 the COP GSC began the work of identifying key concerns and issues that our children and families face within the three counties. The following are the top issues that were identified as key challenges that are keeping some of our children and families from being successful and that the GSC and its partners could address over the next several years.

As we examined the data we found that families were facing the following issues:

- ★Lack of access to health care, specifically healthy birthing options
- ★Lack of public transportation options
- ★Low wages
- ★Many of our families are struggling to provide and/or access to the basic necessities,
- ★Lack of affordable housing
- ★Make a livable wage
- ★Access quality health care
- ★Access quality child care
- ★Locate and attend affordable preschool
- ★Increase pre and emerging literacy skills.

With the qualitative and quantitative data we have examined, we find that it is vital that we, as an early childhood collaborative come together to fully and intrinsically examine these issues and their root causes and to pull together our knowledge, resources and tools to initiate a plan that will address these issues and will ultimately increase access and remove barriers that will help our children and families become healthier, thriving and successful.

We asked the following questions aligning each one of Michigan's Early Childhood Outcomes ( in dark bullets) through assessments, surveys and community conversations. The Great Start Collaborative then examined those questions, picked the top 3 topics in each outcome area that we felt we could in some way have a positive impact on and make system changes that are beneficial for our children and families.

In order to understand what families are truly facing in our community, the COP GSC conducted a comprehensive strengths and needs assessment which included a thorough review of quantitative data from numerous sources and qualitative data collected from surveys, interviews and focus groups conducted with a broad variety of key stakeholders throughout the counties. This information was compiled and used to identify the conditions that currently exist in Cheboygan, Otsego and Presque Isle Counties that need to be addressed in the strategic plan to improve child outcomes.

As we reviewed the information gathered, we found the following problems:

## MICHIGAN'S EARLY CHILDHOOD OUTCOMES

### Outcome 1: Children are born healthy.

#### • Why are some children not born healthy?

- Lack of OB/Gyns and Pediatricians.
- Lack of resources on prenatal classes and local birthing centers.
- Lack of mental health services.
- Lack of prenatal care

Based on this information, the COP GSC has prioritized the following OBJECTIVES to address these issues:

- Increase availability, and accessibility of prenatal, perinatal and postnatal care across the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District (COPESD).

## BIRTHS WITH LESS THAN ADEQUATE PRENATAL CARE

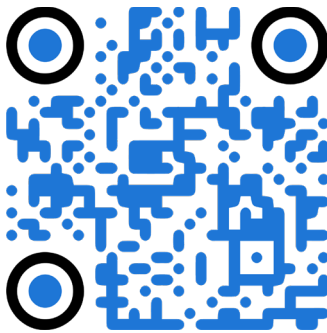
Location	Data Type	2019	2020	2021
Cheboygan	Number	63	61	61
	Percent	29.4%	31.6%	31.4%
Otsego	Number	77	75	69
	Percent	31.3%	31.3%	29.9%
Presque Isle	Number	29	30	30
	Percent	32.0%	33.3%	35.7%

## MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN COP COUNTIES

Location	Data Type	2019	2020	2021
Cheboygan	Number	24	24	29
	Rate	1059:1	1053:1	875:1
Otsego	Number	61	64	63
	Rate	404:1	385:1	393:1
Presque Isle	Number	2	3	5
	Rate	6369:1	4197:1	2533:1

## POPULATION AGES BIRTH TO 4 IN CHEBOYGAN, OTSEGO, PRESQUE ISLE

Location	Data Type	2021	2022
Cheboygan	Number	1,008	895
Otsego	Number	1,268	1,288
Presque Isle	Number	468	507



SCAN HERE TO LOCATE ADDITIONAL  
DATA FROM KIDS COUNT



## Outcome 2. Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.

### • Why are some children not healthy, thriving and developmentally on track from birth to third grade?

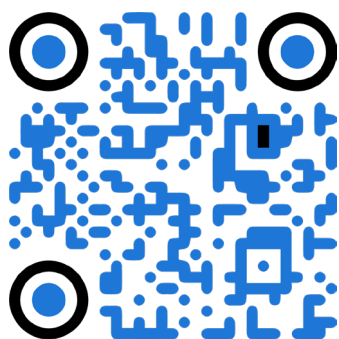
- Lack of affordable housing/families are homeless.
- Lack of affordable and availability of childcare/preschools, lack of wraparound care opportunities.
- Some parents are unaware of services that are available for their families or do not know how to access the services.

Based on this information, the COP GSC has prioritized the following OBJECTIVES to address these issues:

\*Increase supports to individuals and families around nutrition and physical activity, including referrals to WIC programs and services.

## AVERAGE COST OF FULL-TIME CHILD CARE PER MONTH (Percent of Full-time minimum wage) IN MICHIGAN

Location	Data Type	2021	2022	2023
Cheboygan	Number	553	584	585
	Percent	33.1%	34.2%	33.5%
Otsego	Number	562	626	634
	Percent	33.6%	36.6%	36.3%
Presque Isle	Number	547	598	575
	Percent	32.7%	35.0%	32.9%



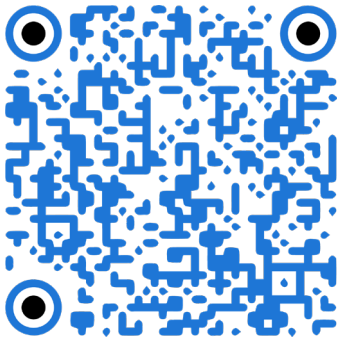
**SCAN HERE TO LOCATE LICENSED CHILD CARE IN MICHIGAN**





## HOUSEHOLDS IN POVERTY AND ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)

Location	Data Type	2017	2019	2021
Cheboygan	Number	4,773	4,426	4,598
	Percent	42.1%	39.5%	43.1%
Otsego	Number	4,118	3,701	4,040
	Percent	41.7%	37.2%	38.7%
Presque Isle	Number	2,556	2,451	2,321
	Percent	43.1%	42.3%	39.7%



SCAN HERE TO SEE MORE INFO ON ALICE  
AND WHO ALICE IS



## CHILDREN AGES BIRTH TO 8 RECEIVING FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FAP)

Location	Data Type	2020	2021	2022
Cheboygan	Number	461	487	549
	Percent	27.7%	26.7%	29.6%
Otsego	Number	566	549	611
	Percent	23.2%	22.6%	25.1%
Presque Isle	Number	189	208	228
	Percent	20.6%	23.1%	25.6%

**Outcome 3. Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.**

**• Why are some children not developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry?**

- Lack of access to quality preschools or daycare programs.
- Disruptive behaviors at home.
- Lack of parent involvement.
- Lack of parent educational opportunities.

Based on this information, the COP GSC has prioritized the following OBJECTIVES to address these issues:

- \* 1. Review and make recommendations regarding the components of the Great Start Readiness Program.
- 2. In collaboration with the Great Start to Quality Northeast Regional Resource Center, link licensed and registered providers in the GSC/GSPC Cop area to Great Start to Quality for the purpose of achieving higher levels of Quality.
- 3. Connect parents and caregivers to GSTQ Resource Center for Childcare Resources in the event that public health emergencies require parents/caregivers to connect with local licensed quality childcare providers in the event that local schools close face to face options and/or the family’s current childcare options are closed.
- 4. Support newly licensed child care providers in the COP counties with funds to help increase access to local quality childcare options and materials.

**CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 4 NOT IN PRESCHOOL IN MICHIGAN**

Location	Data Type	2015-2019	2016-2020	2017-2021
<b>Cheboygan</b>	Number	235	230	274
	Percent	50.0%	51.7%	54.7%
<b>Otsego</b>	Number	186	254	315
	Percent	36.5%	46.5%	64.0%
<b>Presque Isle</b>	Number	156	144	143
	Percent	60.5%	62.1%	62.5%

## Outcome 4. Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

### • Why are some children not reading proficiently by the end of third grade?

- Some children do not have access to books and other literacy supports.

- Lack of family centered activities.
- Some parents are not familiar with how to read to young children.
- Some families are not reading at home.

Based on this information, the COP GSC has prioritized the following OBJECTIVES to address these issues:

\*Provide parents, caregivers, educators and young children access to free age-appropriate children’s books and B-3 Literacy Essentials.

