



Engagement and Leadership

# Saginaw County Families

# Great Start Parent Coalition



## Leadership:

- Executive Team Parent
- Parent Member of the Year Award
- Parent representatives on Subcommittees according to their experiences with services (home visiting, Early On, etc.)
- Parents involved in quality improvement projects

## Levels of Involvement:

- Board Parent Representatives – 6 parents
- 12 school districts across the county – Board parents represent districts
- Core Parents – 25 including past board parents, leaders on Subcommittees and current Board Representatives
- At-large Parents - Connections through email and social media , 350 plus
- Parent Coalition Evenings – Average attendance 20 families, including new participants

## Great Start Parent Activities:

- Outreach monthly in communities
- Family Friendly Business Awards
- Parent Cafes and Focus Groups
- Parents involved in GSC Strategic Planning
- Parent Leadership training for coalition
- Monthly meetings – evening meetings include free dinner, childcare and speakers
- Digital Stories



# CAN Council – Parenting education

Strengthening Families (through MAX System of Care) :

- Completed 3 classes with 30 people graduating since October 2014.
- Westlund Guidance Clinic hosting a class of 10 set for completion end of January.
- The Empower to Reach and Teach Families group (MAX System of Care) is hosting 4 classes in 2015 starting in February at the Family Resource Center.
- Westlund and the Mexican American Council will each host classes in 2015.

Incredible Years:

- Completed 6 sessions in the past year with a total of 60 parents graduating the 20-week course.
- CAN Council collaborating with Head Start to provide a class with “parent support plus” – resources and activities on family literacy, continuing education and life coping skills.
- Collaborating with Old Country Buffet to offer new sessions starting in February.
- Researching a preschool curriculum for parent support.
- Other programs for parents:  
MSU Extension is offering the BEES Parenting Program (Building Early Emotional Skills in Young Children) for parents of children 0-3.



# Saginaw MAX System of Care

Saginaw MAX was developed to help meet the unique needs of youth with complex emotional and behavioral challenges. It is a partnership of all the child- and family-serving agencies that can provide the necessary services to these youth. Parent leadership development trainings happening at the Family Resource Center in Saginaw:

- **Strengthening Families Program** has made a difference in thousands of families in all 50 states and in over 25 countries. A research study conducted by the Partnerships in Prevention Science Institute found a return of \$9.60 for every dollar spent implementing the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14.
- **Team Up for Your Child ROAD MAP®** curriculum is a highly interactive, research-based curriculum that uses games, worksheets and group process to teach parents/primary caregivers family-tested strategies for navigating systems and partnering more effectively with providers. This step by step guide empowers parents to work smarter with school and other human service agencies.
- **Resource Parent Training** is a curriculum that was developed out of the work of the National Children's Traumatic Stress Network. It is an 8-module training format that is led by a parent and clinician. Six sessions with an average of 10 parents per class have been completed.

