

# *Great Parents, Great Start* Evaluation Report

*2008-09 Program Year*

**Celeste Sturdevant Reed, PhD**  
Principal Investigator  
Evaluator

**Laura V. Bates, MA**  
Research Assistant



---

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**



University Outreach  
& Engagement  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing

**SEPTEMBER 2009**

Copies of this report are available from:

**University Outreach and Engagement**

Michigan State University  
Kellogg Center, Garden Level  
East Lansing, Michigan 48824  
Phone: (517) 353-8977  
Fax: (517) 432-9541  
Web: <http://outreach.msu.edu/CERC>

© 2008 Michigan State University. All rights reserved

The views expressed are solely those of the authors. For more information about this report, contact Celeste Sturdevant Reed at the above address, or phone number (517) 432-8439, or email: [csreed@msu.edu](mailto:csreed@msu.edu).

**Funding**

This report was supported by Michigan Department of Education *Great Parents, Great Start* Grantees' evaluation funds transferred to the Midland County Educational Services Agency and contracted with University Outreach and Engagement.

Michigan State University is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity institution.

# Table of Contents

---

Highlights.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Method.....	6
Curricula.....	7
Links to Other Initiatives and Programs.....	8
Great Start Community Collaboratives.....	8
Safety Programs.....	9
Literacy Programs.....	9
Parenting Awareness & Education Programs.....	10
Other Early Care and Education Programs.....	10
Maximizing Resources.....	12
Resources Provided Most by Partners.....	12
Resources Provided Least by Partners.....	12
Unique Resources Provided by Partners.....	13
Parents' Contributions.....	14
No Contributions.....	14
Contributions to or for Services Received.....	14
Parents' Opinions.....	16
Appendices.....	18

# Highlights

---

**Curricula and Program Models.** All 57 grantees provided some response about their services, target populations, and planned curricula. See the separate report entitled *Great Parents, Great Start* Summary of Program Models and Curricula for details.

**Links to Great Start Community Collaboratives.** This year almost twice as many grantees as last year report that they are linked to a local Great Start Community Collaborative.

**Web access to information about programs.** All but one ISD post information about their program on the Michigan Great Parents website. Three quarters also post information either on their own website (either Great Start or Success by Six) or on the ISD website.

**Links with other early care and education programs.** The majority of grantees reported having links to other home visiting programs in their area and to Early On. Several ISDs report engaging in collaborative activities with these programs and preK programs through activities such as joint training, pooled funding, and joint staff meetings.

**Partner contributions to GP,GS.** All ISDs involved partners in planning. Other contributions made most frequently were space for staff or programming, materials including literacy materials, and direct services.

**Parent contributions.** Only 26% of grantees charge any fees for services, one of whom uses a sliding fee scale. This is no change from last year. Fees were charged for enrollment, summer play groups, conference registrations, and materials. Parents were asked to contribute time to help with events, money for materials, or snacks for events, or to carpool to help those without transportation. Some asked parents to participate in local decision making bodies.

**Parent Opinions.** For 2008-2009 each grantee was required to provide not only service numbers and financial data but also survey data on two programs: 1) Home visits, offered by 95% of the grantees; and 2) parent-child playgroups, offered by 77% of the grantees. See the separate report *Great Parents, Great Start* Parents' Opinions for the results of those surveys.

# Introduction

---

The Great Parents, Great Start program allocates funds to intermediate school districts (ISDs) to provide parenting education and involvement programs for families with young children who voluntarily participate. Coordination and cooperation with the local child care system and community organizations allow Great Parents, Great Start (GP,GS) grantees to leverage their resources and expand available services. The plan for GP,GS Program Grants specifically requires grantees to provide universal and targeted services that align with and are part of the broader community early childhood collaborative plan.