- Partner and collaborate with other literacy focused organizations and licensed child care providers to help put books in the hands of parents and children.
- Provide parents with education about the B-3 Literacy essentials and tools to help facilitate literacy at home.
- Collaborate with United Way of Northeast Michigan, Health Department #4 and Northwest Health Department to ensure Dolly Parton Library and PoWer! Books Bags are delivered with fidelity.

## M-STEP- STUDENTS NOT PROFICIENT IN THIRD- GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Location	Data Type	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023
Cheboygan	Number	110	100	86	79	96
	Percent	59.8%	65.8%	66.7%	54.5%	51.9%
Otsego	Number	140	139	132	132	179
	Percent	53.8%	53.1%	58.7%	55.2%	68.9%
Presque Isle	Number	39	42	54	48	59
	Percent	48.1%	47.2%	76.1%	67.6%	62.8%

## WHAT IS THE DATA SAYING?

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Researching Data, identifying the needs & gaps in our early childhood system was vital to acquiring information to truly give us a clear picture of what we needed in order to develop a meaningful and achievable Early Childhood Action Agenda. During our Great Start Collaborative meetings, we set aside time to review the qualitative data gathered from parents, child care providers, community stakeholders, and the qualitative data available in the Great Start Data Set through Michigan League for Public Policy, local health departments, and United Way's ALICE report formed the basis for our understanding of needs and gaps in our region.

Throughout the following pages, we share data from Kids Count to help the community understand what our children and families are facing in today's world and how we determined the work that is needed to change the outcomes for our children and families.

Once we examined the data, we then held many sessions to determine the goals, strategies and activities that we needed to implement to make the changes that are needed to help our children and families move forward in a positive direction towards success.

Cheboygan, Otsego and Presque Isle counties are all diverse in their own way. Cheboygan county is home to 25,635 residents with 4,017 of those being 0-5 year olds. Otsego county has 24,765 residents with 5,131 being children ages 0-5, and Presque Isle county has 12,665 residents, with 1,919 being children ages 0-5. Combined, we have 11,065 children between the ages 0- 5 living in the COP counties.

The Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle geographical area is large, with mainly rural communities, which can lead to the inequities that many of our families are facing. The resources and supports are very limited all throughout the COP communities with some families facing barriers such as transportation, lack of financial resources, childcare options and other barriers that limit access to needed supports and resources.

Otsego county has a median income is \$61,330.00. This community is the larger of the three cop counties, with more resources and services being in that county. Cheboygan county is the second largest of the three counties and has a median income of \$50,788.00. Median income in Presque Isle county is \$49,713 with Michigan rate being \$61,352.00. Presque Isle county median income is significantly lower than both Cheboygan and Otsego counties, as well as Michigan, leading to inequities in access to the resources and supports that our children and families so desperately need.

Understanding using this data and more is important developing the early childhood action agenda. This helps to drive the collaboration, goals, objectives, strategies, and activities that the Great Start Collaborative and Family Coalition will focus on the next five years.

# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

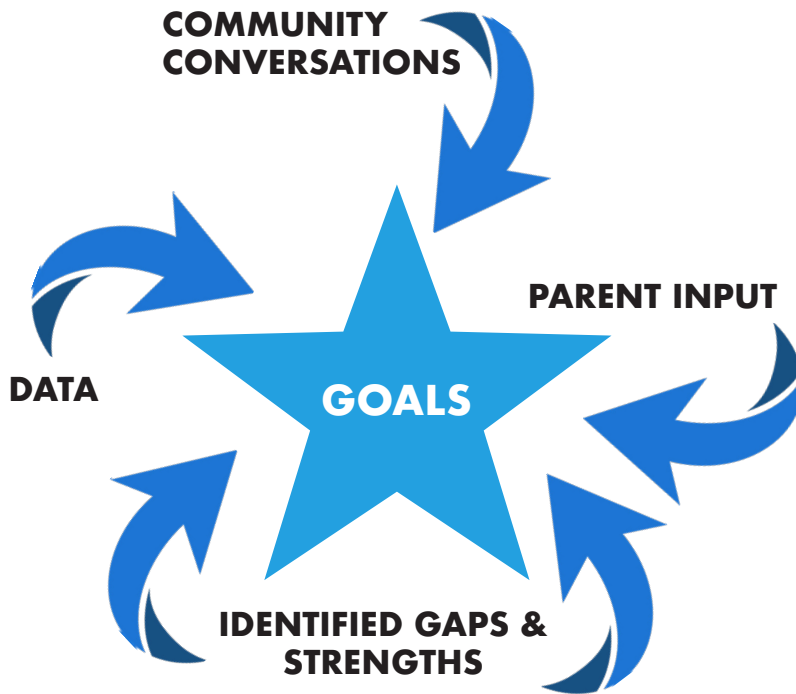
Every year the Great Start Collaboratives are required to submit a work plan/ Early Childhood Action Agenda. This document is a liveable, breathing document that outlines our goals, strategies and activities that will help us achieve the goals we have set forth to accomplish.

Our goals are set based on data, community conversations and parent input. Once these are set, we develop strategies and activities that will help us achieve these goals. Each activity is then planned out with “who” is going to carry out the activity, “when” it will be completed, and “what” resources are needed to complete those activities.

In order to be held accountable and know that our goals are being met, we included progress and performance measures to ensure we have done what we were going to do and more importantly, what we did truly made an impact on parents, caregivers and the children we serve.

Once gaps were analyzed and root causes determined, members of the GSC Sub Committees were charged with identifying other community partners who are working on the same or similar issues. Determining who these partners are, is vital to the success of achieving our goals, reducing duplicate efforts, and to make a larger impact on identified issues.

Thought was given to the projected impact on Michigan’s Four Early Childhood Outcomes, and Michigan’s Collective Early Childhood Plan, coupled with our ability to influence/impact the controllable. We then brainstormed ideas and set concrete activities, put them in a liveable document, known as the Early Childhood Action Agenda. This document will impact and aid in the achievement of our goals and objectives.



## CREATING ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS

Creating activities and action steps to accomplish our goals we needed to hold discussions and develop activities to help us have small wins and make progress towards accomplishing our goals. We needed to explore and determine “who” was responsible for completing the activities, and developed a plan to help ensure timeliness and completion. We also needed to know what available and needed resources were required to truly effect change.

Parent and caregivers voices are vital to the success of our work, they are an integral part of the change in all aspects of our work. This is evident in our work plan and our Early Childhood Action Agenda. In the sections where you will read “Parent Led Activities”, these activities are the responsibilities of parents involved in the Great Start Family Coalition. The parents/caregivers will take the lead in these activities and will be responsible for the completion of these goals, and activities.

Using the information that was gathered, we set our goals, objectives, strategies, activities and integrated this into part of the strategic plan and can be found in the Early Childhood Action Agenda portion of this document. The Early Childhood Action Agenda also contains both progress and performance measures to help ensure progress, completion and accountability for our work.

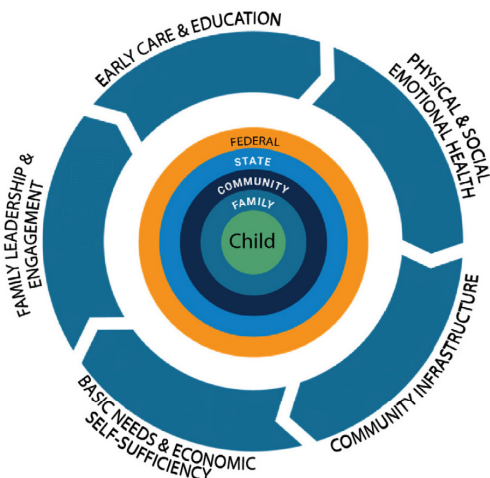
Through collaboration and coordination, and using our funding efficiently, we are confident that we can maximize our impact on system changes for the greater good for children and families.

As we continue to plan and ensure all families are considered and included in the plan, we need to remain focused and ensure that COPGSC continues to view everyone through the equity lens. It is important that everyone feels they belong, they are included and are part of our active and supportive community. Our goals, strategies, objectives and actions have been developed and implemented with diversity, and equity in mind to ensure we are being inclusive of all families and are using the perspectives and ideas of the families of Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle counties.

In addition, the COP GSC will be streamlining our Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle County Great Start Collaborative Strategic Plan with Michigan’s Collective Early Childhood Action Plan to ensure continuity, alignment and shared purpose to strengthen Michigan’s early childhood system.

In the following pages you will find our GSC COP 2023-2024 Early Childhood Action Plan.