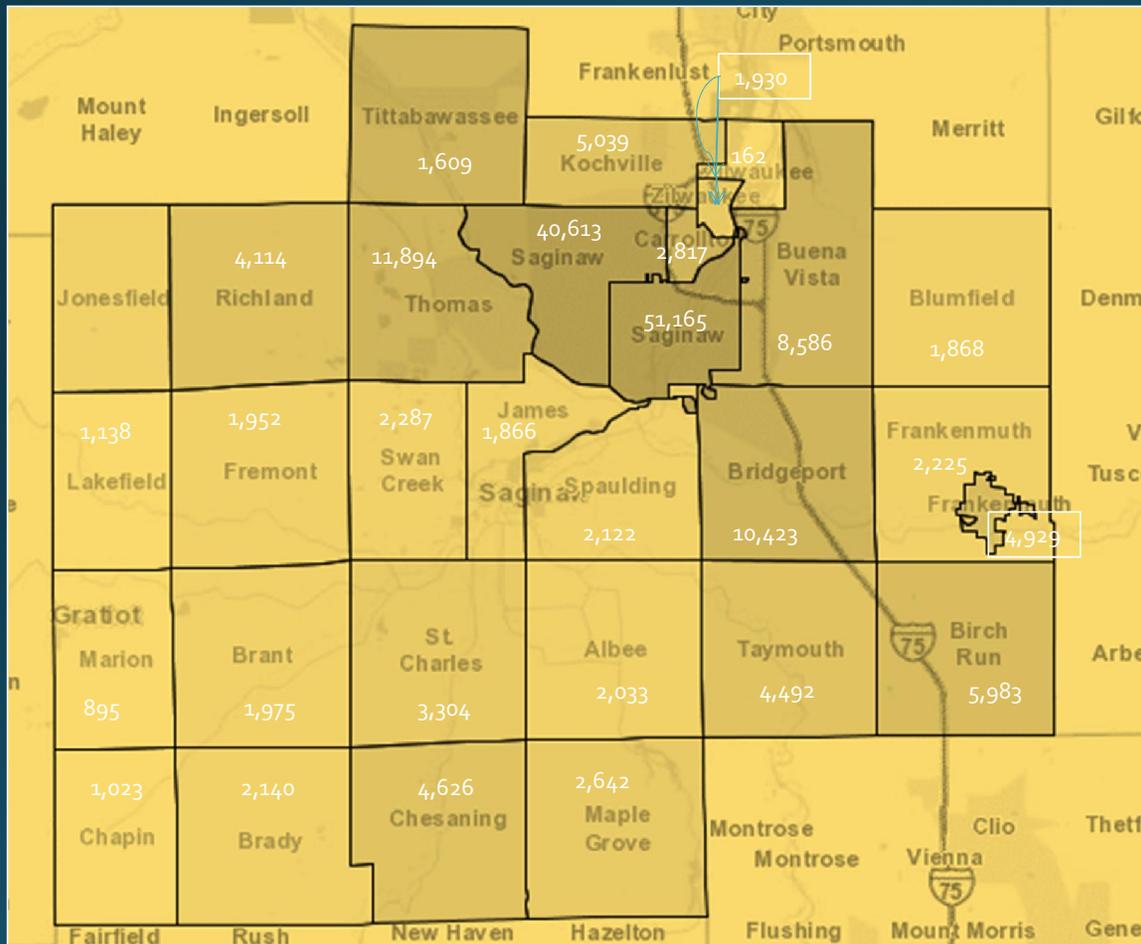


# Challenges: Reaching families

- Removing barriers for parents, gathering their voices
- Reaching parents across the county – rural, suburban and urban
- Receiving input from parents or caregivers who are not using services – making them part of Strategic Planning
- Transportation issues across the county
- Reaching families who are not ready to accept services as well as those who do not qualify



# Saginaw County population in 2013



In 2013, the Census Population estimate for Saginaw County is 198,841. Almost half (46%) live in the City and Township of Saginaw, with the rest scattered in. More than half (57.3%) live in the 4 places of Saginaw, Thomas, Bridgeport Townships and city of Saginaw.

# Successes: Empowered Parents

- More parents know they are important and have valuable input to give.
- Collaboration between groups – Great Start is working with System of Care, CAN and other agencies to share resources and ideas. Parents are involved across groups.
- Parents have gained skills for employment and state-level leadership, leading classes, serving on committees and holding political office.
- Good relationships with state legislators
- Home Visitation hub system is in place.



# Contact

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A stylized, colorful illustration of a landscape. The foreground features rolling green hills with dark brown soil patches. On the left, there is a green tree, a purple flower, and an orange flower. A small red and orange bird is flying in the sky. The background consists of layered blue and white wavy bands representing a sky or water. The text 'Ottawa County Parent Coalition' is written in a brown, cursive font in the upper right area.

Ottawa County  
Parent  
Coalition

The background features a light blue sky area at the top, transitioning into several horizontal, wavy bands of varying shades of blue. Below these, the background is a pale, clean white. At the bottom, there are several rounded, overlapping hills in various shades of green, from light to dark, creating a sense of depth and a natural landscape.

# *Developing Parents' Leadership Skills*

## *How this project got started:*

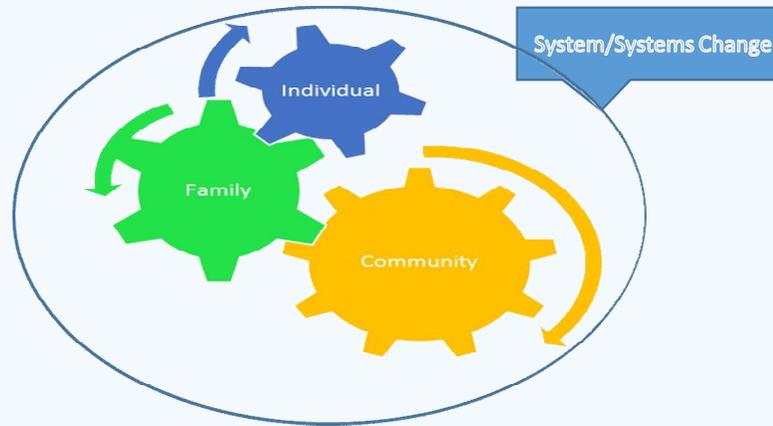
- Developing leadership in the Parent Coalition (PC) was written as part of the strategic plan.*
- Parent Liaison and GSC coordinator asked two PC members to help develop what this might look like.*
- Plan was developed and presented to the core membership of the parent coalition.*