Eligible grantees are encouraged to collaborate with other organizations through partnering with the local human services collaborative, the regional 4C (Community Coordinated Child Care) agency, Public Health, Community Mental Health, the Department of Human Services, MSU Extension Service, local school districts, Head Start and other early childhood organizations. In the 2008-2009 grant year, grantees were also encouraged to work with four state-wide efforts:

1. Great Start Community Collaboratives, where these exist
2. Linking to and keeping the district's information up-to-date on the website [www.migreatparents.org](http://www.migreatparents.org)
3. Working with Early Head Start and *Early On*<sup>®</sup> to serve families with children birth to three
4. Reach Out and Read<sup>®</sup>, a pediatric literacy program found in hospitals, health clinics and physician offices

This evaluation sought to document the relationship among the ISD, the local early education and care service community and others with the types of universal and targeted services provided. Following on the previous evaluation, which was primarily oriented toward understanding how the collaborative structure used by the ISD affected the partners involved in community delivery of early childhood services, the 2008-09 evaluation focused on the services GP,GS grantees proposed to provide.. The questions we sought to answer are abbreviated as follows:

- How appropriate are the curricula or other educational programs for the children and families served by GP,GS grantees?
- Were any changes proposed for how the GP,GS grantees linked to targeted early education and care programs?
- How are GP,GS grantees maximizing the use of their resources? What are the common and unique partnerships developed or approaches being used?
- How do families receiving parent-child play groups and/or home visits perceive their experiences with these programs?

# Method

---

Data presented in this report came primarily from information submitted by each ISD on the Continuation Grant Plan for 2008-2009 Great Parents, Great Start. Fifty-seven intermediate school districts were awarded continuation grants.

The proposal information is based on self-report and is prospective (what is intended to happen). There were few instances where it was possible to check on the authenticity of the data provided by grantees. The Continuation Plan Announcement did include an attachment with the location of Reach Out and Read® programs in Michigan. The Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) website was used as a starting point for identifying the location of Great Start collaboratives.<sup>1</sup> The Michigan Great Parents<sup>2</sup> website was used to verify the extent to which ISDs were keeping their information up to date; this was compared to the ISDs' or the Great Parents, Great Start programs' own web sites.

Parent-completed surveys and/or reports compiled from surveys were received from a total of 44% of the grantees who provided home visits and 50% of the grantees who provided parent-child play groups.

Various types of information were either entered directly or coded into categories in a series of Excel files for analysis. By contractual agreement these files were sent to both the Midland County Educational Service Agency and the Michigan Department of Education Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ecic4kids.org/collaboratives.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.migreatparents.org>

# Curricula

---

To answer the first evaluation question – “How appropriate are the curricula or other educational programs for the children and families served by GP,GS grantees?” – grantees were asked to provide information in their Continuation Grant Plans regarding the types of targeted high-intensity services they planned to offer to families. They were asked to identify the types of services they would offer (home visiting, play groups, parent support, etc), the specific target populations they intended to serve, and the specific program model or curriculum they planned to use for providing each service. They were also asked to explain how resources would be targeted based on family needs and how families would be identified to receive services.

All 57 grantees provided some response about their services, target populations, and planned curricula. Our analysis of the efficacy of the various program models and curricula used and their appropriateness for the chosen target populations can be found in a separate report entitled *Great Parents, Great Start Summary of Program Models and Curricula*.

# Links to Other Initiatives and Programs

This section includes questions about grantees' links to other early childhood programs, how those are proposed to change from the prior year, and the extent to which they are linked to the four targeted state-wide efforts.

---

The data in this section come from four primary sources: 1) Continuation Grant Plan for 2008-2009 – 1.f. Linkages of Great Parents, Great Start Services to Other Early Childhood Programs and Initiatives (1.f. Linkages); 2) Continuation Grant Plan for 2008-2009 – 2.a. Leadership (2.a. Leadership); 3) the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) website;<sup>3</sup> and 4) the Michigan Great Parents website.<sup>4</sup>

## *Great Start Community Collaboratives*

### **Linkage with and changes to the local Great Start Community Collaborative (GSCC)**

There was a row on the 2.a. Leadership chart in the proposal for grantees to check the ways in which they were linked to their local Great Start Community Collaborative (GSCC) should they have one. In trying to identify the presence or absence of the local GSCC using the ECIC website, we re-confirmed a fact that we discovered last year: the definition of a GSCC is fluid. Recall that in the 2006-2008 Report, 24 ISDs said that they were working with their GSCC although only 21 were reported on the ECIC website. Grantees took more latitude in describing their 2008-09 situation in their proposals, for example by saying “will start in the 08-09 year”, than was on the ECIC website. On the ECIC website there either was or was not a GSCC. However, the responses this year are more consistent than last year: 46 (including new start-ups) in the proposals vs. 47 GSCCs on ECIC website.