### MICHIGAN’S EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM



## EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

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### **OUTCOME ONE:** Children are born healthy.

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** Increase access to healthy birthing options for all parents.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:** Availability, and accessibility of prenatal. Prenatal and postnatal care is supported and expanded across the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District (COPESD).

**Strategy 1:** Increase access to prenatal, perinatal and postnatal supports by connecting and sharing DOULA contact information with community partners, through social media and during family engagement events.

**Strategy 2:** Increase access and availability of Postpartum Supports for new mothers.

**Strategy 3:** Partner with McLaren Health System and other Community Partners to help implement parent educational classes that support child development, literacy, safe sleep classes and other infant/child classes. Participants can “earn” Baby Bucks to purchase needed baby supplies.

### **OUTCOME TWO:** Children are healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade.

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** Improve maternal and child health outcomes through an active collaboration with WIC, the GSC and GSFC.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:** Increase supports to individuals and families around nutrition and physical activity, including referrals to WIC programs and services .

**Strategy 1:** Create a plan for joint trainings/meetings between WIC and the GSFC.

**Strategy 2:** Exchange educational opportunities and materials, including breastfeeding promotion and support.

#### **Parent Led Activity**

**Strategy 3:** Work collaboratively to develop and install Life Jacket Loan Stations in the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties.

**OUTCOME THREE:**

Children are developmentally ready to succeed in school at time of school entry.

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** Increase access to high quality early care and education services and supports.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:**

1. Review and make recommendations regarding the components of the Great Start Readiness Program.
2. In collaboration with the Great Start to Quality Northeast Regional Resource Center, link licensed and registered providers in the GSC/GSPC COP area to Great Start to Quality for the purpose of achieving higher levels of quality.
3. Connect parents and caregivers to GSTQ Resource Center for Childcare Resources in the event that public health emergencies require parents/caregivers to connect with local licensed quality childcare providers in the event that local schools close face to face options and/or the family's current childcare options are closed.
4. Support newly licensed child care providers in the COP counties with funds to help increase access

**Strategy 1:** The School Readiness Advisory Committee will address the needs of school readiness across the community.

**Strategy 2:** The GSC, GSFC and RC will work in collaboration to engage the community to support and align plans to facilitate childcare availability in the wake of the influx of state and federal funds.

**Strategy 3:** The GSC and GSFC will work in collaboration with parents and COP Playgroups to introduce the B-3 Literacy Essentials, and Talking is Teaching Campaign by providing tools to assist parents as they help children transition into kindergarten successfully.



**OUTCOME FOUR**

Children are prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):**

High quality literacy programs, services and materials are located and offered throughout the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle communities to allow for equitable access.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:**

1. Parents, caregivers, educators and young children will have access to free age-appropriate children’s books and B-3 Literacy Essentials.
2. The GSC will partner and collaborate with other literacy focused organizations and licensed child care providers in the area to help put books in the hand of parents and children.
3. Parents will have access to B-3 Literacy Essentials to help facilitate literacy at home.
4. Collaborate with United Way of Northeast Michigan, District Health Department #4 and Northwest Health Department to ensure Dolly Parton Library and PoWer! Books Bags are delivered with fidelity.

**Strategy 1:** Great Start Collaborative and Family Coalition will increase access to books and other literacy supports, including; Talking is Teaching campaign, Cheboygan, Otsego and Presque Isle Read Cycle Project, B-3 Literacy Essential outreach efforts.

**Strategy 2:** COP Great Start Collaborative will continue to partner with PoWer! Book Bags to bring literacy, learning and writing skill building materials into the hands of children. Funding will be from 32 P 6 Funds and will continue to be sustainable with partial funding from PoWer! Book Bags.

**Strategy 3:** New little libraries will be placed throughout the COP area to bring literacy supports to the families in spaces where children and families frequent.

**PARENT LED STRATEGY**

**Strategy 4:** Dolly Parton Library will be supported in partnership with United Way of Northeast Michigan.

**Strategy 5:** Support licensed child care providers with high quality literacy materials to enhance quality of child care facilities and to connect child care providers and parents with B-3 Literacy Essential #10

# Early Childhood



# Action Agenda

## OUTCOME 1

This Goal, Objective(s) and Strategy(ies) targets the following early childhood outcome(s):

**x 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.

Addresses the following early childhood components:

- x Physical and social emotional Health.
- x Family supports, including, but not limited to, the provision of basic needs and economic self-sufficiency.
- x Parent leadership and family engagement.
- Early education, including the child’s development of skills linked to success in foundational literacy, and care.
- x Community infrastructure.

**% and # of children not reaching targeted outcome(s), broken down by demographics when possible (Targeted Problem(s)):**

**Births with late or no prenatal care:**

**Cheboygan County: 2020: 8 4.2 % 2021: 11 5.7 %**

**Otsego County: 2020: 9 3.8% 2021: 9 3.9%**

**Presque Isle County: 2020: 6 6.7% 4 4.8%**

**Births with less than adequate prenatal care:**

**Cheboygan: 2020: 61 31.6 % 2021: 61 31.4%**

**Otsego: 2020:75 31.3% 2021: 69 29.9%**

**Presque Isle: 2020: 30 33.3% 2021: 30 35.7%**

**Low Birthweight Babies:**

**Cheboygan: 2020: 19 9.8 2021: 21 10.8%**

**Otsego: 21 8.8% 17 7.4%**

**Presque Isle: 6 6.7% 6 7.1%**

**Pre-Term Births**

**Cheboygan: 2020: 21 10.9% 2021: 22 11.3%**

**Otsego: 23 9.6% 9.6% 2021: 22 9.5%**

**Presque Isle: 7 7.8% 2021: 9 10.7**

**Infant Mortality**

**Cheboygan:2020 3 15.5% 2021: 3 15.5%**

**Otsego: 2020: 2 8.3% 2021: 2 8.7%**

**Presque Isle: 2020: 1 2021 0**

**Cited Source: Kids Count Data**

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** Increase access to healthy birthing options for all parents.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:** Availability, and accessibility of prenatal, perinatal and postnatal care is supported and expanded across the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Educational School District (COPESD).

<p><b>Strategy 1:</b></p> <p>Increase access to prenatal, perinatal and postnatal supports by connecting and sharing DOULA contact information without community partners, through social media and during Family Engagement events.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Prenatal care, birthing supports and resources are limited or non-existent.</p> <p>Resources for prenatal care are limited.</p> <p>OB/GYN Doctors are very limited and/or are not in every county in the COP Communities.</p> <p>Mental Health services are limited in the COP Communities.</p> <p>Some parents do not have transportation to and from appointments.</p> <p>Appointment times and/or educational opportunities are not held at times and in locations that support utilization by the target population.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <p>1.) Meet the Doulas Brochures are shared with 10 community partners.</p> <p>2.) Community Partners are sharing the Meet the Doulas brochures, helping parents connect with Doulas supports.</p> <p>3.) Parents/caregivers learn about the local Doulas during Family Engagement Events, Lunch and Learn Sessions and COP Playgroup Events.</p>
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b>    x Mindsets    x Components x Connections    x Regulations    x Resources    x Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:**     Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment    x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan    x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement  
 Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice     Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality     Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<p><b>1.1.a</b> Add Meet the Doulas Brochure on COPESD and COPGSC websites and GSCCOP Parent Coalition Facebook page</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Family Engagement Specialist (GSFES) GSC Members GSC Webmaster</p>	<p>Dec. 2023</p>	<p>Brochures available both via hard copy and electronic</p>	<p>Meet the Doulas Brochure is on the COP ESD website and on the COPGSC website and Facebook page</p>

<p><b>1.1.b.</b> Share Meet the Doula Brochure with community partners, including home visitors, COPESD playgroups, Health Departments, WIC staff and others. Sharing will be done via hard copies of the Meet the Doulas and electronic versions to help increase knowledge and access to Doula supports.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSFC Family Engagement Specialist</p>	<p>May 2024</p>	<p>Meet the Doulas Brochure in hard copies and electronic version Tracking tool</p>	<p>Develop a tracking tool to document how many brochures have been distributed.</p>
<p><b>1.1.c.</b> Invite Doulas to local playgroups and GSC meetings to help increase knowledge and accessibility to local Doula's.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSFC and Family Engagement Specialist DOULAS</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>COP Playgroup dates/locations Time</p>	<p>DOULA's have presented at Family Engagement Events. Lunch and Learn Sessions and COP Playgroup Sessions</p>