## Parent Coalition definition of a leader :

- *A leader creates positive change through personal growth extending out to the community, thus enabling others to become leaders.*

# Ottawa Great Start Parent Coalition Leadership Plan

*Changing the system from the inside out*



Individual/Personal	Family/Interpersonal	Community	Systems Change
Creating a safe place- Meeting Norms/Guidelines	Exploring our family system	Giving back to our community	What is a system/systems change?
Self-exploration- values, bias, cultural mapping	Developing character, knowing our family members	Creating an Ubuntu mentality	Who is already working together and why?
Parenting styles, Personality	Family mission and goals	<u>Me to We</u>	<u>Switch</u>
TED talks, psychological scales/studies	<u>How Children Succeed</u>	How service impacts the System?	
Building Leadership/Capacity Leadership during meetings	Creating strong families, parent education, 5 Protective Factors	Give a Book a Home Social Media Ambassadors for ASQ	Talking to doctor's offices Great Start Collaborative Subcommittee

# Primary Goals

- *Parents to have the skills needed advocate for their families and children.*
- *Parents use these skills to work with the early childhood system in Ottawa Area to ensure that it is working for families.*
- *Parents learn to be leaders in their families as well as in their communities.*

## What we do and who is involved:

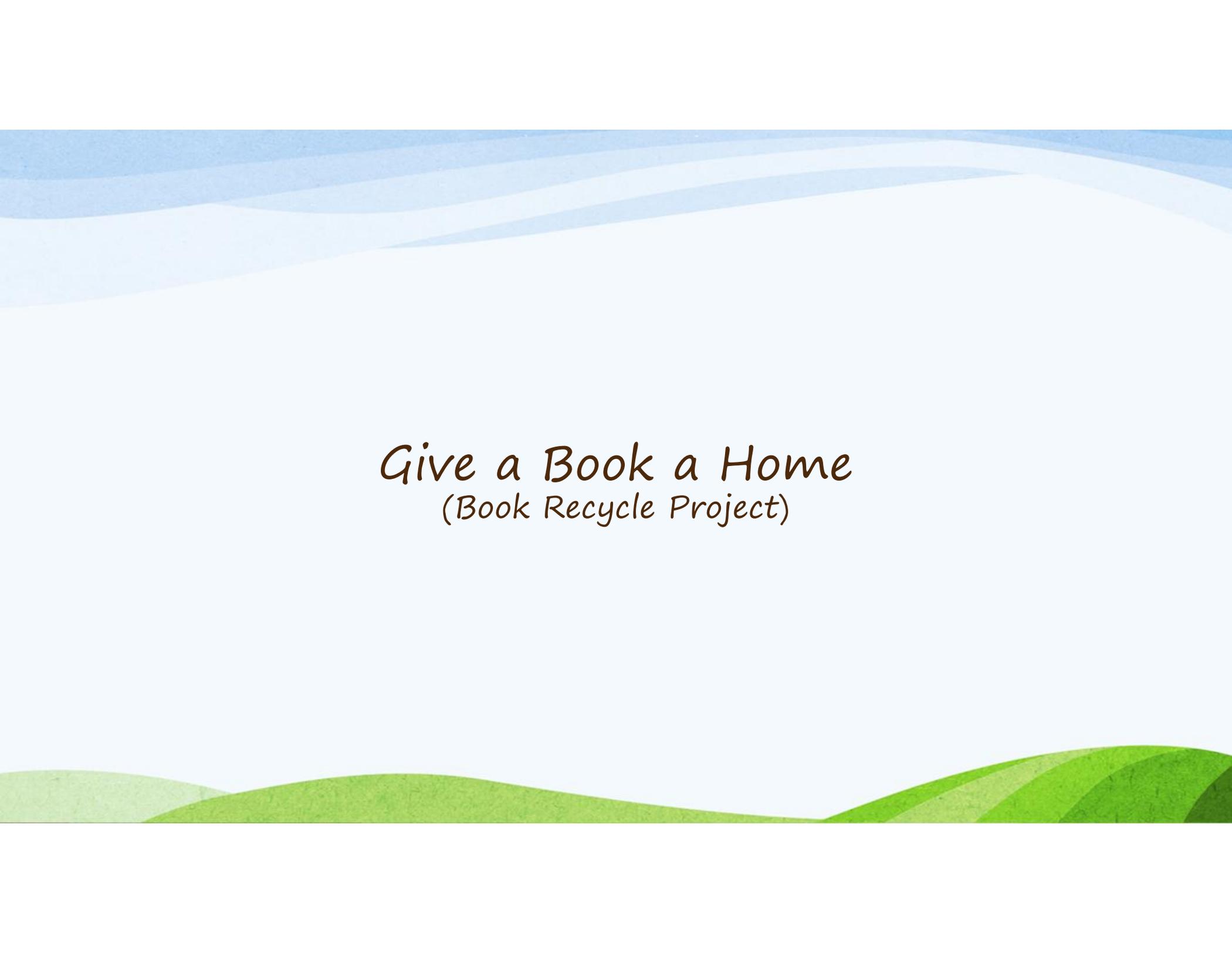
- We meet once a month as a Parent Coalition.
- Leadership subcommittee plans the leadership portion of PC meetings. Parents read books and research and help provide information to other parents.
- Working to involve community organizations in providing parent workshops similar to the work we are doing.
- Some collaborative members have offered to help with trainings as we move forward.
- Have a continual feedback loop from parents about what they are learning.

