



# Geauga HMG Newsletter

July - August - September 2017

## What is Help Me Grow?

**Help Me Grow** is a voluntary program for pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers between the ages of birth and three years old. The goal of the program is to assure that newborns, infants, and toddlers have the best possible start in life. Help Me Grow provides services that promote children's growth and development and support families during their children's early years.

A **Help Me Grow** Worker can make visits to your home to provide you with information about community services and resources for Geauga Families. Your child will also be screened for health and overall development to make sure he/she meets important milestones.

The purpose of **Help Me Grow** is to help parents help their children reach their fullest potential because the first three years of life are so important to a child's overall educational, social, and emotional development.



### Contact us:

Geauga County Help Me Grow  
8200 Cedar Road  
Chesterland, Ohio 44026

Program Information & Central Intake:  
440-729-5250  
Toll Free 1-866-975-1100

Check us out online at:  
[www.geaugaffc.org/helpmegrow](http://www.geaugaffc.org/helpmegrow)  
<http://ohioearlyintervention.org/>

Geauga Help Me Grow is funded by Geauga Family First Council & Ohio Department of Health with the Early Childhood Developmental & Home Visitation Program component funded by Geauga County Job & Family Services.





Be sure to watch your email for additional community opportunities and events that HMG/EI will forward.

If you'd like to be added to our email list, please contact your Help Me Grow Service Coordinator.

## REFER A FAMILY



In hopes of reaching all Geauga County families who could benefit from Help Me Grow home based services, we need your help. Help Me Grow families who refer another family to Help Me Grow would receive a \$20 gift card with each successful referral.

For more information, Meredith Myers at 440.729.5250 x1530

## InfantSEE



FREE eye exam for Infants 1 year old or younger

Dr. Graley, 14901 North State Road in Middlefield is a provider for the InfantSEE program and works with children of all ages. She prefers to start seeing children between 6 months-1 year old. Remember you can get that first visit for free if your child is 1 year or younger.



Make your appointment now, Call 440.632.9277

More information and full list of providers: go to [InfantSEE.org](http://InfantSEE.org)

## STABLE ACCOUNT

Savings and investment solutions for people with disabilities.

Stable account allows you to save or invest up to \$14,000 per year without losing government benefits like Medicaid or SSI.

Visit [stableaccount.com](http://stableaccount.com) or call 1.800.439.1653 for more information

## The Great Geauga County Fair



14373 N. Cheshire St., Burton, 44021  
August 31–September 4, 2017  
Open 9:00am–12:00am (midnight)  
General admission-\$8.00  
Children 12 and under-free

*Stop by the Metzzenbaum Center booth and say 'hi'.  
(close to the North entrance to the Fair Grounds)*

For more detailed information on special prices, hours and events visit: <http://www.geaugafair.com/fair-info.html>

## Attention parents ... do you have questions? feedback? ideas?

### Please join us at the next Early Childhood Subcommittee meeting!

**Thursday, July 13, 2017**

**At Geauga County Job & Family Services**

**12480 Ravenwood Drive, Chardon**

**10:00**



### What is Early Childhood Subcommittee?

The Early Childhood Subcommittee is an advisory group of the Geauga County Family and Children First Council. Membership is comprised of various community agencies, representatives, and parents who partner together to share ideas, experiences, and expertise in the area of early childhood development.

### Why should I attend Early Childhood Subcommittee?

The focus of the group is to gather input regarding direction, planning, and success for the Geauga County Help Me Grow program. The ESC is also the place where community professionals and parents have the opportunity to talk about gaps in services for young children still exist in Geauga.

### We value your time & your opinions...

During the meeting we provide you with childcare. Your children will be watched by HMG staff on-site, in a child-friendly room. **In addition, your time is valuable to us - we will pay you \$25 for attending the meeting.**



# Developing Skills during Outdoor Playtime



Supporting your child's communication through play is a great way to learn new vocabulary, concepts, and ideas. What better time to play than summer! Parks, picnics, pools, beaches, zoos, sandboxes, and sports are all activities that are filled with speech/language opportunities. During any summer activity, think of ways you can target...