<p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Increase access and availability Postpartum Supports for new moms.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b>  Postpartum supports are limited  Mental health supports have long waiting lists  Mental Health supports are non-existent in some communities.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b>  1.) COPGSC partnered with neighboring GSC to offer 1 Doula Postpartum training.  2.) Doulas and Home visitors who are trained in postpartum trainings have increased by 10%.</p>
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> x Mindsets x Components x Connections <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations x Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:**  Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality  Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<p><b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b></p>	<p><b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Target Dates</b></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b></p>
<p><b>1.2.a</b> Partner with neighboring Char Em GSC to bring Postpartum Training to local Doulas and COPESD Home visitors.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Co Coordinator</p>	<p>Dec. 2023</p>	<p>Funds to help support Doulas Tuition for the class  Registration link for people to register</p>	<p>Postpartum training has been scheduled and held.</p>

<p><b>1.2.b.</b> Provide support to COP Home Visitors and COP Doulas to attend Postpartum training.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Co-Coordinator</p>	<p>Dec. 2023</p>	<p>Time Funds</p>	<p>Postpartum training has been held with home visitors and DOULAs being trained to help support new mothers experiencing Postpartum.</p>
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<p><b>Strategy 3:</b>  Partner with McLaren Health System and other Community Partners to help implement Parent Educational Classes that support child development, literacy, safe sleep classes and other infant/child classes. Participants can “earn” Baby Bucks to purchase needed baby supplies.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b>  Child development and safe sleep classes are held outside of the local communities, making it difficult for expecting/new parents to attend.  Some expecting/new parents are not familiar with how a child develops, how to read to a child or safe sleep practices.  Some expecting/new parents do not have the resources to purchase safe sleep equipment or other items needed to take care of their child.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b>  1.) Partnership with McLaren Health Services and other community partners to develop and implement Parenting Educational classes that help support new families and caregivers.  2.) Expecting/New parents are attending the Educational Classes.  3.) Cross sector partners are referring expecting/new families to the Parenting Educational Classes.  4.) 15 Expecting/New parents are attending the Parenting Educational classes.</p>
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> x Mindsets x Components x Connections x Regulations x <input type="checkbox"/> Resources x Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:**  Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement  Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality  Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<p><b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b></p>	<p><b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Target Dates</b></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b></p>
<p><b>1.3.a</b> Meet with McLaren Health System to finalize Expecting/New Parent Educational Classes.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator</p>	<p>Jan. 2023</p>	<p>Meeting space Time</p>	<p>Partnership with local health systems and other child / family focused programs who want to participate in the Expecting/New Parent Educational Classes has been established.</p>

<p><b>1.3.b.</b> Baby Bucks Point System will be developed to use as a guide for earning and redeeming points for Baby supplies/equipment.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Health &amp; Wellness Committee McLaren Health System rep</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<p>Meeting Space Time List of baby items/supplies Align items/supplies with points</p>	<p>Baby Bucks system has been developed.</p>
<p><b>1.3.c.</b> 1.3.c. Set Expecting/New Parent Educational list of classes, including time frame and locations.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Health &amp; Wellness Committee McLaren Health System Rep.</p>	<p>April 2023</p>	<p>Meeting space Time List of classes Time and location of classes Virtual or in person classes determined.</p>	<p>Expecting/New Parent Educational Classes schedule has been set.</p>

## OUTCOME 2

This Goal, Objective(s) and Strategy(ies) targets the following early childhood outcome(s):

- ☐ Children are born healthy.
- x 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.

Addresses the following early childhood components:

- x Physical and social emotional Health.
- x Family supports, including, but not limited to, the provision of basic needs and economic self-sufficiency.
- x Parent leadership and family engagement.
- x Early education, including the child's development of skills linked to success in foundational literacy, and care.
- x Community infrastructure.

**% and # of children not reaching targeted outcome(s), broken down by demographics when possible (Targeted Problem(s)):**

**Families receiving Food Assistance Years: 2020-2022**

**Cheboygan - 2021:487 2022: 549**  
**Otsego - 2021: 549 2022: 611**  
**Presque Isle - 2021: 208 2022:228**

**Free and Reduced Lunch K-12**

**Cheboygan: 2021: 1769 67% 2022: 1791 68.6 %**  
**Otsego: 2021: 1949 54.0% 2022:2,024 56.1%**  
**Presque Isle: 2021: 686 57.0% 2022: 743 60.2 5**

**Woman, Infant and Children ( WIC) :**

**Cheboygan: 2020: 544 52.1% 2021:511 52.6% 2022:545 54.1%**  
**Otsego: 2020: 710 55.1 % 2021:630 49.0% 2022:669 52.8%**  
**Presque Isle: 2020: 273 54.5 % 2021: 274 58.1% 2022: 299 63.9%**

**Number of Families in the Maternal Infant Health Program:**

**Cheboygan: 40 and 22 siblings**  
**Otsego: 96 and 42 siblings**  
**Presque Isle: 32 and 22 siblings**

**Number of Drownings in Otsego County: 3 Cited Source: Anecdotal Source Michigan State Trooper Corey Hepner**  
**Number of Lakes in Michigan: 11,000 Inland Lakes**

**Cited Source: Kids Count Data**

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** Improve maternal and child health outcomes through an active collaboration with WIC, the GSC and GSPC.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:** Increase supports to individuals and families around nutrition and physical activity, including referrals to WIC programs and services.



<p><b>Strategy 1: (Possible strategies to choose from, must have 2)</b></p> <p>Create a plan for joint trainings/ meetings between WIC and the GSFC</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Some people are not aware of WIC services and the educational component.</p> <p>Some people think that they do not qualify for WIC.</p> <p>Transportation is an issue for some families/caregivers so they cannot attend trainings/ meetings.</p> <p>Staff is limited on time to be able to lead trainings/meetings.</p> <p>Registration for programs can be difficult for some families to navigate, so there is a need for a familiar face to help parents feel comfortable and ask for help when needed.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <p>1.) GSC and GSFC and WIC/ Michigan Infant Health Home Visiting Program staff have met to create a plan for joint trainings/meetings.</p> <p>2.) District Health Departments have staff attending and actively participating in the GSC and share GSPC meetings and events with parents.</p> <p>3.) 20 Parents have gained knowledge by attending joint trainings.</p> <p>4.) Parents connect the GSC and GSFC with local health department partnership and understand they have a shared purpose for working with children and families/ caregivers.</p> <p>5.) 20 additional families are aware of WIC and Health Department services/ programs.</p>
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><b>x Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> x Mindsets x Components x Connections <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations x Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:**  Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality  Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<p><b>1.1.a</b> Health Department/WIC/ MIHP staff will meet to create a joint training/ meeting plan.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator Health Department Staff GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee</p>	<p>Feb. 2024</p>	<p>Meeting Space Time</p>	<p>Joint training / meeting plan has been developed.</p>

<p><b>1.1.b.</b> Joint training/ meeting topics, dates and locations will be planned.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator Health Department Staff GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee</p>	<p>Jan. 2024</p>	<p>Meeting Space Time Schedule speakers Decide who is responsible for what.</p>	<p>3 joint meetings/ trainings have been held.</p>
<p><b>1.1.c.</b> Joint meeting/ trainings/events including Project Connect events will be held with Health Department #4, Northwest Health Department and GSC Family Engagement Coalition and other community agencies, organizations to share and inform parents/ caregivers on the importance of proper nutrition and physical health, including public resources that can aid families with community resources, nutritional and physical health supports.</p>	<p>GSFC Health Department Staff</p>	<p>March 2024</p>	<p>Meeting Space Presenters Time Food</p>	<p>Joint meetings/ trainings have been held with Health Department with a focus on physical health and nutrition.</p>

<p><b>Strategy 2: (Possible strategies to choose from, must have 2)</b></p> <p>Exchange educational opportunities and materials, including breastfeeding promotion and support.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Parental and postnatal care is limited and/or non-existence in our counties so families don't seek outside care.</p> <p>Some pregnant women do not understand the importance of prenatal care.</p> <p>Some parents need breastfeeding support and opportunities to gain knowledge on the benefits of breastfeeding.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <p>1.) Parent educational opportunities have increased due to the GSC/GSFC and WIC partnering together to offer joint trainings, meetings.</p> <p>2.) 25 Parents have gained knowledge on the supports offered through WIC and the Health Departments.</p> <p>3.) 25 Parents have become more aware of breastfeeding supports and home visiting supports that are offered at through the Health Department.</p>
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<p><b>x Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b>    x Mindsets    x Components x Connections    x Regulations    x Resources    <input type="checkbox"/> Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:** ☐ Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement ☐ Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality ☐ Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<b>2.1.a</b> Invite WIC/ Health Department staff to present program information to parents/caregivers at local playgroups and planned family engagement events.	GSPL GS Family Engagement Coalition	June 2024	Time Location for playgroups WIC/ Breastfeeding materials	WIC/Health Department service/ program information has been shared with parents during COP playgroups and family engagement events in the COP communities.
<b>2.c.</b> Work collaboratively to share WIC QR code and WIC enrollment app by adding the tools to fliers.	Health Department Staff GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee	May 2024	Flyer QR Code WIC App Info.	Flyer has been developed and distributed with WIC enrollment information app and/ or QR Code.

