

Tri-County Head Start

Family Resource Book

2023-2024



www.tricountyhs.org



Congratulations

Welcome to the Tri-County Head Start Family

At Tri-County Head Start we are more than a Preschool; we recognize that parents are a child’s first and most important teacher and that parents are critical in their child’s school readiness. That is why with Head Start, not only do you have the education team to help prepare your child for kindergarten and future school success, but you are also assigned a Family Advocate (FA). For our Home-based families, your Home Visitor (HV) is also your Family Advocate. Your FA /HV will be your link to help you find resources in the community, will complete a strengths assessment with your family, and help your family set and achieve goals.

We take the future success of your family and your child’s education seriously at Head Start and are excited to be on this journey with you.

Your Family Advocate/Home Visitor is: _____

Their Contact information is: _____

Your Child’s School Location is: _____

Your Child’s School/Home Visiting Hours are: _____

This Family Resource Book is provided to you to offer information about resources that may be useful for your family. Please reach out to your Family Advocate/HV if you have questions or need further information and they can assist you in finding the appropriate resource to best fit your needs. Additionally, your input is critical to the success of our organization and the community. If there is a service or resource that you feel should be included in future Family Resource Books please let us know, your ideas are important to us.



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Michigan 2-1-1

Michigan 2-1-1 is a free, confidential service that connects you with local community-based organizations across the state offering thousands of different programs and services for people seeking answers. To connect with Michigan 2-1-1 you can either call 211, or visit their website at www.mi211.org.

Family Well-Being

Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security.

Economic Mobility – Employment, Budget, Finance

- Feed the Pig – Financial Literacy Information
www.feedthepig.org
- Michigan Works! Employment Services (800)533-5800
- Telamon Corporation (269)459-2300
www.telamon.org
- Job Search Websites
 - www.indeed.com
 - www.snagajob.com
 - www.michiganworks.org
 - www.kinexus.org
 - www.michigan.gov/leo

Child Abuse & Domestic Violence

To help with obtaining Personal Protective Orders, crisis intervention, case management, housing placement, emergency shelters, and referral to job training and education.

- Child Help National Child Abuse Hotline (800)422-4453
www.childhelp.org
- Child Protective Services (855)444-3911
- National Domestic Violence Hotline (800)799-7233
www.thehotline.org
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (800)843-5678
www.missingkids.com
- National Sexual Assault Hotline (800)656-4673
www.safehelpline.org

Berrien County

- Berrien County Safe Shelter (269)925-9500

Cass County

- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services (DASAS) (800)828-2023
www.dasasmi.org
(serving Cass, Van Buren, and St. Joseph Counties)

Van Buren County

- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services (DASAS) (800)828-2023
www.dasasmi.org
(serving Cass, Van Buren, and St. Joseph Counties)
- Domestic Violence Coalition (269)655-9008
www.domesticviolencecoalition.org

Clothing, Food, Household and Personal Items

- Feeding America West Michigan
www.feedwm.org/findfood
- We Care I.N.C. – Bangor and South Haven (269)637-4342 or (269)427-9581
www.wecare-inc.org
- Christian Services Center (269)684-0637
222 Clay, Niles
- Decatur Human Services (269)423-6474
www.decaturhumanservices.org
- Edwardsburg Food Pantry (269)699-6133
24832 U.S. 12, Edwardsburg
- Harbor Country Emergency Food Pantry and Thrift Store (269)756-7444
301 N. Elm St, Three Oaks
- Helping Hands (269)445-8104
130 S. Broadway, Cassopolis, www.helpinghandsofcasscounty.org
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (888)642-7434
www.michigan.gov/mibridges
- Neighbor 2 Neighbor (need a referral) (269)471-7411
www.n2nhelps.com
- Goodwill of Southwestern Michigan (269)382-0490
www.goodwillswmi.org
- Redbud Area Ministries (269)695-5083
708 Red Bud Trail, Buchanan
- Salvation Army (269)684-2660
424 N. 15th, Niles
- Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency (269)674-7175
www.smcaa.com
- Harbor Mission (269)326-0077
9600 Red Arrow Hwy Bridgman
- Love Care (269)236-6295
943 56th St. Pullman
- Lydia’s Closet (269)415-0767
600 E. Michigan, Paw Paw
- Eleanor’s Food Pantry (260)415-0444
221 Drew Street, Paw Paw
- Townline Resource Center (Open Tuesday 12-3) (269)521-4559
113 W. Main Street, Breedsville
- United Civic Organization (269)764-8854
73292 34th Ave, Covert
- Our Father’s Family Keepers (269)476-1257
Cass County Location, Open to all counties
- Spero House (269)240-7177
603 N 2nd Street, Niles
- First Presbyterian Church – The Kids Closet at Ellis House (269)683-7600
11 S. 4th Street, Niles

