



Greene County Board of D.D. *Four Oaks Early Intervention*

EI Adventure Map

Spring 2022 edition

www.greenedd.org

Leadership Cove

Dear Parents,

As we move through the Spring months and hopefully clear skies and warmer weather, we hope everyone can all get out of the house and enjoy the sunshine! As mothers of busy young children ourselves, we understand the need to venture outside to get the wiggles out!

Over the past few years, we have become proficient and knowledgeable in offering multiple options for service delivery and have found they are all successful and valuable. It excites us to have the ability to mold services depending on your family's individual needs and unique learning styles. We are very appreciative of your support and understanding as we continue to make adjustments to best serve Greene County families safely and appropriately.

Our service delivery model, the Primary Service Provider (PSP) approach has proven to be extremely beneficial. It stresses the importance for the provider to coach caregiver(s) in encouraging and supporting their children during their everyday routines and natural environments. Expanding our methods of service delivery to include virtual visits has had a greatly positive impact on the consultative coaching model and building up caregiver's competence and confidence.

Please know that we are here to support the families of Greene County and provide the best quality services for all.

With Gratitude,

Jennifer Frey, Early Childhood Program Director

&

Andrea Geiger, Early Childhood Program Manager

Bulletin Blvd.

Important Dates:

Primary Service Provider Meetings: Tuesdays, *contact PSP for details*

Four Oaks Closed:

May 30th. Memorial Day

June 20th Observation of Juneteenth

Hours/Delivery of Services:

Monday through Friday: 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Four Oaks direct staff will continue providing virtual visits to our EI families as they work to have discussions with each about service delivery options. Service delivery will be discussed and be decided jointly amongst the EI team (your family included). Virtual visits will continue to be the primary mode of service delivery, and will continue to be an option in the future. In addition, EI staff will continue working remotely and as needed in the office for the foreseeable future. Four Oaks staff are available during typical business hours.

Need to reschedule ?

Please call your
Primary Service
Provider (PSP) or the
Four Oaks scheduler at
(937)562-7003

Parent/Caregivers Welcome Way

With our Primary Service Provider (PSP) evidence-based practices, every family has access to a multidisciplinary Core Team consisting of our Developmental Specialists (DS), Occupational Therapists (OT), Physical Therapists (PT), Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP) and Early Intervention Service Coordinators (EISC). We have also continued to work closely with other agencies in the area to better meet specific needs such as the Deaf Community Resource Center, The Ohio State School for the Blind, and Child Focus (Infant Mental Health). In addition, we have available, our Program Licensed Social Worker and Sign Language Specialist.

We want to remind families that you have access to weekly Core Team meetings that include updates, coaching, and discussion about how to best meet your family needs and how to best promote your child's learning and development. Each child is updated quarterly and discussed during coaching when needed. Families are welcome to attend via virtual platform (Zoom), or call in during the portion of the meeting that their child and family are being discussed. Please contact your PSP if you would like to be in attendance or if you would like more information.

Resource Rd.

- Looking for the latest Program information and upcoming activities? Check us out at the following sites:
Greene County Board of DD website: www.greenedd.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/greencountydd/>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/greenecodd1>
- For additional support and information on motor, sensory or communication development visit www.pathways.org
- **Green County Parks and Trails:** <https://www.gcparkstrails.com/events/>
There are Programs planned for the rest of 2022!
 - *The monthly Calendar view is best to see all events and availability.
 - *With the *Wiggle Worms* Program (ages toddler-Preschooler)-held every month on 3rd Thursday, FREE, 10-12. A Drop-In Format, to be supervised by caregiver/parent
- **Greene County Playgrounds & Trails:** <https://www.gcparkstrails.com/parks-trails/>
Favorites include: Glen Helen Nature Preserve (Yellow Springs) is the Glen Helen Raptor Center.
-The Narrows Reserve (Xenia) has a smaller Raptor & Bird house.
- **Greene County Public Library.** <https://greenelibrary.info/>
 - *Depending on Branch Location, there are Story times, for babies/toddlers, Preschoolers.
 - *Also at the Public Library branches- Take and Create Kits for Toddlers/Preschoolers. **FREE.** Ask at Children's Section or Reference Desk.
 - *There are several fun events, 'one time only', planned for 2022 that include older children, adults. Even an Animal Petting Event in June at the Bellbrook Branch Location!
 - Other Story times **Free**
 - *Barnes & Noble (Beavercreek) Saturdays at 11:00. All Ages. (You can call in advance to hear what books to be presented)
 - *Books & Co (Beavercreek, The Greene) and Half Price Books (Beavercreek) have 'tentative' plans to hold regular story time. It is on hiatus currently& waiting to get approval from Mgmt.
- **Indoor Play Areas Free**
 - *Fairfield Commons Mall (2nd Floor)
 - *Fairhaven Church (Centerville location) has a fun medium size indoor play place area that you need to register in advance for to use Mon-Thurs (11-12:45; 1-2:45) Call at 937-434-8627 ext. 180 or online register <https://brushfire.com/fairhaven-church/PlayArea/532325>
- **Other Ideas for Free Fun**
 - * Pet Stores to see the pups, fish, birds, etc.
 - * Call a Fire Station and ask to have a tour.

Children's Mental Health

Infants and preschoolers in a digital world.

Did you know young children can struggle with mental health?

Often, a child's way to show they are struggling is to act out. Time and again, these behaviors are misunderstood and viewed as "bad behaviors" or "bad parenting" especially if the child cannot speak yet or has no words to express what they're feeling. Technology has become one way to "help" calm these behaviors. As a lot of parent/caregivers have discovered, when technology comes on, children are drawn to it. However, real life learning opportunities are key to building social skills and emotional regulation.