<p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Work collaboratively to develop and install Life Jacket Loan Stations in the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Life jackets are expensive.</p> <p>Information on required sizes and types of life jackets for swimming vs. boating is not well known.</p> <p>Many children have drowned in the COP area waters.</p> <p>Swimming lessons are expensive.</p> <p>Swimming lessons programs are not held frequently in all COP counties.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) GSC Health and Safety Committee has met to discuss and plan for the Life Jackets Loan Stations.</li> <li>2.) Meeting with invested partners have been held.</li> <li>3.) 3 Life Jacket Loan Stations are built.</li> <li>4.) 3 Life Jacket Loan stations are installed in the COP counties.</li> <li>5.) Information regarding Life Jacket Loan Stations location and purpose has been shared through 3 different media outlet sources.</li> </ol>
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<p>☐ <b>Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p>x <b>Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> x Mindsets x Components x Connections x Regulations x Resources x Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:** ☐ Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality ☐ Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<b>2.3.a</b> Meet with Safe Kids North to present plan and explain the “why” life jacket loaner stations are needed.	GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee	March 2024	Meeting Space Time	Meeting with Safe Kids North representative has been held.
<b>2.3.b.</b> Meet with local authorities to gain permission for the Life Jacket Loan stations.	GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee	March 2024	Appointments Time Contact information of local authorities	Meeting with local authorities has been held to gain permission to install Life Jacket stations.
<b>2.3.c.</b> Recruit people cross sector agencies and organizations, comprised of local parents, firefighters, Police, EMS staff and other agencies to help plan and make the stations.	GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee	April 2024	Meeting space Time Building materials	A committee has been formed to address and plan Life Jacket Loan Stations.
<b>2.3.d.</b> Install Life Jacket Loan stations.	Local Volunteers	May 2024	Time Tools Locations for Life Jacket Loan Stations	Life Jacket Loan Stations have been installed.
<b>2.3.e.</b> Purchase Life Jackets for children ages 0-8.	GSC Coordinator GSF Engagement Specialist	April 2024	Funds Time	Life Jackets have been purchased.
<b>2.3.f.</b> Build awareness of the importance of wearing Life Jackets, including sharing the location of Life Jacket Loan Stations through media outlets.	GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee	May 2024	Time Media Exposure	Information about Life Jacket Stations has been shared through various media outlets.
<b>2.3.g.</b> Support awareness of the importance of water safety through creation of “Let’s Talk About Water Safety” materials.	GSC Health Wellness and Safety Committee	May 2024	Time Funds Items	“Let’s Talk About Water Safety” materials have been developed. Posters/Beach Balls

### OUTCOME 3

This Goal, Objective(s) and Strategy(ies) targets the following early childhood outcome(s):

- 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.

Addresses the following early childhood components:

- x Physical and social emotional Health.
- x Family supports, including, but not limited to, the provision of basic needs and economic self-sufficiency.
- x Parent leadership and family engagement.
- x Early education, including the child's development of skills linked to success in foundational literacy, and care.
- Community infrastructure.

**% and # of children not reaching targeted outcome(s), broken down by demographics when possible (Targeted Problem(s)):**

**Children ages -0-12 receiving subsidized care (Approved)**

<b>Cheboygan:</b>	<b>2020:65 2.4%</b>	<b>2021: 67 2.5 %</b>	<b>2022- 88 3.2%</b>
<b>Otsego:</b>	<b>2020:207 5.7%</b>	<b>2021: 180 5.0%</b>	<b>2022 : 197 5.4%</b>
<b>Presque Isle:</b>	<b>2020: 35 2.6%</b>	<b>2021: 34 2.6%</b>	<b>2022: 54 4.3%</b>

**Children ages 0-12 Receiving subsidized care ( Payments)**

<b>Cheboygan:</b>	<b>2020: 30 1.1%</b>	<b>2021:37 1.4%</b>	<b>2022: 41 1.5%</b>
<b>Otsego:</b>	<b>2020: 119 3.3%</b>	<b>2021: 118 3.2%</b>	<b>2022: 120:3.3%</b>
<b>Presque Isle:</b>	<b>2020: 17 1.3%</b>	<b>2021: 14 1.1%</b>	<b>2022: 21 1.6%</b>

**3-4 year olds in Preschool**

<b>Cheboygan:</b>	<b>2020:187 43.7%</b>
<b>Otsego:</b>	<b>2020:251 34.7%</b>
<b>Presque Isle:</b>	<b>2020: 99 42.5%</b>

**Children not proficient in third grade English Language Arts**

<b>Cheboygan:</b>	<b>2022: 79 54.5%</b>	<b>2023: 96 51.9%</b>
<b>Otsego:</b>	<b>2022: 132 55.2%</b>	<b>2023:179 68.9%</b>
<b>Presque Isle:</b>	<b>2022: 48 67.6%</b>	<b>2023: 59 62.8%</b>

**Children not proficient in fourth grade English Language Arts**

<b>Cheboygan:</b>	<b>2022:103 70.1%</b>	<b>2023: 79 53.7 %</b>
<b>Otsego:</b>	<b>146 58.2% 58.2%</b>	<b>2023:133 53.6%</b>
<b>Presque Isle:</b>	<b>61 76.3%</b>	<b>2023: 53 69.7%</b>

**Cited Source: Kids Count Data**

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** Increase access to high quality early care and education services and supports.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:**

1. Review and make recommendations regarding the components of the Great Start Readiness Program.
2. In collaboration with the Great Start to Quality Northeast Regional Resource Center, link licensed and registered providers in the GSC/GSPC Cop area to Great Start to Quality for the purpose of achieving higher levels of Quality.
3. Connect parents and caregivers to GSTQ Resource Center for Childcare Resources in the event that public health emergencies require parents/caregivers to connect with local licensed quality childcare providers in the event that local schools close face to face options and/or the family’s current childcare options are closed.
4. Support newly licensed child care providers in the COP counties with funds to help increase access to local quality childcare options and materials.

**Strategy 1:**

The school readiness advisory committee will address the needs of school readiness across the community.

**Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:**

Transportation is a barrier for some families to get children to and from preschool and school.

Public transportation is not available in all communities.

Not all children can/have attended quality preschools.

COVID affected learning opportunities.

Navigating childcare/preschool systems can be difficult. Infant and Toddler care is limited in the COP counties.

Preschool Classrooms are understaffed or no staff, causing classrooms to close.

**Performance Outcome(s):**

1.) Data from the Great Start Readiness Programs(GSRP) is reviewed and discussed to help increase quality in GSRP programs.

2.) Supports are provided to GSRP programs to help address needs in GSRP program.

3.) 4 SRAC meets have held.

4.) SRAC has a diverse membership representing all three COP counties.

5.) GSRP/ Teaching Strategies Gold Data is shared during 3 Data Analysis and Great Start meetings

6.) 5, 000.00 in Funding for Great Start Preschool Scholarships is secured.

7.) 2 new parents are diverse and are active members of the SRAC to provide a parent’s voice/perspective.