Family Emergencies & Safety

To help families experiencing emergencies and emergency preparedness and safety and injury prevention.

- American Red Cross Disaster Relief (800)733-2767
www.redcross.org
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (888)642-7434
www.michigan.gov/mibridges
- Poison Control (800)222-1222
www.poisonhelp.org
- The Salvation Army (800)725-2769
www.salvationarmyusa.org
- Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency (269)925-9077
www.smcaa.com
- Mental Health – 24 Hour Crisis (800)922-1418
421-421 text “hand”
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline 988
- Veteran Crisis Hotline 988 x1

Berrien County

- Animal Control (269)927-5648
1400 S. Euclid Benton Harbor

Cass County

- Helping Hands of Cass County (269)445-8104
130 S. Broadway, Cassopolis
www.helpinghandsofcasscounty.org
- R.A.D. Rape, Aggression, Defense (269)445-1201
Through Cass County Sheriffs Office or
http://www.rad-systems.com/rad_programs.html
- Animal Control / Humane Society (269)445-3701
323 M-62 Cassopolis

Van Buren County

- Animal Control (269)621-4624
58040 Co Rd 681 Hartford

Health (Dental)

Berrien County

- Harbor Dental (269)927-1313
143 E. Main, Benton Harbor
- Cynthia Liebelt DDS (269)468-6794
292 W. St. Joseph St, Coloma
- InterCare - Benton Harbor (269)927-5300
800 M-139, Benton Harbor
- InterCare – Eau Claire (269)461-6927
6270 West Main, Eau Claire

- Brite Dental (269)471-7970
401 W. Ferry, Berrien Springs
- Red Arrow Dentistry (269)465-3001
9500 Red Arrow Hwy, Bridgman
- Niles Community Health Center (269)262-4364
122 Grant, Niles
- Dr. Beckmeyer (269)683-6461
123 Marmont, Niles
- Sure Family Dental (269)262-4689
1111 Lambert, Niles
- Dr. Jilek (269)695-3601
121 Main St, Buchanan
- Dr. Darlene Getz (269)468-5741
213 N. Paw Paw St., Coloma

Cass County

- Cassopolis Dental (269)445-8636
62225 M-62, Cassopolis
- Smile Center (269)445-5550
110 S. Broadway St, Cassopolis
- Community Dental Clinics (888)782-0064
302 Front St, Dowagiac

Van Buren County

- InterCare – Bangor (269)427-7969
308 Charles St, Bangor
- Dr. Craig Herrmann (269)427-7106
102 Monroe St, Bangor
- Decatur Family Dentistry (269)423-7025
321 W. Delaware St, Decatur
- Dr. Carl Druskovich (269)423-7866
45140 M-51, Decatur
- Gobles Family Dentistry (269)628-2186
13910 M-40 Hwy, Gobles
- Community Dental Clinic – Mattawan (269)668-6715
23200 Red Arrow Hwy, Mattawan
- Community Dental Clinic – Hartford (269)621-6159
57418 CR 681, Hartford
- Paw Paw Family Dentistry (269)657-4100
32800 E. Red Arrow Hwy, Paw Paw
- Dr. Jenny Grunberg (269)657-3900
54055 CR 653, Paw Paw
- South Haven Family Dentists (269)637-1306
1088 Bailey St, Ste. A, South Haven
- Dr. Vern Ticknor (269)637-1281
900 S. Bailey St, South Haven

