

Washtenaw

SUCCESS BY 6™



Children's News

a newsletter for growing
minds

November 2009

FREE Admission to Jungle Java Fun for Kids; Learning for Mom and Dad

Across the state of Michigan, a network of Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPC) is growing. The GSPC is a volunteer group of parents who work together to lend voice and hand to the belief that every child from birth to age six needs and deserves a Great Start in life.

Join us on
**Thursday, December
17th from 9:30am to
11am**
at **Jungle Java**
(900 Jackson Rd)
to learn how you can
be involved

Did you know that 90% of a child's brain is formed during the first four years?

A local expert will be discussing the **importance of brain development** in the first years of life and how **you can be your child's first teacher**. Come and learn while your children are supervised and having fun in a giant indoor play structure with a dedicated toddler area.

Dear Melissa,

Welcome to the December edition of the Washtenaw Success by 6 Newsletter. The holidays are filled with opportunities to engage children in family traditions, both new and old! If your family traditions include time spent in the kitchen, you might enjoy our feature article, "Let's Cook", all about how letting children help in the kitchen can actually be helpful to their development. Also, don't miss the opportunity for fun and learning at Ann Arbor's Jungle Java indoor playspace during the free event hosted by the Washtenaw Great Start Parent Coalition. We hope to see you there!

Melissa

Washtenaw Success by 6

Let's Cook!

Little hands can help! Emma cut cheese in funny shapes with cookie cutters. Jackson made smiles on peanut butter sandwiches with apple slices and raisins. Thunya tore lettuce for salad. Jeffrey poured milk.

Children are natural kitchen helpers. They like to share simple tasks of food shopping and picking foods for meals. They enjoy preparing and serving food to the family.

Cooking builds self-esteem.

Helping in the kitchen builds confidence and early skills of independence. Most kids feel proud and important when they help prepare food. Sharing in family tasks helps them feel that they belong in the family.

Cooking teaches.

Kitchen tasks give your child a chance to measure, count, and see food change. That's early math and science learning. Your child can learn new words and symbols by cooking with you. Talk about the food and what you are doing. Read words together on food containers.

Small muscle skills develop, too, when your child uses his or her hands to help with kitchen tasks. Cleanup teaches responsibility. It's part of many creative, messy things we do.

Cooking together is fun family time.

Kitchen time offers a special parenting chance. Cooking together creates closer bonds and lifelong memories. It's also a chance to talk and hear what

Admission to Jungle Java and refreshments will be provided for free, but a reservation is required. Please contact Donna Lasinski, Parent Liaison, at 997-7265 or lasinski@mac.com to reserve your spot.

Registration is limited to the first 30 parents.

The Washtenaw County Parent Coalition is made up of parents with children ages 12 and under. Our purpose is to increase parent participation in early childhood planning and decision making in our county and state.

Kitchen Safety Rules for Kids and Families

- * Fasten hair back if it's long.
- * Wear clean clothes, maybe with short sleeves
- * Get started with hand and table washing.
- * Taste with a clean spoon. A licked spoon goes in the sink, not back in the bowl.
- * Resist nibbling cookie dough or cake batter.
- * Stay away from hot surfaces and utensils and sharp objects. An adult needs to help.
- * Work at a stable, child-size surface.
- * Walk slowly. Carry food and utensils with care.
- * Wipe up spills.

Together, follow four food safety rules:

- 1) Be clean.
- 2) Keep raw and cooked food

your child has to share.

Pick kitchen tasks that match your child's abilities.

- 1) Start: stir, pour, shake, tear
- 2) Then: spread, mix, and knead
- 3) After that: cut, grate, and measure (with supervision)

Think about this!

- If your child makes a cooking mess, it's okay! Young kids don't have the same muscle coordination and skills that you do.
- Even if meals take longer to prepare, it's worth letting your child help. Kitchen time is learning time that you share together.

This information came from the United State Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service program. For more information about healthy eating for your family, visit their [website](#).

Activities- What's Happening Around the County

Here is just a sampling of the free events taking place throughout the county during the month of December:

*Tuesday, Dec. 1st *6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Nutcracker Storytime

For ages 3-8. Join us for a very special storytime, complete with ballet dancers from Chelsea's Youth Dance Theatre's production of "The Nutcracker." This program is presented in partnership with Youth Dance Theatre of Michigan McKune Memorial Library, Chelsea, 475-8732

*Friday, Dec. 4th *6:00 p.m. to midnight

Midnight Madness

Presented by the Main Street Area Association and the Kerrytown Shops. Live performers on Main Street including appearances by Santa. Many shops open late with special sales. Kerrytown Shops and Main Street, AA 668-7112

*Friday, Dec.4th-Sunday, Dec. 7th

Chelsea Annual Hometown Holidays

This annual event kicks off the holiday season in Chelsea. Featuring a variety of activities for the family including visits with Santa, the light parade, tree lighting ceremony, holiday concerts, merchants offering special treats and events, and more. Downtown Chelsea, 475-1145

*Saturday, Dec 5th *9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m.