- Pretend play (feeding a stuffed animal/doll on a picnic)
- Imitation (waving, blowing kisses, "uh-oh", "moo", "achoo")
- Turn taking (my turn/your turn, tag you're it!)
- Verbal routines (ready, set, go or 1...2...3)
- Commands (point to the slide, kick the ball, find a big rock)
- Verbs (run, ran, running)
- Prepositions (on/off, in/out, over/under, front/behind)
- Adjectives (color, shape, size, texture)
- Questions (are your shoe's on?, what is this?, where's the bucket?)
- Opposites (big/little, fast/slow, hot/cold, wet/dry, empty/full)

Remember the most important part of play is to be animated, silly, and most of all HAVE FUN! ☺

-Vanessa Oster, Speech-Language Pathologist

Summertime is the perfect opportunity to get kids outside and moving! Encourage effortful play, such as climbing, jumping, and running to assist in meeting gross motor milestones. Be sure to provide the appropriate amount of assistance on the playground to allow your child to get out of their comfort zone. You can even play games from your own childhood, such as hopscotch or Simon Says ("Simon says jump!"). Most importantly strive to make play fun...it's what summer is all about!

-Danielle Skrabec, Physical Therapist



## Excerpt from Children and Nature Network

Angela Hanscom, Pediatric Occupational Therapist

Nature is the ultimate sensory experience! More children are presenting with sensory issues these days. They aren't moving like they did in years past. They don't explore, roll down hills, climb trees at great heights or spin in circles just for fun. In fact, our society sometimes discourages this type of play due to liability issues. The more we restrict children's movement and separate children from nature, the more sensory disorganization we see. Providing opportunities for your child to play outdoors will help them to integrate their senses in the most natural ways.

Here are some wonderful ways we can step back and start to see outdoor play as therapeutic in design:

**Climbing trees.** Children will need to use their problem-solving skills in order to scale the tree, testing branches as they go to make sure they are safe and sturdy. They would learn safety skills and the tree offers a nice tactile and natural touch experience as they hold onto the tree limbs during the climb.

**Playing in a mud puddle or a pile of leaves.** The kids have to maneuver through the mud, leaves or fields, using their balance, visual scanning skills, and engaging their tactile (touch) senses as they search for fun.

**Walking barefoot on a log.** If we take children outside, we could let them go barefoot on fallen trees, enhancing their sensory experience on a multitude of different levels. Not only would they be experiencing different textures, but they would feel the sensations of moist versus dry, crunchy versus soft, noisy versus quiet, and changes in temperature.

**Swings outdoors.** From ropes, swings or a parent's arms. Children are exposed to bird sounds, the wind on their face, and the shadows playing across the ground as they are swinging. With this movement, we engage all of their senses — not just the vestibular (balance) sense.

**Building forts.** By encouraging children to design their own forts and obstacle courses they are problem solving, creating, and planning. Children love creating play spaces, getting exposed to a variety of sensory experiences while igniting their imagination!

Nature truly is the ultimate sensory experience and the perfect medium for families to enjoy time together. Let's step beyond the confining walls of buildings for fresh air, playing outdoors to enrich our children's lives!

**Sensory Exploration:**  
Fun With Bubbles!

**Come join the fun!**

**When:** August 21, 2017  
**Where:** Metzenbaum Center  
8200 Cedar Rd.  
Chesterland  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.  
(Rain date: August 25, 2017)



*Make sure you and your child wear clothes that can get messy and wet!*

RSVP at 440.729.9406 x1705 or  
plg@geaugadd.org for more details



## Area Firework Displays

July 2, 2017 @ dusk

Chardon High School  
151 Chardon Ave., Chardon 44024

Kenston High School  
9500 Bainbridge Rd., Chagrin Falls 44023

July 3, 2017 @ dusk

Thompson Raceway Park  
8233 Sidley Road, Thompson 44086

## **FREE** community MOVIE NIGHT



**When:** August 5, 2017, 7:00-9:15  
**Where:** Metzenbaum Center, 8200 Cedar Road  
**Movies:** Guardians of the Galaxy

**Free popcorn and drinks will be provided.** Other snacks will be available for purchase. Bring blankets and pillows if you wish to lie on mats on the floor, otherwise chairs will be provided.