- Dr. Norman Maly (269)637-2603
05055 Blue Star Hwy., South Haven
- Dr. DellaVecchia Dental Services (269)857-1431
430 Wiley Rd, Douglas

Surrounding Areas

- InterCare – Holland (616)738-8978
285 James St, Holland
- InterCare – Pullman (269)236-5027
5498 109th Ave, Pullman
- Oshtemo Family Dentistry – Kalamazoo (Does not accept Medicaid) (269)372-1042
5917 Stadium Dr, Kalamazoo
- Small Smiles – Mishawaka (574)259-5437
2332 Miracle Lane, Mishawaka
- Kalamazoo Pediatric Dentistry (269)343-5386
621 W. Centre Ave, Portage
- Port Pediatric Dentistry - Holland (616)392-1100
291 Lakewood Blvd, Holland
- West Michigan Pediatric Dentistry – Holland (616)392-2381
844 S. Washington, Ste 4100, Holland
- Dr. Blank – Three Rivers (269)244-3705
213 Spring St, Three Rivers
- Dr. Dellavecchia (269)857-1431
430 Wiley Rd, Douglas

Health (Vision)

- Allegan Eyecare (269)673-5100
123 Locust St, Allegan
- Dr. K. August (269)345-4425
4425 W. Main St, Kalamazoo
- Floods Vision Center (269)408-8762
2603 Niles Ave., St. Joseph
- Dr. Jeffrey Scieska (269)429-6781
2810 Niles Road, St. Joseph
- Hiemstra Optical (269)657-4551
133 E. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw
- South Haven EyeCare Associates (269)637-1442
1088 S. Bailey Ave, South Haven
- Advanced Eye Care (269)982-4237
88 W. Main St, Benton Harbor
- Kalamazoo Valley Eyecare (269)375-3937
4855 W. Centre Ave., Portage
- Niles Vision Center (269)683-4040
9 South Ave., Niles
- Southwest Vision Center (269)414-4492
69001 M-62, Ste. E, Edwardsburg
(269)659-9011
1045 E. Front St., Ste. B4, Buchanan

- RX Optical (269)684-1330
1421 S. 11th St, Niles

Health (General)

- Constance Brown Hearing Center (269)343-2601
1634 Gull Road, Kalamazoo
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (888)642-7434
www.michigan.gov/mibridges
- La Leche League
www.lalecheleague.org
- MSU Extension Services
Provides educational materials, and programs about meal planning, food storage, gardening, composting, farming, Build Strong Families, 4-H Youth Program, and Natural Resources policy.
 - Benton Harbor (269)944-4126
 - Cassopolis (269)445-4438
 - Paw Paw (269)657-8213
- Women Infants & Children (WIC)
www.fns.usda.gov/wic
Nutritional Services for children birth to five years, pregnant women, and postpartum women.
 - Benton Harbor (269)927-5646
 - Niles (269)684-2800 ext. 6511
 - Three Oaks (269)759-2008
 - Dowagiac (269)782-3374
 - Bangor (269)427-7914
 - Paw Paw (269)655-8900
- Children’s Special Health Care Services
 - Berrien (269)629-7121
 - Cass & Van Buren (269)621-3143

Berrien County

- Benton Harbor Health Center (269)926-8535
- Great Lakes Medical Clinic (269)925-8386
850 Pipestone Suite 102 B, Benton Harbor
- InterCare - Benton Harbor (269)927-5400
800 M-139, Benton Harbor
- InterCare – Eau Claire (269)461-6927
6270 W. Main St, Eau Claire
- Dr. Tynes - Benton Harbor (269)926-8535
687 E. Empire Ave, Suite 101, Benton Harbor
- Coloma Medical Center (269)463-3600
6701 Paw Paw Ave, Coloma
- Southwestern Medical Clinic – Stevensville (269)429-6604
5515 Cleveland Ave, Stevensville
- Lakeland Family Medical – Niles (269)684-6000
4 Long Meadow Village Dr, Niles