Annual Holiday Bazaar and Children's Faire

The Rudolf Steiner School hosts this large children's event with puppet shows, music, storytelling, refreshments. Something for the whole family including many beautiful, original and affordable gifts. Rudolf Steiner School, 2775 Newport Rd., AA, 995-4141

*Saturday, Dec. 5th *8:30a.m. to 7:30p.m.

Dexter Home for the Holidays

Fun for all ages featuring ice sculptures, a holiday craft bazaar, a tree lighting ceremony, plenty of opportunities to meet Santa and much more. Downtown Dexter, 476-1175

****Special: Road Trip-Worthy Event in Detroit****

*Saturday, Dec. 5th *5:00p.m. to 9:30p.m.

Noel Night

The University Cultural Center Association's 37th annual event includes horse-drawn carriage rides, holiday shopping, crafts and performances by music, theater and dance groups - plus, free access to many of the city's cultural institutions.

- separate.
- 3) Cook food to proper temperature
 - 4) Refrigerate perishable food right away.



Storytime @ your library

Public libraries throughout the state work to encourage reading and learning throughout the summer by offering a variety of fun events and programs for all ages! Contact your local library for details:

Ann Arbor	327-4200
Chelsea	475-8732
Dexter	426-4477
Manchester	428-8025
Milan	439-1240
Saline	429-5450
Ypsilanti	482-4110
Northfield	449-0066

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Your Ideas Wanted!

Have an idea for a story or something that you would like to see featured in Growing Minds? Please feel free to call us or email us anytime!

734.994.8100 ext, 2177

[Email Success by 6](mailto:Successby6@washtenaw.org)

Midtown Detroit, 317-577-5088

*Sunday Dec., 6th *2:00 p.m.

Kids Sing! Concert

Ann Arbor musician Diane Kimball will sing fun songs and play the dulcimer and kantele. Bring your imagination and ideas about favorite colors and foods, and we'll travel around the world to meet new people and animals. For grades K-3, with adult. Ann Arbor District Library, Traverwood, 327-4200

*Tuesday, Dec. 15th *9:30 a.m.

Shalom Baby Class

One time class for moms and babies (newborns to crawlers) featuring "Post-Baby" Strength and Body Sculpt exercises and parenting discussions. Jewish Community Center, 2935 Birch Hollow Dr., AA, 971-0990

Tuesday, Dec. 15th *7:00 p.m.

Annual Holiday Concert: Combined Ypsilanti Community Band and Community Choir

A joyous holiday concert of festive band and choral music for the whole family, including the glorious "Grand Chorus and Dialogue" for pipe organ and band, "Russian Christmas Music," with the band and choir joining forces for a grand finale. Pease Auditorium, Eastern Michigan Univ, 904-5453

Top Five Tips for Safe Holiday Shopping

Each year, more than 3 billion toys and games are sold in the United States, with 65 percent of these sales occurring between the day after Thanksgiving and the day before Christmas. Learn how to shop safe this holiday season by following these **top 5 tips:**



- Before shopping for toys, consider the child's age, interest and skill level. A fun, but inappropriate toy for a particular child can be dangerous.
- Keep toys with small parts away from children under age 3. They can choke on small toys and toy parts.
- Shopping at a second hand shop this holiday season? Check recalls.gov to make sure kids' products and toys are safe and haven't been recalled.
- Bikes or scooters make great holiday gifts. But remember that a helmet is a necessity, not an accessory when it comes to wheeled sports.
- Consider alternatives to putting children in shopping carts including strollers and carts that have plastic mini-cars or trucks attached to the front or back. If you must use a cart, make sure your child stays seated and is secured by a seat belt.

From SafeKids USA. Learn more about toy safety and injury prevention by visiting: www.usa.safekids.org Be sure to check out their handy "Pocket Guide to Safe and Age-Appropriate Toys"!



Don't Worry, But Don't Wait

Do you have a child who is not growing or developing at the same rate as his same- age peers. Are you concerned about a particular aspect of your child's growth and development or has a doctor, teacher or other professional suggested that you seek support for your infant, toddler or young preschooler?

Visit [Early On Michigan](http://www.earlyonmichigan.org) or call 1-800-EARLY ON

Did You Know?

Success by Six is working throughout Washtenaw County to support families, child care providers and others as we all work toward sending our young children off to school ready to succeed!

Want to Learn More?

Visit our website to learn more about the work that Success by Six is doing in Washtenaw County. You can also join our Parent Network, volunteer, or join our Great Start Parent Coalition to help us get the word out about the importance of learning in the first 5 years of a child's life!

www.washtenawsuccessby6.org