To answer the question “Were there any changes?” we only have to look at the totals from last year compared to this year and the answer is clearly “Yes, there are many more GSCCs.”

### **Up-to-date Website**

While the specific goal is for grantees to keep their county web sites up-to-date at [www.migreatparents.org](http://www.migreatparents.org), we also investigated where else on the Internet grantees' information can be found. Because the Michigan Great Parents site is new, we believe that all are currently up-to-date. We also discovered the following:

- All but one of the counties have information on the targeted website (the missing one says *check back in February 2009*); ten (18%) have information only on that site.
- Thirty-two grantees (56%) have their own web sites; usually this is a Great Start website, but in two instances it is a Success by 6 website.
- Sixteen grantees (28%) have GP,GS information linked to their ISD's website.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ecic4kids.org/collaboratives.cfm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.migreatparents.org>

- There is no overlap between those grantees who have their own web site and those who have linked to their ISD; grantees are using one or the other approach.

It could be complicated for grantees to keep more than one website up to date in the future, particularly when their own/ISD sites have been in operation longer than the new one.

## *Safety Programs*

There are two safety-related programs that GP,GS grantees are urged to link with: Safe Sleep and Safe Kids.

### **Safe Sleep**

Safe Sleep is an educational program for parents of infants designed to raise awareness of safe and unsafe sleeping practices in order to reduce the number of infant deaths. Materials are available from a variety of sources, including the Michigan Department of Human Services that has pamphlets available in English, Arabic and Spanish on their website.<sup>5</sup> Seventy-four percent (42/57) of ISDs report either being linked to programs in their area or having some means of getting materials to parents; three more GP,GS grantees have programs in their area but are not linked to them. This represents a modest change from the 2007-08 grant year because one GP,GS grantee formerly not linked has become linked. Safe Sleep efforts are most often part of their universal parent education strategies such as community birthday parties or Welcome Baby events.

### **Safe Kids**

Safe Kids is the Car Seat Safety Restraint program component being promoted by Safe Kids, USA<sup>6</sup> and other organizations. Forty-four GP,GS grantees have Safe Kids programs in their areas; however five are not linked with their programs and one three-county grantee has the program available in only one county, reducing the effective coverage to less than 68% of the grantees. This represents no change from the 07-08 year.

In addition to arranging community events including car seat safety checks, six grantees have staff trained and/or certified as car seat safety inspectors, including one county that does not otherwise have a Safe Kids program. Three other grantees have links through their websites to information for parents.

## *Literacy Programs*

GP,GS grantees were encouraged to become involved with three literacy programs where these are available. The first program being promoted is **Reach Out and Read (ROR)**,<sup>7</sup> an early childhood reading program providing new books to children and advice for parents on the importance of reading aloud. It is offered through hospitals, medical centers, health clinics and/or physicians' offices. This grant year a list of locations in Michigan was attached to the Continuation Plan Announcement. While that was undoubtedly helpful to grantees, 7 of 29 are not linked to the available programs. We think this is attributable to the fact that distribution of ROR programs is uneven; one location in one county cannot possibly be located conveniently to reach all children who need it.

---

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5452\\_7124\\_47340---.00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5452_7124_47340---.00.html)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.usa.safekids.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.reachoutandread.org/>

Second, GP,GS grantees were encouraged to use the **Michigan Free Books** program, sponsored by either the Michigan Friends of Education<sup>8</sup> (for the lower half of the Lower Peninsula) or the Public Enrichment Foundation<sup>9</sup> (northern half of Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula). Both programs give books to schools or nonprofit organizations to distribute to children and adults who fit specific criteria (Head Start, Migrant, in a nursing home, etc.). Thirty-five grantees reported Michigan Free Books available in their area; however, five are not linked to those programs for an effective coverage of 54%.

Finally, GP,GS grantees were encouraged to link with the **Imagination Library**<sup>10</sup> which is promoted by the Dollywood Foundation. Eighteen grantees (32%) have Imagination Library programs in their areas. Local sponsors pay for a book to be sent every month to each child in the country under 5 years of age. There is great variety in the sponsor groups, which include the United Way, churches, and private citizens. For example, in one grantee area, the ISD and each local school district participates in sponsoring the program.