- Southwestern Medical Clinic - Niles (269)687-0200
2002 South 11th St, Niles
- Cass Family Clinic – Niles (269)262-4749
24 N. St. Joseph Ave, Suite G, Niles

Cass County

- Cass Family Clinic (269)445-3847
261 M-62, Cassopolis
- Edwardsburg Family Medicine (269)663-8288
27082 Main St, Edwardsburg
- Borgess Lee Medical Group – Dowagiac (269)783-2080
520 Main St, Ste C, Dowagiac

Van Buren County

- InterCare – Bangor (269)427-7969
308 Charles St, Bangor
- Bronson LakeView Family Care – Bangor (269)427-8511
520 Railroad St, Bangor
- Bronson Lakeview Family Care – Decatur (269)423-7028
319 W. Delaware, Decatur
- Bronson Lakeview Family Care – Paw Paw (269)657-2550
541 Health Pkwy, Suite A, Paw Paw
- Bronson Lakeview Family Care – Mattawan (269)668-3348
52374 N Main St, Mattawan
- Bronson Pediatrics – Paw Paw (269)655-3090
451 Health Parkway, Suite E, Paw Paw
- Lakeland Community Watervliet (269)463-3600
525 S. Center St, Hartford
- Dr. Ravi - Hartford (269)621-2166
30 W. Main St, Hartford
- Shoreline Family Care – South Haven (269)639-2772
965 S. Bailey Ave, Suite 2-4, South Haven
- South Haven Family Physicians (269)637-1115
930 Blue Star Hwy, South Haven
- Riverside Medical – South Haven (269)637-2102
203 S. Center, South Haven
- Staff Medical Center (269)463-3600
525 S. Center St., Hartford

Health Departments

Health Department - Appointments are Required and some restrictions may apply. Offers a variety of services including immunizations and family planning.

- Benton Harbor (269)927-5638
- Niles (269)684-2800
- Three Oaks (269)765-2008
- Cassopolis (269)445-5280

- Three Rivers (269)273-2161
- Hartford (269)621-3143
- Bangor (269)427-7969
- Allegan (269)673-5411

Housing and Homelessness

To help with weatherization, repairs, emergency utilities, rent assistance, assistance in purchasing, rent subsidy, and shelter information.

- Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency (800)334-7670
www.smcaa.com
- Rural Development – USDA (269)657-7055 ext. 4
www.rd.usda.gov
- Michigan State Housing Development Authority (866)946-7432
www.stepforwardmichigan.org
- Housing Assessment & Resource Agency (HARA)
 - Benton Harbor (269)677-5055
 - Centerville (269)467-9081
- Buss Housing Commission – Benton Harbor (269)927-3544
- Benton Township Housing Commission (269)927-3541
- Niles Housing Commission (888)299-3288
- Lakeview Terrace – St. Joseph (269)983-2814
- Dowagiac Housing Commission (269)782-3786
- Bangor Housing Commission (269)427-5535
- Covert Public Housing (269)764-8881
- South Haven Housing Commission (269)637-5755

Emergency Shelters

- Emergency Shelter Services – Benton Harbor (269)925-1131
- The Salvation Army (269)927-1353
www.salvationarmyusa.org
- Domestic & Sexual Abuse Services – Cass & Van Buren Counties (800)828-2023
www.dasasmi.org
- YWCA for Domestic Violence (574)233-9491
- Decatur Family Shelter (269)905-4526

Life Goals and Aspirations

- Life Goals
www.lifegoals.org
www.actionforhappiness.org
www.sparkpeople.com
- Free Learning Opportunities
www.khanacademy.org
www.edx.org
www.coursera.org

Substance Abuse & Addiction

To help people abusing substances and their families find addiction treatment and recovery services, mental health counseling, children and family support, and education and prevention resources.