## Since we started this work in October

- We have had more of a consistent attendance and a bigger commitment from parents.
- Parents are attending many of the GSC subcommittees as well as other community collaborative work.
- One parent said, “I feel like I can make a commitment to the parent coalition because you are investing in me”.

## Lessons learned to be replicated:

- *Connect with a couple of really passionate parents and learn what is interesting to them and the parents they interact with.*
- *Continue to get feedback from all the parents as the work moves forward.*
- *Having parents lead this work has helped make it a community of work and not just providing passive learning experiences.*
- *Scaling it down and becoming focused has helped with the commitment and created a better understanding the goals.*



*Give a Book a Home*  
(Book Recycle Project)

## How we started

- *This started as a recruitment effort for our Parent Coalition. We had lost many members who reported that they were not sure what the purpose parent coalition was and wanted to be more action oriented.*
- *Our new Parent Liaison was looking for something that may interest parents while meeting a community need. We then learned about another county doing a book recycle program.*
- *We brought that to the parents and they loved the idea of a concrete project.*

## Primary goals

- *Recruitment for Parent Coalition.*
- *Getting books to children who have few or no books in their home.*

## What we do:

- *Parent Coalition members have sites that they keep stocked.*
- *Parent liaison coordinates the effort.*
- *Community has done book drives through youth advisory council, boy/girl scouts, Herman Miller, and several others.*
- *We have sites at DHS, all the WIC sites, Health Dept. hearing and vision screenings, home visitors give them out, and we are working to connect with some food banks to distribute.*
- *In our first year we distributed 4,000 books.*

# Success

- *This was a great recruitment effort as it was easy to understand.*
- *Parents can volunteer to the level they are comfortable with which helped engage people.*
- *We have had community engagement and better knowledge of the Parent Coalition through this project.*
- *Challenges*
  - *Book storage is a challenge.*
  - *It takes time of Parent Liaison we are looking at how to make this work better.*

## *Lessons learned to be replicated:*

- Need to have parent buy-in and the community will engage quickly.*
- Need to make messaging simple and not over complicate or attach to other efforts.*
- Start small to ensure that you can keep the sites stocked with books.*