Technology's Impact on Children

Unhealthy technology use can disrupt a child's typical developmental. The risk for children under the age of 6 is magnified due to the rapid brain growth and skill development happening during this period. According to researchers at the Center on Developing Child at Harvard University, more than one million new neural connections form every second during the first few years of life. Children need a variety of experiences to learn how to be social thinkers, handle stressful and upsetting situations, and to build resiliency.

A child's ability to learn new things, be calm, pay attention, remember details, learn to talk, and regulate emotions is hindered by background television. The shocking fact is children under 3 are being exposed to an average of 5.5



hours of background television per day. *That's 40% of a child's waking life!*

Excessive, unmonitored screen time can damage mental health and can have lasting effects, such as:

- unseen damage to brain development = cognitive delays, psychosocial delays
- less activity and movement = physical or motor delays, obesity, trouble sleeping
- fewer words spoken in home = language delays
- fewer interactions = social-emotional delays, difficulty forming relationships

Too much screen time is like too much sugar. A little bit can make life sweeter, but too much can rot your teeth and ruin your health. It's about finding a healthy balance.

So How Much Is Too Much?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends:

- NO screen time exposure for infants and toddlers, with the only exception being connecting with loved ones on a screen.
- For children ages 2-5 years up to one hour a day of high-quality screen time.

The AAP also recommends not using screen time to care for or supervise a young child and to only co-view television alongside young children to support their understanding. Interactive and mindful use screen time can have a positive impact.

What Can We Do?

It's about finding the balance. Parents and caregivers can promote a healthier living and manage screen time by following these simple strategies to

DISCONNECT TO CONNECT:

- **Maintain daily screen-free times:** mealtime, bath time and bedtime.
- **Create Safe Spaces for Independent Play:** Have books available and include toys such as a mirror, dolls, cars, stuffed animals, musical instruments, or an empty container filled with brushes, plastic containers with lids, plastic cups, and plates.
- **Play, Interact, and Communicate together:** Inside games like hide & seek, roll a ball, build a fort, obstacle course with couch cushions, listen to music and dance. Get outside! Run, play, walk, swing, blow bubbles, go to the park, and play "Ring around the Rosie" or "Duck-Duck-Goose."
- **Avoid background television:** Too quiet? Try music instead.
- **Be consistent with technology limits:** For example, one half hour of screen time in the morning/evening.
- **Be intentional:** Choose educational shows and games that are on your child's level.

Interested in doing more?

Try creating a Family Media Plan: healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx.

ACT EARLY!

Contact Ohio Early Intervention at ohioearlyintervention.org or call 1-800-755-4769.

Email Pam Hamer at phamer@gcph.info or call (937) 824-0828.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Greene County



BROUGHT TO YOU BY



SCREEN-FREE ACTIVITIES

1. Create your own music with objects around the house.
2. Read books together.
3. Draw pictures and write letters to a friend or relative.
4. Bake treats or cook dinner and share with a neighbor.
5. Play cards or a board game.
6. Plan a picnic or barbecue.
7. Go bird watching. Learn the names of local birds.
8. Make cards for holidays or birthdays.
9. Teach your child some of your favorite childhood games.
10. Take a nature hike.
11. Watch the night sky through binoculars and identify different constellations. Observe the moon.
12. Visit the library and borrow some books.
13. Visit the zoo or a museum.
14. Build a fort in the living room and camp out.
15. Research your family history. Make a family tree.
16. Clean up or redecorate a room.
17. Create a collage out of old magazine pictures.
18. Make puppets out of old socks and have a puppet show.
19. Go for a bike ride.
20. Clean up the community. Pick up litter or plant flowers.



Tasty Fun in the Sensory Garden

By: Danielle Brooks, RDN, LD, CLT - Owner of Nutritious Path, LLC

Home gardening is a great family activity that offers opportunity for parent/ child interaction, teaches children about where food comes from, provides an opportunity for fun sensory play, allows children to practice gross and fine motor skills, introduces healthy foods that the children may not otherwise try or be exposed to, and allows us to try new recipes to use the foods we grow. Home gardens can be as simple as container gardens (planting a tomato plant in a large pot) or more involved by creating square foot or plotted gardens. Utilizing your space, sunlight, and working within your schedule to create some type of a home garden can be a great experience for yourself and your children. Research has proven exposure to gardens increased fruit and vegetable intakes in children.

Garden-related Activities for the tots may include: filling containers with dirt, planting seeds or plants with parents, watering the plants, talking about growth/ changes in the plants as time goes on, feeling the leaves/ looking at different colors, textures and shapes, smelling the plants and produce, picking fresh herbs/ produce and best of all...tasting!

Garden fruits and vegetables can be made into purees, steamed until soft and easily mashed, used in smoothies or homemade popsicles, eaten raw, or used in recipes.

Additional ways to expose your children to fresh fruits/vegetables and where food comes from:

1. Consider taking your toddler to a farmers market and picking some new fresh fruits/ vegetables to try. Talk about the different colors, textures and flavors of the foods you choose to try.
2. Plan an outing to a local "pick-your-own" farm with your toddler this summer.
3. Consider joining a CSA to support your community and receive regular packages of fresh fruits/ vegetables.

Nutrition is important for our health at *all* ages and stages of development. Promoting healthy habits at an early age is a great way to teach your child positive habits that can last a life time.

Featured Children's Books:

- "Planting a Rainbow" by Lois Ehlert
- "Arty the Fly and the Great Vegetable Garden Rescue" by R" In the Garden" by innovative kids
- J. Rangel

Gardening Resources:

- "Gardening for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Special Educational Needs" by Natasha Etherington
- Kidsgarden.org
- Therapeuticgardens.com.au
- <https://ofbf.org/whats-in-season>