- Al-Anon/Alcoholics Anonymous
www.aa.org
- National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Hotline (800)662-4357
- Meth Tip Hotline (866)638-4847
- Community Healing Center (800)338-5444
www.communityhealingcenter.org
- Addictions and Alcohol Hotline (212)870-3400

Berrien County

- Berrien County Health Department (269)926-7121
- Carol's Hope (800)338-5444
- Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Center (269)815-5500
6418 Drans Hill Rd, Berrien Center
- Harbortown Treatment Center (269)815-0015
1022 E. Main, Benton Harbor

Cass & Van Buren County

- Van Buren/Cass Health Department (800)210-1921

Other Family Services

- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Mentoring program for children.
 - Berrien & Cass Counties (269)684-1100
 - Van Buren (269)382-6800
- Parent Help Line (855)427-2736
Confidential help for parents and children, crisis intervention, referrals for parenting classes and support groups.
- Logan Autism Learning Center (269)983-5833
1651 Nickerson Ave, Benton Harbor

Positive Parent-Child Relationships

Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child’s learning and development.

Mental Health

- Riverwood Center (Benton Harbor & Niles) (800)336-0341
www.riverwoodcenter.org
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800)784-2433
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- Community Healing Center – Kalamazoo (269)343-1651
www.communityhealingcenter.org
- Gryphon Place (269)381-4357
- Men in Crisis (269)422-2120
- All Three Counties – Anonymous Crisis Hotline Text “Hand” to 741-741

Berrien County

- Child and Family Services (888)237-1891
www.cfsswmi.org
- Freedom Counseling Center (269)982-7200
www.freedomcounselingusa.com
- Riverwood Mental Health (800)336-0341
www.riverwoodcenter.org
- Centered on Wellness (269)926-6199
www.centeredonwellness.info
- Lakeland Medical Center (269)683-6859
www.lakelandhealth.org/medical-services/mental-health
- Lakeland Center for Better Health (269)408-2258
100 w. Main Street, Benton Harbor
- Shepard House (800)687-0907
www.shepardhousecounseling.com
- Haelan Counseling Center (269)683-8972
109 N. 3rd St, Niles
- Hope Center of Coloma (269)556-1526

Cass County

- Woodlands Behavioral Health Care Center (269)445-2451
- Shepard House (269)445-0999

Van Buren County

- Community Mental Health (800)922-1418 (269)657-5574
- Hope Center (888)516-4673
- Associated Therapy (269)657-2880
- Maple view Consultation Center (269)657-6025

Fatherhood Engagement

- Website and Apps
 - 24/7 Dad to go app
 - www.fatherhood.gov
 - Fatherwork.byu.edu/activities.htm
 - <https://f15.fatherhood.org/vbgspc>

Paternity and Custodial Rights

TCHS will **always** follow whatever the most recent order from the court states. TCHS will **NEVER** side with one parent over another in the case of a custody battle.

- In the case of Divorced Parents – When a child was conceived or born during the course of the marriage, there will be a section in the divorce paperwork from the court outlining physical and legal custody that determines the custodial parent(s) right(s).
 - TCHS will follow the court paperwork (or most recent amended order) when determining who can pick the child up, who to contact in emergencies, who may add/remove people from the Child Information Card, Who can gain access to academic/attendance information and who can volunteer in the classroom.
- In the case of Parents who were never married - In the state of Michigan, the father does not have any innate rights to the child, if the parents were not married at the time of birth or conception. The father’s name on the birth certificate does not grant him any physical or legal custody of the child. In Michigan, for the father (if the parents were not married at the time of birth or conception) to gain any rights or responsibilities of the child, is to file for an affidavit of parentage. The affidavit of parentage does not provide physical custody of the child, it only provides legal custody. Legal Custody is needed to go to the court to start a custody order to gain physical custody of the child.

Paternity

- Family and Child Services, Child Welfare (269)344-0202
1608 Lake Street, Kalamazoo
- Van Buren County Friend of the Court – 24/7 Dad (269)657-7734
www.vbco.org/vbcfoc.asp
- Michigan Child Support (866)540-0008
Michigan.Gov/Childsupport
- Michigan Custodial Rights
www.michigan.gov/dadventure
- Paternity and Custody Websites
Courts.michigan.gov/self-help/center/casetype/pages/paternity.aspx
www.fcsource.org

Kinship Care

- Kinship Care Websites
Kinship.msu.edu
Childwelfare.gov/topics/supporting/
Childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/kinship

Families as Lifelong Educators

Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school, and in their communities.