Parent Led Strategy

Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment

**System Characteristic(s) Addressed**

Mindsets  Components  
 Connections  Regulations  Resources  Power

**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:** □ Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice □ Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality x Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<b>3.1.a</b> School readiness advisory committee meets with regularity and is comprised of the required and recommended members.	School Readiness Advisory Committee GSC Coordinator SRAC Chair Family Engagement Coalition/GSFES	June 2024	Meeting dates, time and location to meet	Parents, providers, and community members who represent the diversity of the area and programs and services are represented with equal representation and engagement.
<b>3.1.b.</b> Provide support to remove barriers for parents/ caregivers to ensure parent engagement and voice.	GSC Coordinator GSC Co-Coordinator GSC Partners Family Support SRAC	Dec. 2023	Parents Funds	Barriers will be removed in order to have parent engagement and voice present.
<b>3.1.c.</b> Review Great Start Readiness Program data and make recommendations as outlined in Section 32d.	School Readiness Advisory Committee GSC Coordinator	June 2023	Meeting dates, time and location Data from GSRP Programs	Enhancements are made to GSRP based on input from the committee and documented in approved meeting minutes.
<b>3.1.d.</b> Develop a plan to share preschool and school age care options to families as a part of the joint recruitment and enrollment process.	GSFC SRAC	Jan. 2024	Time People List of licensed child care businesses	Plan has been developed, including website and contact information to <a href="http://greatstarttoquality.org">greatstarttoquality.org</a>
<b>3.1.e.</b> Funding for Preschool Scholarship Project will be explored to help increase access to preschool opportunities.	Great Start Collaborative Coordinator Leadership Committee	May 2024	Grant Opportunities Time	Funding for Scholarships is secured.
<b>3.1.f.</b> Great Start COP Preschool scholarships are made available to families of children ages 3&4 to help fill the lack of free preschool opportunities.	Great Start Collaborative Coordinator Leadership Committee	June 2024	Application is live on the COP4kids website Time	Parents and preschools are aware of scholarship opportunities. Scholarship application is on the <a href="http://cop4kids.com">cop4kids.com</a> website.

<p><b>Strategy 2:</b></p> <p>The GSC, GSPC and RC will work in collaboration to engage the community to support and align plans to facilitate childcare availability in the wake of the influx of state and federal funds.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Parents are not aware of Great Start to Quality Resources.</p> <p>Childcare is limited in the COP Counties.</p> <p>Cost for Childcare is expensive.</p> <p>The workforce is lacking people who are interested in the field of early childhood. Preschool programs are closing due to the lack of early childhood staff.</p> <p>Some parents do not have a backup Childcare plan in case of Pandemic emergencies.</p> <p>Navigating childcare/preschool systems can be difficult. Infant and Toddler care is limited in the COP counties.</p> <p>Opening a new licensed child care facility can be expensive.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <p>1.) Increased spaces and/or organizations that can implement childcare, including school age children.</p> <p>2.) Increased family utilization of greatstarttoquality.org to search for childcare and school aged care.</p> <p>3.) Mini grants are given to newly licensed child care providers.</p>
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><b>x Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> x Mindsets x Components x Connections x Regulations x Resources x Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:**  Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment x Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality x Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<p><b>3.2.a</b> Ensure GSRP potential partnership letters are sent to all licensed preschools in the area to increase GSRP partners.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator</p>	<p>Feb. 2024</p>	<p>Mandated Letters Email addresses Time</p>	<p>All licensed preschools have been sent GSRP potential partnership letters.</p>



<p><b>3.2.b.</b> COP GSC will continue to serve on the Northeast Regional Resource Advisory Council to ensure connectivity and to provide input as needed.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSPL</p>	<p>Sept. 2024</p>	<p>Notice of meeting date, locations. links to virtual meetings Time</p>	<p>GSC coordinator has attended Northeast Regional Resource Advisory Council meetings.</p>
<p><b>3.2.c.</b> Great Start to Quality website information will be shared with parents during family engagement events and/or Lunch and Learn Sessions.</p>	<p>GSTQ Staff GSC Coordinator GSFES</p>	<p>Sept. 2024</p>	<p>Website info Time Funds Location of Lunch and Learn Sessions</p>	<p>Lunch &amp; Learn Session has been held with NEGSTQ staff presenting information.</p>
<p><b>3.2.d.</b> Support new child care facilities by offering mini-grants to support childcare providers in opening or enhancing the quality of their child care. Mini-grants may be used for licensing fees, purchasing quality learning materials, or anything else that will support increasing quality.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Co-Coordinator GSC Leadership Committee</p>	<p>Sept. 2024</p>	<p>Funds Process developed Application for funds</p>	<p>Mini grant project application and MOU is developed and shared with new childcare providers.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 3:</b>  The GSC and GSFC will work in collaboration with parents and COP Playgroups to introduce the B-3 Literacy essentials, and Talking is Teaching Campaign by providing tools to assist parents to help children transition into kindergarten successfully.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b>  B-3 Literacy Essentials are not widely recognized.  Not all families have literacy supports available to their families.  Reading scores are low in the COP area.</p>		<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b>  1.) IB-3 Literacy Supports are presented to parents/caregivers in 3 Playgroups.  2.) 15 Families will be introduced to the B-3 Literacy Essentials.  3.) B-3 Literacy Video is produced  4.) B-3 Video is added to Family Kindergarten Guide.  5.) Talking is Teaching Campaign is promoted throughout the community by sharing tools and other Talking is Teaching materials at Family Engagement events.</p>	

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b>  <b>x Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b>		<b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> x Mindsets x Components x Connections x Regulations x Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Power		
<b>Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation				
<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<b>3.3.a</b> Family Kindergarten Guide will be reviewed and updates added, including tuition based Kindergarten programs.	SRAC	Feb. 2024	Time Information from local schools Booklet from last year	Kindergarten Family Guides have been reviewed and updated.
<b>3.3.b.</b> Add B-3 Literacy Essential into the Family Kindergarten Guide, including a video of how to build B-3 Literacy into your everyday routine.	SRAC GSC GSCFEC	March 2023	B-3 Literacy Video Support	B-3 Literacy Essentials video is produced.
<b>3.3.c.</b> Talking is Teaching Kindergarten Transition folders and other Talking is Teaching/Let's Talk about Math materials will be compiled and distributed at Kindergarten and family engagement events.	SRAC GSC Leadership Committee	March 2024	Transition information Talking is Teaching Folders Dates for Family Engagement events Math Materials	Transition folders have been developed and disbursed.
<b>3.3.d.</b> Talking is Teaching campaign will be presented at COP playgroups, including disbursing math and other Talking is Teaching supplies will be disbursed at presentations.	GSC Coordinator GSCFES	August 2024	Talking is Teaching Supplies and materials Dates and locations of COP Playgroups	Talking is Teaching campaign has been presented at COP Playgroups. Talking is Teaching materials have been disbursed to support families with Talking is Teaching activities.

## OUTCOME 4

This Goal, Objective(s) and Strategy(ies) targets the following early childhood outcome(s):

- 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.

Addresses the following early childhood components:

- Physical and social emotional Health.
- Family supports, including, but not limited to, the provision of basic needs and economic self-sufficiency.
- Parent leadership and family engagement.
- Early education, including the child's development of skills linked to success in foundational literacy, and care.
- Community infrastructure.

**% and # of children not reaching targeted outcome(s), broken down by demographics when possible (Targeted Problem(s)):**

### Children not proficient in third grade English Language Arts

Cheboygan: 2022: 79 54.5% 2023: 96 51.9%  
 Otsego: 2022: 132 55.2% 2023: 179 68.9%  
 Presque Isle: 2022: 48 67.6% 2023: 59 62.8%

### Children not proficient in fourth grade English Language Arts

Cheboygan: 2022: 103 70.1% 2023: 79 53.7 %  
 Otsego: 146 58.2% 58.2% 2023: 133 53.6%  
 Presque Isle: 61 76.3% 2023: 53 69.7%

### MI Step Scores 2023

#### COPESD Districts:

2022	3rd Grade ELA	42.9	Math	47.5	4th Grade ELA	36.0	Math	37.8
2023	3rd Grade: ELA	38.1 %	Math:	47.7	4th Grade ELA	43.8	Math	39.2

### Children living in Poverty 0-17

Cheboygan: 2020 : 844 21.7% 2021: 822 20.8%  
 Otsego: 2020: 718 14.3% 2021: 770 15.0%  
 Presque Isle: 2020: 380 20.3% 2021: 446 23.1%

### Children not in preschool: 2017-2021

Cheboygan: 274 54.7 %  
 Otsego: 315 64.0 %  
 Presque Isle: 143 62.5 %

### Cited Source : Kids Count Data

**Goal related to the targeted problem(s):** High quality literacy programs, services and materials are located and offered throughout the Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle communities to allow for equitable access.