## *Parenting Awareness & Education Programs*

### **Born Learning**

Born Learning<sup>11</sup> is a parent awareness and education program developed through a partnership among the United Way of America, the Advertising Council of America, Civitas, and Families and Work Institute. Forty-six grantees report that they have this program available, although four are not linked for coverage of 81%.

In two ISDs, the GP,GS grantee coordinates the effort without participation from the United Way. Grantees have made good use of the Internet for this program. Ten grantees reported that they used the website to download materials and/or information to give parents. One county without a Born Learning program uses this method exclusively.

### **Parenting Counts**

Parenting Counts<sup>12</sup> is a program operated in conjunction with local public television stations. It uses DVDs and written materials developed by the Talaris Institute<sup>13</sup> to introduce parents to their children's development in three time periods: baby (birth to 12 months), toddler (1 to 3 years), and pre-school (3 to 5 years).

It is the least available program in Michigan, available to only 18 of the grantees, with one of those not linked to the program. However, three grantees without the program report that they use the website, increasing the effective coverage to 35% of the grantees.

## *Other Early Care and Education Programs*

In this section we discuss coordination with other home visiting programs, *Early On*®, Early Head Start, and the two PreK Programs Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program.

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.mifriends.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.publicenrichmentfoundation.com/>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.dollysimaginationlibrary.com/splash\\_usa.php](http://www.dollysimaginationlibrary.com/splash_usa.php)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bornlearning.org/default.aspx?id=33>

<sup>12</sup> <http://parentingcounts.org/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.talaris.org/>

## Other Home Visiting Programs

Only four grantees report that there are no other home visiting programs in their area. However, one grantee reports “hosting Family Discovery Days” in this category and one additional grantee reports not being linked to the other home visiting programs. The other 89% of grantees report that they are linked with the home visiting programs in their area. This can be:

- As flexible as having representatives of all home visiting programs be members of the local early childhood coordinating council where services can be discussed
- As organized as having a well-defined referral network among the programs so that families with children eligible for one service but on the waiting list can be served by another program
- As centralized as having all families come through a one source and being referred to the appropriate home visiting program.

In addition to pooling services, several grantees are doing joint training for home visitors and/or professional development for their supervisors. Others already have pooled as many as a half-dozen different sources of funds or are actively considering pooling funding for home visiting programs. One multi-county grantee is working with the Health Department and others to develop regional coverage using shared funds.

### *Early On*®

Because both GP,GS and *Early On*® are programs operated by the ISD, there are many opportunities for cooperation and coordination. At the very least, staff of the two programs can make their families aware of the other program. Some grantees have integrated the staff further, either through the use of joint staff meetings or more formally through a common supervisor for both programs. Several ISDs report using the GP,GS play groups as the naturalistic environment for their *Early On*® families. At least one ISD uses GP,GS as the entry and eligibility determination point for *Early On*®, Early Head Start, Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP).

## PreK Programs

Several of the GP,GS grantees mentioned their commitment to assisting their families to transition to a preK program. Some grantees made sure that staff from preK programs came to GP,GS events to provide information to parents. Several reported on joint recruitment efforts. In two cases they mentioned working closely with Head Start and GSRP to ensure that all four-year-olds were accepted into an appropriate program, including helping parents complete the required forms. As was true with home visiting programs, there were occasions where GP,GS, preK and early elementary staff were involved in joint training efforts.

# Maximizing Resources

Data in this section come primarily from Continuation Grant Plan FOR 2008-2009 2.b. Maximizing Resources. We also referred to data on 2.a. Leadership to confirm partners' participation in planning activities.

---

As a first step, information from the fourth column in table 2.b, titled Support & Resources from Other Sources, was sorted into the same categories as Support & Resources from GP,GS. That is, we used the A (Finances) through I (Other) categories, listing the agency, organization or person providing that resource. The discussion below is organized into three topics: those resources with the most participation by partners, those with the least participation by partners, and the resources where there was something unique about the participation.

## *Resources Provided Most by Partners*

**Partners providing space** was the most named resource; 46 (81%) GP,GS grantees reported from one to nine partners providing space. This included space for programming, such as playgroups, screenings and events and for office space. By far the organization most often cited for providing programming space, particularly for parent-child playgroups, was the local school district (LEA), but the ISD, Head Start and libraries were also mentioned by many. By their very nature, community events could be hosted by any number of organizations. Among those mentioned most often were churches and community centers; to a lesser extent the local mall, the fairgrounds, the local park (city government), camps, colleges and "space throughout the community" were used.