For more information or to register contact  
Janice Chesnes at 440.729.9406 x1512 or  
jchesnes@geaugadd.org

## Movin' with Music

New Groups starting the first week of September

**Mondays**  
The Metzenbaum Center  
8200 Cedar Road, Chesterland  
9am group or 10am group

**Tuesdays**  
The Metzenbaum Center  
8200 Cedar Road, Chesterland  
10am group

**Thursdays**  
St Mary's School School,  
401 North Street, Chardon.  
9:00am group

**Fridays**  
Geauga YMCA  
12460 Bass Lake Road, Chardon  
10:30am group

**Please contact Cathy Yane to reserve a spot!**  
cyane@geaugadd.org or 440.729.9406 x 1317

## Le Buchaneers Performed by The Metzenbaum Dancers

**When:** September 16, 2017  
**Where:** Metzenbaum Center  
8200 Cedar Road  
Chesterland, OH  
**Cost:** Free



## Metzenbaum Pool

HMG/EI family open swims  
9-11:30  
July 17 2017  
September 11, 2017



Contact Pam Marusek for more information at  
pmarusek@geaugadd.org



**Check out Geauga's Play, Learn & Grow  
Facebook page for information about  
exciting upcoming activities and  
calendars of events**



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Play-Learn-and-Grow-Geauga-County/327114797445810>

# July UV safety Month

The sun emits radiation known as UV-A and UV-B rays. Both can damage your skin and eyes.

- \* UV-A reach the outer layer of your skin
- \* UV-B can penetrate to the middle layer of your skin



Unprotected sun exposure can:

- \* Affect vision and eye damage
- \* Suppresses Immune system
- \* Premature skin aging
- \* Skin cancer

## Minimize the risk of sun exposure

- Cover up—proper clothing may include long sleeve shirts, pants, hats and sunglasses (for eyes).
- Stay in shade—Staying in shade between 10:00am and 4:00pm when sun is most intense.
- The right sunscreen—Sunscreen should be at least 15 SPF and protect against both UV-A and UV-B.
- Right amount of sunscreen—When in sun apply a palmful of sunscreen every two hours. Apply more if swimming or sweating even if it is waterproof.

If you have any problems as a result of being in the sun, contact your healthcare provider

# August Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

## Baby's vision development:

- Birth—adjusting to light and beginning to focus
- 2-4 months—focus and track moving items
- 5-8 months—reaching for items (depth perception), seeing a 3 dimensional world around them, have good color vision, crawling also enhances eye-hand coordination.
- 9-12 months—can see and judge distance to reach and grab something between their finger and thumb.

Eye and vision problems can lead to a delay in a baby's developments. If you have any questions talk with your pediatrician.

For more details visit : [www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/baby-vision-development-first-year](http://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/baby-vision-development-first-year)

**Eye Safety:**  
Injury can happen to the eye any time/anywhere from sports to toys to fireworks. Encourage your child to wear protective eyewear during recreational activities and to play with age appropriate toys. If an eye related accident does happen—do not rub eye and seek eye care provider as soon as possible.

Healthy vision is important because 80% of learning occurs through the eyes.

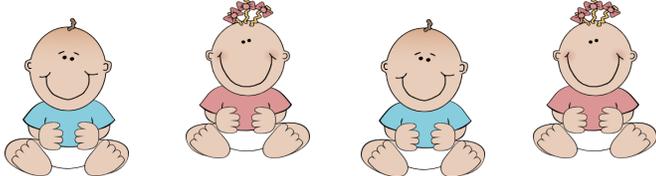


Recommended full dilated eye exams:  
6 months, 3 years, 5 years (before Kindergarten) and then every 2 years.

# September Baby Safety Month

## Keeping your baby safe:

- Do not hold your baby while cooking at the stove and make sure all pot handle are turned toward the back of the stove.
- Secure unsafe areas by using safety gates, knob covers or door locks
- Attach corner and edge guards to tables.
- Secure bookcases or other loose furniture that can fall by securing them to the wall
- Put safety plugs in all outlets.
- Keep blow dryers, curling irons and other small appliances unplugged and out reach.
- Hide all electrical cords or use a hide-a-cord device.
- Secure flat screen TV's with safety cords.
- Collect all bath items before starting a bath for your baby.
- Never leave baby unattended in bathtub.
- Always keep toilet seat down and empty water in tub when not in use.
- Always properly secure baby when in stroller, carriers or car seats.



For more information on baby safety and baby equipment and toy safety visit:  
<https://babysafetyzone.org>

# Join us for our annual day of FUN IN THE SUN!

Saturday, July 29, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
PIONEER WATER PARK, 10661 KILE RD., CHARDON

Tickets are \$7

This includes admission to the park and parking for the day!