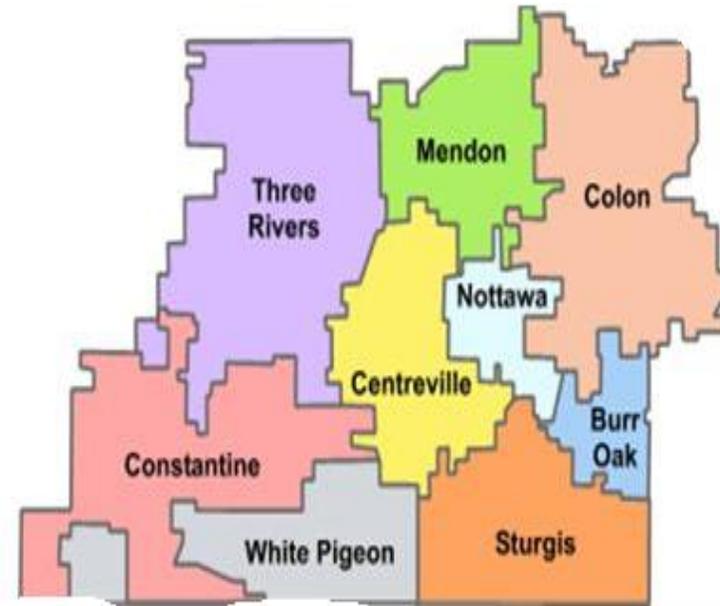


# St Joseph County Great Start Parent Coalition

Amy Brauer  
Early Head Start Program Manager

# St Joseph County, MI

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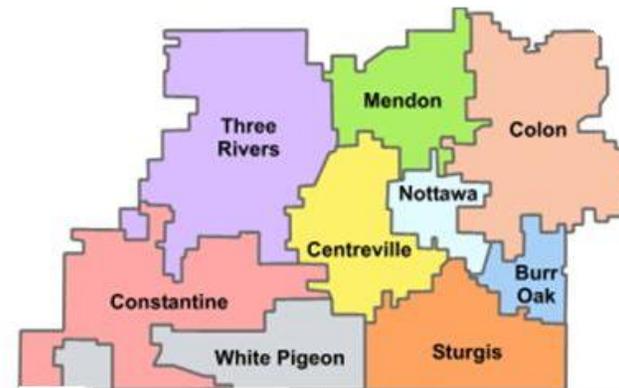


# Although Rural, St Joe is a Diverse County

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## Some Highlights:

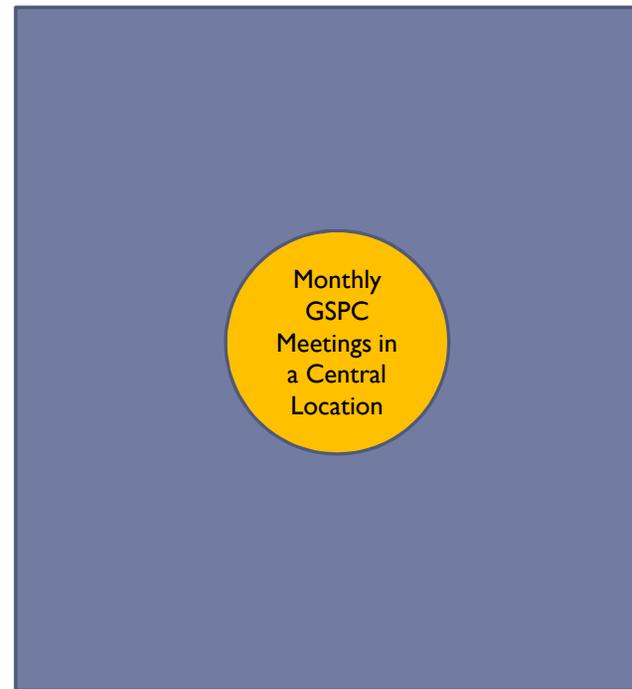
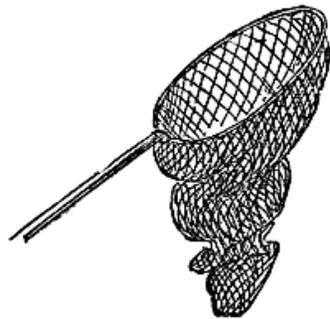
- ▶ Constantine is Seed Capital of the world
- ▶ Sturgis has a unique Hispanic Population
- ▶ Nottawa and Burr Oak have large Amish Communities



# Building the Parent Coalition

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- ▶ **One Option:**
  - ▶ Cast a large net and hope to capture what we could of our unique county



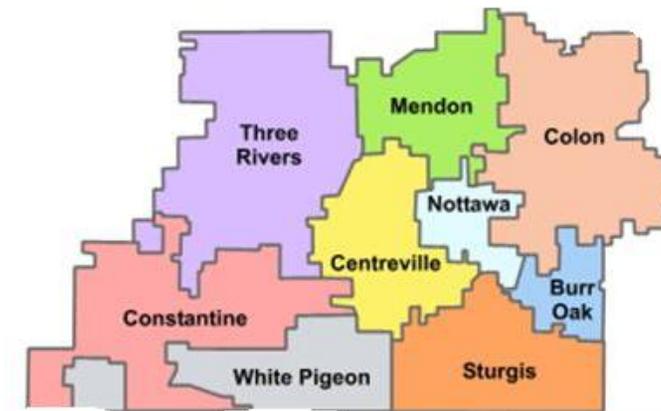
# Building the Parent Coalition

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- ▶ ...or given the unique makeup of our county, we could be more intentional in our endeavors