Family

- Ferry Street School Community Resource Center - Niles (269)687-9860
Assists residents in getting support services: GED Preparation, Job Training
- Family Planning – Family Planning Education and Resources (269)757-7342
www.Lifeplan.org

Early Education

- Michigan Migrant Head Start (Telamon) (800)782-7831
- Child Care Resources (800)343-3470

Intermediate School Districts

Evaluation and services for children with delays in development, Gifted and Talented Program, vocational/educational programs, Single-Parent Program including child care, hearing and speech therapy, transportation, and job training.

- Berrien RESA (269)471-7725
711 St. Joseph Ave, Berrien Springs
 - Early On – Parents as Teachers
 - PAT Caregiver Educator Program
 - PAT Playgroups, Great Start
- Lewis Cass ISD (269)445-3891
61682 Dailey Road, Cassopolis
 - Early On
 - Great Start
- Van Buren ISD (269)674-8091
490 S. Paw Paw, Lawrence
 - Project Find
 - Early On
 - Great Start

Families as Learners

Parents and Families advance their own learning interests through education, training, and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.

Adult Education – GED & Diploma completion

Berrien County

- Michigan Works Adult Education (269)277-5122
499 W Main St, Benton Harbor
- Cedar Lane Alternative High School (269)684-9554
2301 Niles - Buchanan Rd, Niles
- Niles Adult & Community Education (269)684-4480
111 Spruce St, Niles
- Brandywine Adult & Community Education (269)683-8805 ext. 1
1830 S Third St, Niles
- LMC – Center for Educational Opportunities (269)927-8869 or (269)927-8965
- Berrien Springs Public Library (ESL) (269)473-0501
Discovery Academy 1 Sylvester Ave, Berrien Springs
- Benton Harbor Area Schools (269)277-5122 ext. 1419
(Adult Basic Education/GED)
777 Riverview Dr., Ste. B, Benton Harbor

Cass County

- Pathfinders Adult Education (269)782-4471
501 N Paul St., Dowagiac
- Cassopolis Adult Alternative Education (269)445-0536
725 Center St., Cassopolis

Van Buren County

- Bangor Community and Adult Education (269)427-6800 Ext. 2100
12 N. Walnut, Bangor
- Hartford Alternative Education for Teens & Adults (269)621-7143
115 School Street, Hartford
- Paw Paw Community Education (269)415-5700
600 E Michigan, Paw Paw
- Van Buren ISD & Technology Center (269)974-8091
250 South Street, Lawrence

Colleges/Universities

- Andrews University www.andrews.edu
Berrien Springs
- Glen Oaks Community College www.glenoaks.edu
Centerville

- Kalamazoo College www.kzoo.edu
Kalamazoo
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College www.kvcc.edu
Kalamazoo
- Lake Michigan College www.lakemichigancollege.edu
Benton Harbor, Niles, South Haven
- Southwestern Michigan College www.swmich.edu
Dowagiac
- Western Michigan University www.wmich.edu
Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor

E.S.L. Classes

Berrien County

- Berrien Springs Public Schools Discovery Academy (269)473-0501
Adult ESL. 242 Sylvester Ave, Berrien Springs
Homeoftheshamrocks.org/adult-education-esl.html

Kalamazoo

- Kalamazoo Public Schools Community Education Center (269)337-0422
715 S. Westnedge Ave, Kalamazoo

Van Buren

- Van Buren ISD Bangor Community Education (269)427-6800 x 2100
12 N. Walnut St, Bangor
- Van Buren ISD Covert (269)764-3703
- Van Buren ISD Pullman (269)236-5235

Family Engagement in Transitions

Parents and families support and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including Early Head Start to Head Start; Head Start or Early Head Start to other early learning environments; and Head Start to kindergarten through elementary school.