Tickets must be purchased by Thursday, July 6th

For questions and ticket purchase, please contact Janice Chesnes at (440) 724-4106 ext. 1012

\*This event is open to the public  
\*\*Free for guests age 2 and under  
\*\*\*\$7 ticket price is limited to the first 300 tickets sold



Please return the filled out registration form below and payment by July 6, 2017. Tickets will not be considered sold until payment is received. The \$7 price is limited to the first 300 tickets sold!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Tickets: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Owed (\$7.00 per ticket): \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks out to: **Geauga County Board of DD**  
Send the registration form and payment to: **Janice Chesnes, Geauga County Bd. Of DD**  
8200 Cedar Road, Chesterland, Ohio 44026



# Meet your Early Intervention Team



*Nancy Seelbach, LISW*

*Project Director—Ph. 440.285.1201*

I am a licensed social worker with a Master's degree in social work. I have been working in Geauga County with families and children for over 30 years. I have two grown sons and three grandchildren. To me, HMG is one of the best programs ever provided in Geauga County for families with young children and I'm excited to be part of it!



*Meredith Myers*

*HMG Clinical Supervisor—Ph. 440.729.5250 x1530*

I am a 1995 graduate of Kent State University with a major in Individual and Family Studies. I have been working with families in Geauga County for the past 18 years ranging from child protection, mental health to child development. I have raised my own two sons in Geauga County and found this a wonderful place to work and raise a family due to the supportive professionals and the vast resources Geauga County has to offer. I am committed to ensuring your children and family receive excellent services in our program so your children can reach their fullest potential!



*Rochelle Payne, LSW*

*HMG Service Coordinator  
440.729.5250 x1535*

I am a licensed social worker with a bachelor's degree in social work. I have worked in Geauga County with children and their families since 1995. I am a mother of three children.



*Brittany D'Ettorre*

*HMG Service Coordinator  
440.729.5250 x1531*

I earned my Bachelors of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Bowling Green State University. I worked as an Outreach Specialist for the Regional Infant Hearing Program for three years before becoming a Service Coordinator in Geauga County last August. I have had a passion for working with children, and fully believe in helping families make the most of these critical years of development. My husband and I have been in North-east Ohio for four years now and are slowly getting used to the snow. I have two beautiful little girls who keep me on my toes as well as three ornery dogs.



*Cyndy Sperrazzo, M.Ed.*

*HMG Service Coordinator  
440.729.5250 x1533*

I am a licensed Special Education teacher with a Master's in Education. I enjoyed a career as a Pediatric Recreation Therapist with the Cleveland Clinic, taught Special Education and Pre-school before coming to Help Me Grow. It's a pleasure to offer HMG support to our Geauga County families.



*Polly Meil*

*Developmental Specialist  
440.729.9406 x1305*

I received a B.S. in Special Education from Bowling Green State University and attended the University of Oregon where I began my Master's in Early Intervention. Before joining the EI staff at Geauga County Board of DD, I worked in the Early Intervention Program at Cleveland Sight Center with infants and toddlers with vision impairments. I have been at Metzenbaum for 9 years as a Developmental Specialist with the Early Intervention Program. I am a certified PLAY Project consultant working with families and children with autism spectrum disorders.



*Patty Roesel*

*Developmental Specialist  
440.729.9406 x1304*

I graduated from the University of Kentucky majoring in Special Education and Primary General Education. I continued onto Northern Kentucky University for graduate school. I taught in the classroom for 20 years in Special Education before moving into Early Childhood Intervention. I have been a Developmental Specialist in Florida, Texas and now North East Ohio. I'm extremely excited to start working with the wonderful families in this area.



*Karla Faso, MS, OTR/L*

*Occupational Therapist  
440.729.9406 x1306*

I have been an Occupational Therapist for 30 years and at Metzenbaum for 5 years. I graduated from Boston University with a specialty in Brain Injury and have a strong interest in the areas of Sensory Processing Disorder, Feeding Difficulties and Neurodevelopmental Treatment and Movement Disorders. I have a wide variety of experiences including personally and professionally working with children in Early Intervention, Intensive Care & Trauma, Outpatient and Homecare as well as School Age in the Public Schools. I am currently working on my certification credentials for the P.L.A.Y. Project (Play & Language for Autistic Youngsters). I love my job as an Occupational Therapist, working in the natural environment, getting to know the families and helping them achieve their goals.