Neat Square



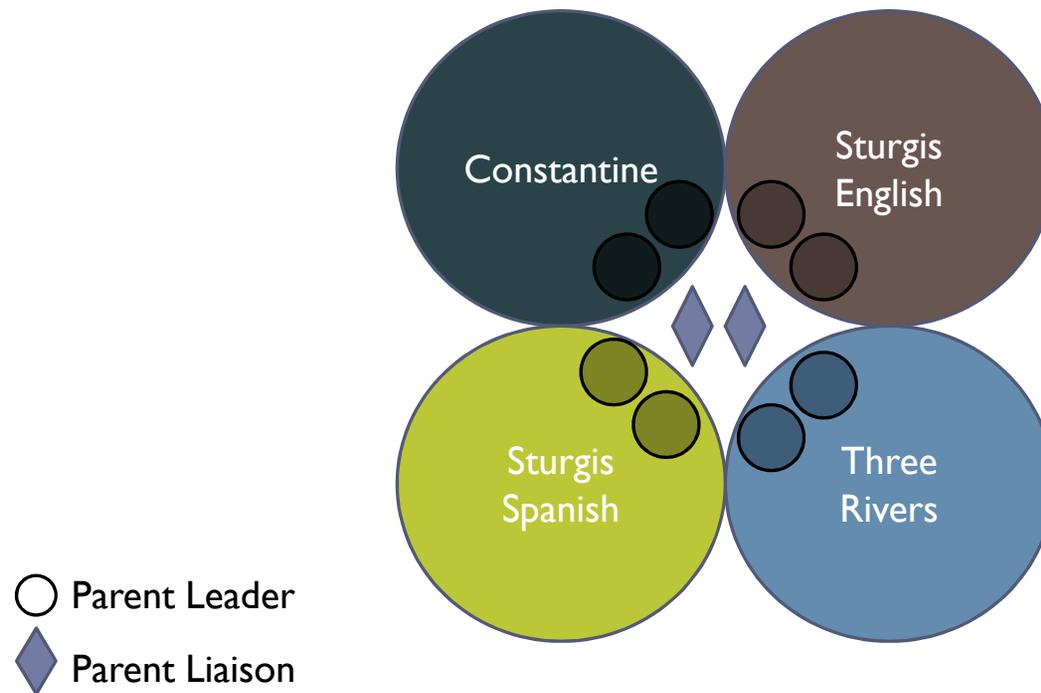
VS

Irregular boundaries



# We chose to be intentional!

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# Local Community Benefits

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- ▶ Allows for members to choose levels of involvement
- ▶ Gives ownerships to local communities for each coalition
- ▶ Allows groups to focus on needs perceived most important
- ▶ Creates parent leaders within the community



# Benefits to Parent Leaders

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*Parent Leaders receive ongoing leadership training and can utilize the experience to propel personal and professional goals. Typical training and/or experience for Parent Leaders can include:*

- ▶ Fiscal Management
- ▶ Community Planning
- ▶ Creating Reports
- ▶ Presenting at Events
- ▶ Business Etiquette
- ▶ Conflict Resolution
- ▶ Basic Computer Skills
- ▶ General Office Equipment



# County Benefits

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- ▶ Captures the voice of our unique communities
- ▶ Parent leaders “at the ready” to assist at the County and State Levels.



## A Snapshot of Current Parent Involvement:

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- ▶ Host Semi-Annual Community Baby Showers
  - ▶ Facilitate “Welcome Baby” Program to area Hospitals
  - ▶ Host Monthly Coalition Meetings & Playgroups
  - ▶ Serve on Local Boards
    - ▶ Transportation Authority
    - ▶ Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
    - ▶ Community Health Center
    - ▶ Office of Great Start
    - ▶ Child Abuse and Neglect Council
  - ▶ Conduct Professional Trainings
    - ▶ 123 Magic
    - ▶ Love and Logic
  - ▶ Develop and Implement Original Ideas
    - ▶ Empty Cradle, Full Heart
    - ▶ Memorial to the Unborn
  - ▶ Homeless Count, Project Connect, Parenting Fair, etc...
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I ♥ My  
Parents



## Contact

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