**Objective(s) related to the goal:**

1. Parents, caregivers, educators and young children will have access to free age-appropriate children’s books and B-3 Literacy Essentials.
2. The GSC will partner and collaborate with other literacy focused organizations and licensed child care providers in the area to help put books in the hand of parents and children.
3. Parents will have access to B-3 Literacy essentials to help facilitate literacy at home.
4. Collaborate with United Way of Northeast Michigan, Health Department #4 and Northwest Health Department to ensure Dolly Parton Library and PoWer! Books Bags are delivered with fidelity.

**Strategy 1:**

Great Start Collaborative and Family Engagement Coalition will increase access to books and other literacy supports, including; Talking is Teaching campaign, Cheboygan, Otsego and Presque Isle Read Cycle Project, B-3 Literacy Essential outreach efforts.

**Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:**

- Not all children have age appropriate books in their homes.
- The geographical area in the COP is large, making it difficult for families to frequent local libraries and literacy events to obtain books and other literacy materials.
- Library policies and district boundaries can make it difficult for some families to obtain a library card at libraries close to their home.
- Age appropriate books can be costly and difficult to obtain.
- Reading to children at different age levels can be challenging.
- Some people are not familiar with B-3 Literacy Essentials.

**Performance Outcome(s):**

- 1.) 1000 Talking is Teaching calendars and other Talking is Teaching materials are distributed to parents and community partners.
- 2.) 3 Talking is Teaching Posters will be added to Safe Swimming Stations.
- 3.) Literacy essentials will be shared via QR codes on books.
- 4.) 300 books will be distributed throughout the COP area during Family Engagement events and placed in Little Libraries and in Read Cycle bins.
- 5.) 30 Talking is Teaching signs with Preschool enrollment information will be installed in areas where families frequent. Permission is granted from locations that have agreed to house Talking is Teaching signs.
- 6.) Talking is Teaching materials such as blankets, towels, bibs, magnets, posters and other materials will be provided to parents/caregivers and Doulas.
- 7.) Families will have access to high quality literacy materials.

**Parent Led Strategy**

**Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment**

**System Characteristic(s) Addressed**  Mindsets  Components  Connections  Regulations  Resources  Power

**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:** □ Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment □ Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality □ Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<b>4.1.a</b> Develop Talking is Teaching Calendars to increase families/ children literacy skills/ knowledge.	GSCFES GSCFC GSC Family Support/ Literacy Committee	Nov. 2022	Funding Community Partners to help distribute Talking is Teaching Calendars	2023 Talking is Teaching Calendar is developed.  QR Code will be provided to get feedback on use of Talking is Teaching calendars.
<b>4.1.b.</b> Distribute 200 Talking is Teaching Calendars to parents/ caregivers/ Early educators/ caregivers and GSC partners throughout the COP county	GSC Coordinator GSCFES GSC Members	Jan. 2023	Man Power Calendars	Talking is Teaching Calendars have been distributed.
<b>4.1.c.</b> B-3 Literacy Essentials will be presented at Family Engagement events and disbursed through literacy supports and materials, increasing family's knowledge of best practices and access to literacy supports.	GSCFES GSCFC GSC Family Support/ Literacy Committee	Sept. 2023	QR Code Stickers for books and materials	B-3 Literacy Essentials have been presented to families.  QR Code and surveys will be given to families for feedback on materials and event.
<b>4.1.d.</b> Families will have increased access to books through Read Cycle Book Bins, Little Libraries, and at Family Engagement events.	GSC Coordinator GSCFES GSC Members	Sept. 2023	Books Little Libraries Family Engagement event dates/ locations	Books and other literacy tools/support are available in Read Cycle Book Bins, little libraries and given at Family Engagement events.

<p><b>4.1.e.</b> Contact local parks/ township officials in COP communities to get permission for installation of Talking is Teaching Signs placed in local parks, beaches, libraries or other areas where families frequent. Thirty park locations have been identified. Signs will have a Talking is Teaching message on one side with QR code to link them to Literacy Essentials B-3 Essentials focusing on essential #1 &amp; #2. The other side will have information on how to apply for area preschools.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator</p>	<p>Oct. 2023</p>	<p>32 P 6 Funds Meeting time/ location</p>	<p>Locations indicated Permission from parks granted/or other partner locations</p>
<p><b>4.1.f.</b> Install Talking is Teaching Signs in Local parks/safe swimming stations.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Leadership Committee</p>	<p>November 2023</p>	<p>32 P 6 funds Talking is Teaching Signs</p>	<p>Signs are installed in local parks, beaches and other public areas where families frequent.</p>
<p><b>4.1.g.</b> Distribute Talking is Teaching materials such as blankets, towels, magnets, bibs, literacy and other Talking is Teaching items to local COP Doulas, parents, parents and caregivers and child care providers. This work supports the B-3 Literacy Essentials #1 and #2.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Leadership Committee</p>	<p>Dec. 2023</p>	<p>32 P 6 Funds Talking is Teaching Materials Literacy Essentials #1 &amp; #2 resource sheets</p>	<p>Talking is Teaching materials and B-3 Literacy Essentials #1 &amp; #2 resources are provided. Data sheet is maintained to track number of books, materials and sign locations.</p>

<b>Strategy 2:</b>	<b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b>	<b>Performance Outcome(s):</b>
<p>COP Great Start Collaborative will continue to partner with PoWer! Book Bags to bring literacy, learning and writing skill building materials into the hands of children. Funding will be from 32 P 6 Funds and will continue to be sustainable with partial funding from PoWer! Book Bags.</p>	<p>Some parents are unaware of local literacy resources.</p> <p>Some parents do not know how to read, share a book with children.</p> <p>Some communities have very limited or no literacy supports/ resources that are easily accessed.</p> <p>Some organizations/agencies are not aware of what others in the community are doing to build literacy skills in children and families.</p> <p>Some families have limited knowledge about the importance of talking, reading and singing to their children.</p> <p>Books and other learning materials are expensive.</p> <p>Some families do not have books or other literacy materials in their home.</p> <p>Knowledge of the importance of early literacy skill building is limited.</p>	<p>1.) 60 Families are participating in PoWer! Book Bags Literacy program.</p> <p>2.) Partnership has been developed and is on going with Health Departments in Cheboygan, Otsego and Presque Isle Counties MIHP program.</p> <p>3.) Trusted Messenger Slide Show has been developed.</p> <p>4.) 420 People have been trained as Trusted Messengers for PoWer! Book Bags.</p> <p>5.) 100 PoWer! Book Magnets have been distributed to families receiving PoWer! Book Bags.</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b>    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mindsets    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Components <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connections    <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resources    <input type="checkbox"/> Power</p>	
<p><b>Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation</p>		

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<p><b>4.2.a</b> MIHP staff will be trained as Trusted Messengers to help deliver Literacy messages to parents and other caregivers.</p>	<p>PoWer! Book Bag Staff and Advisory members. GSC Coordinator Family Support/ Literacy Committee.</p>	<p>Nov. 2024</p>	<p>Trusted Messenger Slide Show and materials. Time Meeting Space 32P 6 funds</p>	<p>Trusted Messenger Slide Show has been developed.  MIHP staff has attended Trusted Messenger Training.</p>
<p><b>4.2.b.</b> GSC and PoWer! Book bags will partner with Trusted Advisors at the Health Departments in the COP area to bring books, Blocks, writing tools, and age appropriate learning tools/books to families who participate in the Michigan Infant Mental Health Programs in partnership with PoWer! Book Bags. This work supports the Birth – 3 Literacy Essential #7.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSCFES GSFC GSC Family Support/ Literacy Committee</p>	<p>Jan. 2024</p>	<p>PoWer! Book Bag materials Partnership with WIC to access number of families being served.  Literacy Essentials B- 3, essential #7 resource materials.  Blocks 32P 6 funds  Funding from PoWer! Book Bags</p>	<p>PoWer! Book bags have been distributed to families in the MIHP.  Staff working in the MIHP programs will be trained as Trusted Messengers with PoWer! Book Bags staff.</p>
<p><b>4.2.c.</b> Magnets will be developed ,displaying PoWer! Book bag messages to help educate parents/caregivers on the importance of reading, writing and playing.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator Family Support and Literacy Committee PoWer! Book Bag Advisory Council</p>	<p>Jan. 2024</p>	<p>Funds Magnets Message for magnets 32P 6 Funds</p>	<p>PoWer! Book Bag message magnets will be developed and distributed to families receiving PoWer! Book Bags.</p>