*Vanessa Oster, MA, CCC/SLP*

*Speech and Language Pathologist  
440.729.9406 x1318*

I received my Bachelor of Science in Hearing, Speech and Language Sciences from Ohio University and completed my Master of Arts in Speech Pathology and Audiology from Cleveland State University. I am a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist in the State of Ohio and hold a Certificate of Clinical Competency from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. I have experience working with children in the early intervention, outpatient, and school settings. My passion is to help families find creative ways for their children to achieve success in their natural environments.



*Danielle Skrabec, MS, PT*

*Physical Therapist  
440.729.9406 x1307*

I earned my Bachelors in Biology and Chemistry from John Carroll University and my Masters in Physical Therapy from Cleveland State University. I have been a PT for 9 years, working in both outpatient and inpatient rehab settings. I have three children, one of which was a 28-week preemie, so I bring a lot of personal experience with me as well.



*Cathy Yane*

*Paraprofessional/Administrative Assistant  
440.729.9406 x1317*

For 27 years, I have held many positions at the Metzenbaum Center. Now, being a part of the HMG/EI team, I provide clerical support for the HMG/EI staff and assist/coordinate the Movin' with Music program. I love the versatility of my job but mostly enjoy the opportunity to work with families in the HMG/EI programs.



*Lisa Ross*

*Play Learn and Grow Staff  
440.729.9406 x1705*



*Kathy Gibbs*

*Play Learn and Grow Staff  
440.729.9406 x1705*

Lisa and Kathy both began as classroom assistants for the Early Intervention Department. They transitioned to the Early Intervention program to facilitate the Play Learn and Grow classes for toddlers eighteen months to three years old that are held at the Metzenbaum Center. They have begun to expand this program into a variety of community settings to encourage social activities for families and their children in the natural environment. Both are very talented and creative in putting together additional special events for the children and families served through the Early Intervention program throughout the year.

**Parents' Rights in Ohio HMG E.I.**  
To file a complaint about your child's early intervention services please contact:

**The Bureau for Children with Developmental and Special Health Needs at the Ohio Dept. of Health via:**



**Phone:** 614-644-8389  
**Email:** [beis@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:beis@odh.ohio.gov)  
**Mail:** Ohio Dept. of Health  
Help Me Grow  
246 N. High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215



Are you concerned about your child's behavior?  
Is your child at risk for expulsion from preschool?

**Crossroads Early Childhood Services Can Help!**

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation  
(Statewide Whole Child Matters Initiative)

**For more information contact:**  
**Marlayna Adamic 440-358-7370**

**Lake-Geauga United Head Start, Inc.**



**FREE Preschool**

for children ages 3-5

*Eligibility is based on family income*

**CALL (440) 636-5387**



Geauga Park District's website is a great resource for FREE and educational events for residents of every age & ability.

[geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://geaugaparkdistrict.org)



**Birthright Geauga, Inc.**

**440-286-9711**

**24 Hour Line:**

**1-800-550-4900**

Free & Confidential Help, Pregnancy Tests, Maternity Clothes, Infant & Children's Clothing

[www.birthright.org/chardon](http://www.birthright.org/chardon)



Please consider becoming a foster and/or adoptive family for the children of Geauga County who need and deserve your support.

[geugakids.com](http://geugakids.com) - **440-285-9141**

**Big Brothers Big Sisters**



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Ohio is seeking men and women over the age of 18 who live in Lake, Geauga and Ashtabula Counties to volunteer as Big Brothers and Big Sisters. If this is something that interests you, please visit our website [bbbsneo.org](http://bbbsneo.org) or contact Shannon Majewski at 440-352-2526.



Geauga County  
**Public Library**

Be sure to check out Geauga Public Library's website for events and story time information.

[geugalibrary.net](http://geugalibrary.net)



Cerebral Palsy  
Group

Cerebral Palsy Group is an online resource for anyone who has been affected by cerebral palsy, brain injuries, or birth injuries.

Visit [cerebralpalsygroup.com](http://cerebralpalsygroup.com) for more information.



**Geauga WIC Program**

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a nutrition education program that provides nutritious foods to pregnant women, women who just had a baby, breastfeeding moms, infants and children up to age 5. Visit [geaugacountyhealth.org](http://geaugacountyhealth.org) for more information on income eligibility. Please call to schedule an appointment at 440-279-1936.