Twenty-six (46%) of the grantees mentioned one to four **partner organizations that provided materials**. This excludes those entities printing and distributing newsletters, which were included in the publicity, information and outreach category. It primarily includes books (Imagination Library, Reach Out and Read) and other literacy materials, playgroup supplies, and parent education materials (including R.E.A.D.Y. Kits). Organizations named for providing literacy materials include both traditional partners, such as Early Head Start, MSU Extension, *Early On*®, and 4Cs as well as traditional and non-traditional funding partners such as United Way, local foundations, power companies and individual donors. Several grantees mentioned their local child abuse prevention council. One grantee reported that their local *Early On*® Parents' Council developed a Parent's Resource Directory and *Early On*® financed its publication.

**Direct service resources** were mentioned by 24 grantees (42%). This included the full range of direct services, from parent education to screening to literacy education to parent-child playgroups and home visits. As far as we can tell, these were part of the community system of early education and care not paid for by funds from GP,GS. Several grantees, in particular, were able to leverage an extensive array of services including home visits from a number of different agencies. These grantees were primarily from small and/or rural counties.

## *Resources Provided Least by Partners*

Partners engaged in **planning were only mentioned by three** (5%) grantees. However, we attribute this very low rate of participation by partners to the information requested in the table immediately prior to this question in the Continuation Grant Plan. In that prior table grantees reported the community partners engaged in leadership activities, including planning. After reviewing grantees' partners involved in leadership activities, we can confirm that all of the grantees had other organizations involved in planning.

Another resource that few partners contributed was **transportation**; only six grantees (11%) mentioned this. This is not surprising; transportation is not traditionally provided for users of service, particularly for a program focused on voluntary participation such as GP,GS. One grantee, however, managed to get a reduced rate from their local transportation authority for parents attending playgroups.

Finally, only ten (18%) grantees reported receiving the following three resources from partners: **Finances, logistics** (organization, coordination of activities, and maintenance of website) and **assessment, screening and/or referrals**. There was some consistency of grantees across these three categories, but it was not universal; 24 different grantees were represented among these groups. Again, we think that the prior table may account for the low response rate, particularly for logistics. Those grantees reporting receipt of financial resources included one grantee that said all of their partners contributed both cash and in-kind resources, a second grantee that managed to amass “extensive public and private funds for their local Collaborative” and a third that managed to leverage an array of public funds including Title I and general funds from their local LEAs, IDEA funds from their ISD, and funds from their local department of health. Among those who noted referrals as a partner-based resource included one grantee where all agencies were using the same referral form.

## *Unique Resources Provided by Partners*

Several of these have already been mentioned, but will be highlighted again here by category of resource.

- **Finance** – All partners contributed both cash and in-kind resources for one grantee.
- **Planning** – All 57 grantees had multiple partners contributing to planning.
- **Logistics** – Websites are being maintained by many different agencies, including the district library, the local health department, the regional 4C organization and the ISD.
- **Publicity, Information and Outreach** – Two grantees report that their local newspaper prints and distributes their newsletter; for three grantees the local Kiwanis Club performs that function.
- **Assessment, Screening and/or Referral** – **One grantee reports** referrals are done on a multi-agency form used by all partner agencies.
- **Direct Services** -- For one grantee, volunteers from the Delta Kappa Gamma Sorority provide literacy instruction to parents at the local WIC office and three physicians’ offices. For another grantee local college students design and run the parent-child playgroups. For a third grantee, health department nurses, child protective services, *Early On*® and mental health staff provide additional home visits.
- **Materials** – For one grantee, the *Early On*® parents develop a Parents’ Resource Directory and *Early On*® funds its publication.
- **Space** – LEAs, ISDs and libraries consistently provide space for GP,GS programs, particularly for parent-child playgroups and literacy education.
- **Transportation** – For one grantee’s parents, the local transportation authority provides reduced fares to and from parent-child playgroups.
- **Other** – A local energy company donates the salary of the book club coordinator.

# Parents' Contributions

Data used in this section came from 2.c. in the 2008-2009 Continuation Grant Plan and was compared to data in 2.d. from the 2007-2008 Continuation Grant Plan.