<p><b>Strategy 3:</b></p> <p>New Little Libraries will be placed throughout the COP area to bring literacy supports to the families in spaces where children and families frequent.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Some families do not have access to books</p> <p>Not all families have books in their homes</p> <p>Books are expensive</p> <p>Transportation to local libraries can be challenging for some families.</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <p>1.) Family Coalition members have contacted appropriate people to gain permission to install 3 Little Libraries.</p> <p>2.) 3 Little Libraries have been installed or placed in family friendly environments.</p> <p>3.) Family Coalition will help keep the little libraries filled with books and other learning supports.</p> <p>4.) 100 books / Literacy Learning Kits have been added to Little Libraries for families to access.</p>		
<p><b>x Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b>    x Mindsets    x Components x Connections    <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations    x Resources    <input type="checkbox"/> Power</p>			
<p><b>Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan    x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement    x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice    x Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality    x Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation</p>				
<p><b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b></p>	<p><b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Target Dates</b></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b></p>
<p><b>4.3.a</b> Parents will meet to discuss locations and who will contact appropriate people to get approval for locations and installation of Little Libraries.</p>	<p>GSFC GSC Family Engagement Specialist</p>	<p>Nov. 2023</p>	<p>Meeting space Time People</p>	<p>Meeting have been scheduled and held.</p>
<p><b>4.3.b.</b> Little Libraries will be purchased and installed at locations to help increase access to books and literacy/math materials.</p>	<p>GSFC GSC Family Engagement Specialist Literacy Hub of Northeast Michigan</p>	<p>Dec. 2023</p>	<p>Manpower Funds  Posts, cement, tools Literacy and math materials</p>	<p>Little libraries have been purchased.  Books have been purchased.  Literacy and math packets have been put together and distributed.  Little Libraries have been installed at their locations.</p>

<p><b>4.3.c.</b> Little libraries will be filled with literacy and math materials regularly.</p>	<p>GSCFC GSC Family Engagement Specialist</p>	<p>Sep. 2024</p>	<p>Literacy materials/books Math Materials</p>	<p>Books and literacy and math packets are filled on a regular basis</p>
<p><b>Strategy 4:</b>  Dolly Parton Library will be supported in partnership with United Way of Northeast Michigan.</p>		<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b>  COP has many rural towns that need extra literacy support and communication tools that are sustainable and available where children and families are present.  Reading scores, according to MI Step are low in the Presque Isle Counties, showing the need for quality literacy programs are needed in Presque Isle communities.</p>		<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b>  1.) 32 P 6 funds will be used to help support the Dolly Parton Library for Presque Isle County in partnership with the United Way of Northeast Michigan.  2.) Families in Presque Isle County will have access to high quality books and Literacy supports.  3.) 80 additional children will participate in the Dolly Parton library literacy program in Presque Isle County.  4.) United Way of Northeast Michigan will share data derived from families participating in the Dolly Parton library.</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent Led Strategy  <b>x Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>		<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b>    x Mindsets    x Components x Connections    x Regulations    x Resources    <input type="checkbox"/> Power</p>		
<p><b>Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan    x Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement    x Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice    <input type="checkbox"/> Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality    x Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation</p>				
<p><b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b></p>	<p><b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Target Dates</b></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b></p>
<p><b>4.4.a</b> Partnership with United Way of Northeast Michigan will be developed to support Dolly Parton library for Presque Isle County.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator United Way of Northeast Michigan Director COP Early Learning Supervisor</p>	<p>Jan. 2024</p>	<p>32 P 6 Funds Meeting time/location</p>	<p>Meeting was held with Director of Northeast Michigan.</p>
<p><b>4.4.b.</b> MOU will be developed with United Way of Northeast Michigan.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Leadership Committee</p>	<p>Jan. 2024</p>	<p>32 P 6 funds Meeting with UWNEM</p>	<p>MOU is developed</p>

<p><b>4.4.c.</b> MOU is executed and funds are disbursed to support the Dolly Parton Library in Presque Isle County.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Leadership Committee</p>	<p>Jan. 2024</p>	<p>32 P 6 Funds Meeting with UWNEM</p>	<p>MOU is executed Funds are disbursed Children will receive books.</p>
<p><b>4.4.d.</b> The B-3 Literacy Essential #3 will be supported through the Dolly Parton Library. Caregivers will be provided B-3 Literacy Essential #3 resources to build capacity.</p>	<p>GSC Coordinator GSC Literacy Committee</p>	<p>Sept. 2024</p>	<p>Literacy Essential B- 3 Literacy Essential #3 resource materials.</p>	<p>Parents and caregivers are aware of B-3 Literacy Essential #3</p>

<p><b>Strategy 5:</b></p> <p>Support Licensed child care providers with high quality literacy materials to enhance quality of child care facilities and to connect child care providers and parents with B-3 Literacy Essential #10.</p>	<p><b>Prioritized root causes related to the objective and addressed by this strategy:</b></p> <p>Some child care provides do not have access to new books and other literacy supports</p> <p>B-3 Literacy Essentials are not widely known or utilized</p> <p>Kindergarten expectations are not clearly communicated with parents or child care providers</p> <p>Literacy scores are low</p>	<p><b>Performance Outcome(s):</b></p> <p>1.) Child Care Providers have Increased access to early childhood literacy materials and supports.</p> <p>2.) F40 Child Care providers have attended learning opportunities on B-3 Literacy Essentials.</p>
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parent Led Strategy</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy came from Strengthening Families Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>System Characteristic(s) Addressed</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Mindsets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Components <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connections <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Power</p>
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**Alignment with PDG B-5 Activities:**  Activity 1: PDG Needs Assessment  Activity 2: PDG Strategic Plan  Activity 3: Parental Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement  Activity 4: Sharing Best Practice  Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality  Activity 6: Integrated Data for Program Use and Evaluation

<b>Activities (small wins to carry out the strategy)</b>	<b>Persons or Groups Responsible</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Progress Measures (outputs of activities):</b>
<p><b>5.4.a</b> Provide books and B-3 Literacy Essentials Tip Sheets to licensed childcare providers in the COP Counties during Licensing visits, CPR trainings and through trainings with the NERRC.</p>	<p>NERRC Literacy Committee</p>	<p>Sept. 2024</p>	<p>Literacy Essentials Training opportunities</p>	<p>Child Care providers attend B-3 Literacy Essentials learning opportunities.</p>

## Fund Development

The Great Start Collaborative (GSC) of Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle counties has been able to meet the goals of the strategic plan by receiving 32 P state funds, as well as leveraging additional funding and supports to help fund our work when needed. We have been able to extend our Great Start Preschool Scholarship project activities through grants from both private and public funding sources as well as from local businesses, and funds from local community foundations and donors. We have also applied for grants that have occasionally filtered down from the state for specific literacy efforts, including our local Talking is Teaching campaign. In addition, we have been able to use 32p funding to support our local Tapestry home visitation program, which is so beneficial to our local children and families, our family coalition, and other system building work.

Our local partners are vital to the success of the Great Start Collaborative COP and Strategic Plan. Some of our main literacy partners such as; The Otsego County Public Library and Indian River Public Library and Friends of the Library in Case Township provides assistance of their Children's Librarian, Director's and volunteers to help fund stories for the story walks. Friends of Cheboygan Children's Trail and its many partners help provide funding for story walks events and activities. We also receive support from United Way of Northeast Michigan who houses and oversees many of our grants as well as our Great Start Preschool Scholarship Project.

The Great Start Collaborative COP and Great Start Family Coalition will continue to look for untapped resources for funding, support, goals and activities that the GSC has set forth for the next three years. The Great Start Collaborative has developed a plan that is sustainable without the need for any additional funding sources beyond those mentioned above, unless we have new projects that we want or need extra funding for.

In closing, when working to implement the strategic plan, the Great Start Collaborative COP examined innovative ways to work with our current agencies/programs and partners in our county to utilize partner funding sources. Collaborating with our current partners who are working on the same or similar projects will be an asset as we can collaborate to help bring activities to life. As we move forward, we will embrace new ideas for funding as needed, and continue to build community investment in our early childhood efforts. Due to the commitment of the collaborative partnerships, resources have been secured for many of the programs identified in the strategic plan.



*Photos on this page are courtesy of St. John Lutheran  
Preschool in Rogers City, MI*