Parent Will – Custody of Child(ren)

Over a Minor Child

In the unfortunate circumstance that a single parent passes unexpectedly, the primary caregiver must have a Will written determining who is granted custody of their child(ren). The absence of such Will could result in the child(ren) being placed in CPS and/or Foster Care.

- www.nolo.com
- www.legalzoom.com
- www.michiganlegalhelp.org

Power of Attorney

Over a Minor Child

There may be situations that require another person to act as parental authority for your child. This person can perform a range of functions which can include parental/guardian duties related to basic care, school, consenting to medical treatment, etc. Should this type of situation occur a written document should be obtained, like the sample below, and if possible be Notarized, by a Notary Public. Please note that the time period cannot exceed six months.

Parental Authority Release	
I, _____, hereby give my permission (Current legal parent or guardian)	
to _____, to act as a parental authority for my (Person to who Authority is given)	
child, _____, in my absence. (Legal name of child)	
This authorization is valid from _____ (Time Period Begin Date)	to _____ (Time Period End Date)
Signature _____ (Current legal parent or guardian)	
Date _____ (Today’s date)	

Family Connection to Peers and Community

Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive, educational, and enhance social well-being and community life.

- American Diabetic Association (800)342-2383
- Autism Learning Center – St. Joseph (269)983-5833
- Autism Society of Michigan (800)223-6722
- Berrien County Hearing Impaired Program (269)471-7724
- Brain Injury Association (800)444-6443
- CDC Info (800)232-4636
- CHADD (Children & Adults with ADD) (800)233-4050
- Council on Aging – Cassopolis (800)323-0390
- Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (855)372-5297
- Easter Seals Michigan (800)292-2729
- First Candle (203)966-1300
www.firstcandle.org
- Multiple Sclerosis Foundation (800)441-7055
- National Dollar General Literacy Foundation (877)389-6874
- National Down Syndrome Society (800)221-4602
- National Information Center for Children & Youth with Disabilities (800)695-0285
- National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) (800)999-6673
- National Reye’s Syndrome (800)233-7393
- Native American Affairs and Indian Outreach Services (269)621-2802
- Neighborhood Watch (616)730-1267
- Senior Services – St. Joseph (800)654-2810
- United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan (800)828-2714
- Veteran’s Services (269)654-7376

Great Start Parent Coalitions

Parent Coalitions are available in every county in Michigan as a way for parents to become advocates for their children’s education. They are open to all parents in each county, and work to help parents become involved in their community by making each county a great place for families to live. Connect with them on Facebook or their websites to learn about their family events and coalition meetings. Free to join and get your voice heard.

- **Berrien County Parent Coalition**
www.greatstartberrien.org or on Facebook - Berrien County Great Start Collaborative
- **Cass County Parent Coalition**
www.greatstartcass.org or on Facebook – Cass County Great Start Parent Coalition
- **Van Buren Parent Coalition**
www.greatstart-vanburen.org or on Facebook – Van Buren Great Start Parent Coalition

Boys & Girls Club

Club programs and services promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence.

- Benton Harbor (269)926-8766

H.O.P.E Parent Resource Center

- South Haven (269)872-3172

Libraries

Berrien County

- Benton Harbor Public Library (269)926-6139
213 E. Wall
- Berrien Springs Community Library (269)471-7074
215 West Union Street
- Bridgman Public Library (269)465-3663
4460 Lake St
- Buchanan District Library (269)695-3681
128 E Front St
- Coloma Public Library (269)468-3431
151 W Center St
- Eau Claire District Library (269)461-6241
6528 E Main St
- Galien Township Public Library (269)545-8281
302 N Cleveland Ave
- Lake Michigan College (269)927-8605
William Hessel Library
2755 E Napier Ave Room L-100 Benton Harbor
- Lincoln Township Public Library (269)429-9575
2099 West John Beers Rd, Stevensville
- Maud Preston Palenske Memorial (269)983-7167
500 Market St - St. Joseph
- New Buffalo Township (269)469-2933
33 Thompson St
- Niles District Library (269)683-0075
620 E Main - Niles
- Niles Area SMC Library (800)456-8675 ext. 3001
33890 US Hwy 12 – Niles
- Sodus Township Library (269)925-0903
3776 Naomi Rd – Sodus
- Three Oaks Township Public (269)756-5621
3 North Elm St - Three Oaks
- Watervliet District Library (269)463-6382
333 N Main St - Watervliet