---

## *No Contributions*

In the 2007-2008 Continuation Plan, grantees were asked to consider a sliding fee scale to underwrite some component of their program. If they were considering such a plan, they were asked for which component; if they weren't considering such a plan, they were asked why not. Overwhelmingly, GP,GS grantees were not using nor considering using a sliding scale. In fact, we were not clear that all grantees understood the concept of a sliding fee scale. Based on their responses, four different questions were asked in the 2008-2009 Continuation Plan. Each is addressed below.

As can be seen in the responses below, some percent – ranging from a high of 89% to a low of 21% -- said their families made no contributions.

## *Contributions to or for Services Received*

### **Sliding Fees**

*If a sliding fee (that is, charging more for some families than for others) has been initiated for any activity in the program, what was it for and how was it implemented?*

One grantee is continuing the sliding fee scale that they were using previously. Of the six grantees who mentioned that a sliding fee scale was either under discussion or would be considered during the 2007-2008 grant year, one has chosen to offer scholarships to families who participate in playgroups and one other is still considering it. The grantee who said last year that “it is on our next agenda” was missing that page in their 2008-2009 Continuation Proposal. One grantee who was not considering it last year reported that they would in this current grant year. The other three have decided against it; one made a comment indicating that they discussed the issue and decided not to implement the practice because they felt it would create larger costs than it would recoup for the program and the other two simply wrote “NA” for the question.

### **The Same Fees**

*For what components of the program are all families currently charged the same fee?*

Most grantees (74%) did not charge fees; some left this blank, which we interpreted as not charging a fee. When fees were charged, they were levied for the following purposes: enrollment fees for a parent or child education program, conference registration fees, per-child summer playgroup fees, materials fees for programs (such as the Love & Logic workbook) and admission fees to local attractions (amusement park, farm, etc.).

Grantees follow one of two strategies for collecting fees:

- 14% of the grantees said parents who want to participate make their own choice to pay and attend. This strategy was applied to admission fees, summer playgroup fees and materials for programs.

- 12% of the grantees said that although the program had a fee for participation, they also had scholarships for those who are unable to pay (some add “and have a child under age five”). This applied to enrollment fees and conference registration fees.

## **Donations of Money or Time**

### ***For what components of the program are families invited to donate money or time?***

Twenty grantees (35%) left this question blank, wrote in NA or reported that there were no components of the program for which donations were invited. The most frequent donation that families made was of their time. Twenty grantees (35%) reported that families were asked to contribute additional time to programs they were already involved in. Most often this was to come early to set up for playgroups and stay late to sanitize the toys, but parents also donated their time to leading playgroups, planning community events, soliciting prizes for fun fairs, or distributing information on programs.

While only two grantees said they invited monetary donations (one for playgroup materials and the other for Imagination Library subscriptions), grantees reported families making other types of equivalent out-of-pocket donations. Nine grantees (16%) said their families made donations of snacks or food for parent groups, another nine that they contributed toys, art materials or other supplies for parent-child playgroups. Finally several mentioned that families carpooled together to playgroups and/or community events.

## **Other Contributions**

### ***Are families encouraged to contribute to the program or specific activities in any other ways?***

Again, 12 grantees (21%) reiterated that no contributions were required, wrote in NA or left this item blank. Some answers given to the prior question were repeated here, such as donating their time or carpooling. The two most prevalent responses were participating in formal decision-making bodies, such as the Great Start Collaborative or the local Parent Involvement Committee and serving as ambassadors to their own communities (families and friends). Recruiting other families and sharing their experiences with other families were two goals of these outreach efforts.

# Parents' Opinions

---

In the 2008-2009 Continuation Grant Plan, grantees were required to participate in surveys. This requirement included community partners who were funded by a grantee to provide services as part of the GP,GS plan. In terms of collecting parent satisfaction with the GP,GS programs, this was interpreted by the MSU Evaluation Team as follows (from the guidance memo sent to grantees in the Spring of 2009):

**For the purposes of the state-wide evaluation, home visits and parent-child playgroups are the two services on which data are required.**

You can fulfill this requirement in one of three ways:

1. **By July 31, 2009** you may send us a summary report on home visits and parent-child play groups using your own surveys or other data collection methods. We will incorporate your results into our final report.

**OR**

2. **Also by July 31, 2009** you may send back a summary report using the Home Visiting and Parent-Child Play group surveys (attached) that were developed for your voluntary use in the 2007-2008 program year.