Cass County

- Cass District Library (269)357-7822
319 M 62 – Cassopolis

- Dowagiac District Library (269)782-3826
211 Commercial St – Dowagiac
- Edwardsburg Branch Library (269)663-5875
26745 Church St
- Howard Branch Library (269)684-1680
2341 Yankee – Niles
- Marcellus Township Wood Mem. (269)646-9654
205 Main St - Marcellus
- Mason-Union Branch Library (269)641-7674
17049 US 12 East – Edwardsburg
- Southwestern Michigan College (269)782-1339/(800)456-8675 ext. 1339
Fred L Mathews Library
58900 Cherry Grove Rd, Dowagiac

Van Buren County

- Antwerp Sunshine Branch Library (269)668-2534
24823 Front St, Mattawan
- Bangor Branch Library (269)427-8810
420 Division St
- Bloomingdale Branch Library (269)521-7601
109 E Kalamazoo Ave
- Covert Branch Library (269)764-1298
33805 M-140 Highway
- Gobles Branch Library (269)628-4537
105 E Main
- Hartford Public Library (269)621-3408
15 Franklin St
- Lawrence Branch Library (269)674-3200
212 N Paw Paw St
- Lawton Public Library (269)624-5481
125 S Main
- Paw Paw District Library (269)657-3800
609 W Michigan Ave
- South Haven Memorial Library (269)637-2403
314 Broadway St
- Van Buren District Library (269)423-4771
200 N. Phelps St, Decatur

Transportation

Berrien County

- Dial-a-Ride
 - Benton Harbor (269)927-4461
 - Niles (269)684-5150
- Berrien Bus/Buchanan Dial-a-Ride (800)654-1827
- Medic 1
 - Emergencies (269)925-2143
 - Non-Emergencies (269)925-2144
- Berrien County DHHS Medical Transportation (269)934-2000

Cass County

- Cass County Public Transit (269)445-2455
- Dial-a-Ride – Dowagiac (269)782-3300
- Cass County DHHS Medical Transportation (269)445-8110

Van Buren County

- Van Buren Transit (800)323-2508
- Van Buren DHHS Medical Transportation (269)621-2800

Families as Advocates and Leaders

Families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, or community and state organizing activities to improve children’s development and learning experiences.

- ARC of Michigan (Advocacy for Developmentally Disabled) (800)292-7851
- Michigan Alliance for Families (800)552-4821
www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org
- Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, Inc. (800)288-5923
 Advocated for civil and legal rights of people with disabilities

Tri-County Policy Council and Parent Meetings

At Tri-County Head Start, parents are essential to our existence. Join us at our Parent Meetings. Meetings are held at each center to give a voice to parents in the program about ideas or suggestions to make our program better. A member of the parent meeting is voted onto Policy Council. Your Policy Council representative is part of the governance of our program. The Policy Council members bring your ideas to monthly meetings where program plans are discussed and approved or disapproved. Contact your Family Advocate, Home Visitor or your child’s Teacher to learn more.

Registering to Vote

Registering to vote in Michigan is easy and voting is one of the best ways to advocate for your child’s future success. Go to www.michigan.gov/vote to learn more.

Legal Aid

- West Michigan Legal Services
 - Client Hotline (800)819-0773
 - Legal Helpline (888)418-1311
- Farmworker Legal Services (269)492-7190
- Justice for Our Neighbors (Kalamazoo Office) (269)743-2501
- Diocese of Kalamazoo – Immigration Assistance Program (269)385-1019
Diokzoo.org/immigration-assistance-program
- Hispanic American Council Inc (269)385-6279