**OR**

3. **By July 15, 2009** you may send completed surveys back to us and we will summarize the information and send a brief report back to you. If you choose this option, you are responsible for the costs of duplicating the surveys and parent letters and for mailing surveys back to us.

Grantees who did not offer one or the other of these services were thus not required to submit data. Three grantees (5%) did not offer home visiting and 13 (23%) did not offer parent-child playgroups focused on child development topics for which the MSU playgroup survey was designed. Only one grantee did not offer either of these services. That makes the total number of grantees able to report on their home visiting services equal 54 and the total number of grantees able to report on their parent-child playgroups equal 46; these number are used as the base for 100% of the grantees reporting in Table 1 below. Table 1 shows the number and percent of grantees that used the approaches listed by number above. In total, approximately one third complied with this requirement. Overall, we did not have enough data to calculate a response rate for those families from which we did receive surveys.

<b>Table 1: Grantee Patterns of Response to Parent Survey Requirement (Number of Grantees and Percent of Grantees)</b>		
	<i>Home Visiting</i>	<i>Parent-Child Play Group</i>
#1 Sent back summary based on using own surveys	2 / 4%	1 / 2%
#2 Sent back summary based on using MSU surveys	5 / 9%	5 / 9%
#3 Sent back surveys	17 / 31%	16 / 36%
<i>Did not send back any surveys</i>	<i>30 / 56%</i>	<i>22 / 50%</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54 / 100%</b>	<b>44 / 100%</b>

We think that the fact that the MSU surveys were only available in English may have accounted for the fact that no surveys were received from the grantee who provided home visits and parent-child play groups to their English-as-a-second-language families. It may also have had an impact for other grantees serving families who were not conversant in English. Finally, one grantee discovered a small number of home visiting surveys long after the deadline and was advised by the MSU evaluators not to return them for analysis.

Parents' opinions on the home visits and parent-child playgroups they received can be found in a separate document of the same title. Copies of the home visiting and parent-child playgroup surveys can be found in the Appendices.

# Appendices

---

**Appendix A: Home Visitor Parent Opinion Survey**

**Appendix B: Parent-Child Play Group Parent Opinion Survey**



**HOME VISITING OPINION SURVEY – County (Please name):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please help us improve our program and assess our network of services by answering the following questions.**

1. How many of your children of your children receive home visits (total number)? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How old is your child/children receiving home visits?  Birth to 12 months  # 1-2 years  # 2-3 years  
 # 3-4 years  # 4-5 years

2. How often do you receive home visits? *Mark the **one** that best describes your schedule.*  
 Weekly  Every other week (or 2-3 times per month)  Monthly  Some other schedule (what schedule?):

3. What subjects do you and your home visitor discuss? *Check all the ones you talk about.*  
 Parenting Skills  Health & Nutrition  Behavior & discipline  Your child’s development  Preparing for school  
 Safety  Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. How satisfied are you with your home visitor doing the following things?

<i>You and your home visitor may not talk about some of these. If that’s the case; circle NA in the No answer column.</i>	<b>Very dis-satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat dis-satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>No answer</b>	<b>If you marked dissatisfied (you circled 1 or 2), why is that?</b>
2.1 Improving your skills as a parent	1	2	3	4	NA	
2.2 Helping you understand your child’s development	1	2	3	4	NA	
2.3 Answering your questions about how to help your child	1	2	3	4	NA	
2.4 Giving you ideas for activities to do with your child	1	2	3	4	NA	
2.5 Discussing the importance of your family’s culture and values and how that affects your parenting	1	2	3	4	NA	
2.6 Preparing your child for preschool or kindergarten	1	2	3	4	NA	

2.7 Helping you become more involved with other parents or groups in your community	1	2	3	4	NA	
2.8 Helping you get connected to other services that your family or child needs	1	2	3	4	NA	

5. Have you received any other services with your home visitor's help?  yes  no

6. If you answered yes, what services did you receive? *Please write in below.*

7. How did your home visitor help you get these services?

- Helped make the appointment for me  
 Drove me to the service  
 Had the service person contact me directly  
 Gave me information and asked about it the next time they visited  
 Gave me information and let me decide for myself

8. In the last 12 months have you received any additional early childhood services that **were not** specially arranged by your home visitor?  
*Check as many as apply.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome Baby materials, R.E.A.D.Y. kits                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Early On</i> services for children with disabilities or developmental delays                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well-child visits at your family doctor or the Health Department | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy services, such as Imagination Library, Road to Reading and library programs for young children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Screening to see how your child is developing                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Free pre-school like Head Start & Michigan School Readiness Program                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vision and/or hearing screening                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pre-school  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immunizations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Family events, like Family Discovery Nights and Family Fun Fairs  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child health insurance such as Medicaid or MICHild               | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent education workshops or classes   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other home visits, such as from Early Head Start                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized services such as Early Childhood Mental Health Services                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent-child play groups   |  |

9. How easy is it to get the early childhood services you want and/or need in your community?

Very easy       Easy       Kind of hard       Very hard

10. If you checked “kind of hard” or “very hard” above, please tell us what made it that way. *For example: services weren’t available; the services were available but I would have to pay; my child didn’t qualify for it; I didn’t know where to get them; I didn’t have transportation*

11. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

***THANK YOU!***

**PARENT-CHILD PLAY GROUP OPINION SURVEY – County (Please name): \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please help us improve our program and assess our network of services by answering the following questions.**

1. How many of your children (total number #) are in play groups? \_\_\_\_\_ How old is your child/children participating in the play group?  
 Birth to 12 months    1 year old    2 year old    3 year old    4 year old    5 year old
2. Are all the children in the group roughly the same age as your child?  
 Same age (within 12 months)    Different ages (more than 12 months difference)

3. Think about the play group you most recently attended. How satisfied are you with how well the play group is doing each of these?  
*Circle your choice.*

<i>Your playgroup may not talk about some of these. If that's the case; circle NA in the No answer column.</i>	<b>Very dis-satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat dis-satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>No Answer</b>	<b>If you marked dissatisfied (you circled 1 or 2), please explain below.</b>
1.1 Teaching you about your child's development	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.2 Answering your questions about how to help your child	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.3 Improving your skills as a parent	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.4 Helping your child develop skills in playing & being with others	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.4 Discussing the importance of your family's culture and values and how that affects your parenting	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.5 Providing you with ideas for activities to do with your child at home	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.6 Treating all parents as important people	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.7 Helping you connect with other parents who can support you	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.8 Helping you get other services that your family or child needs	1	2	3	4	NA	
1.9 Providing time for parents to share their ideas and thoughts about	1	2	3	4	NA	

being a parent						
----------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

4. In addition to the play group you described in the chart, has that child attended any other play group with different parents and children?

- yes       no

5. If you answered yes, how many different play groups (different groups of parents and children) have you and your child attended?

- 2 different play groups       3 different play groups       more than 3 play groups

6. Counting all the play groups you go to with your child, how often do you and your child attend a play group session?

- Weekly       Every other week (or 2-3 times per month)       Monthly       Some other schedule (what schedule?): \_\_\_\_\_

7. If there were one thing that could be improved in your play group, what is it?

8. Have you received any additional services **as a result of information or a referral from the play group**?  yes       no

9. If you answered yes, what services did you receive?

10. In the last 12 months have you received additional early childhood services that **were not** related to participating in a play group?

- yes       no

11. If you answered yes, check all those that apply:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome Baby materials, R.E.A.D.Y. kits   | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Early On</i> services for children with disabilities or developmental delays                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well-child visits at your family doctor or the Health Department                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy services, such as Imagination Library, Road to Reading and library programs for young children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Screening to see how your child is developing   | <input type="checkbox"/> Free pre-school like Head Start & Michigan School Readiness Program                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vision and/or hearing screening   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pre-school  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immunizations   | <input type="checkbox"/> Child health insurance such as Medicaid or MICHild  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home visits, such as from the Intermediate School District, MSU Extension or Early Head Start | <input type="checkbox"/> Family events, like Family Discovery Nights and Family Fun Fairs  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized services such as Early Childhood Mental Health Services                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent education workshops or classes   |

12. How easy is it to get the early childhood services you want and/or need in your community?  
 Very easy       Easy       Kind of hard       Very hard

13. If you checked “kind of hard” or “very hard” above, please tell us what made it that way. *For example: services weren’t available; the services were available but I would have to pay; my child didn’t qualify for it; I didn’t know where to get them; I didn’t have transportation*

14. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

***THANK YOU!***