

THE EARLY EDITION

AN INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER FROM EARLY BEGINNINGS

PLAYGROUPS ARE UP AND RUNNING!

**2 GROUPS EVERY MONTH
WITH JESS!**

- Any enrolled, or family interested in enrolling, is welcome to join! Our **McDonough County** groups are held at 339 S Johnson St, Macomb
- **Groups consist of:**
 - Child development centered activities
 - Music, reading, and family interaction
 - Just over an hour long



FULTON COUNTY GROUPS

HELD WEEKLY WITH ALICIA!

- These groups are from 12-1:30pm on Wednesdays in March and April
- **Lewistown Carnegie Library**
 - 1126 N Main St.,
Lewistown



WHAT PARENTS ARE SAYING

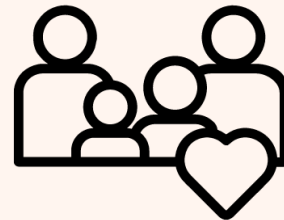
About Early Beginnings!

"I HAVE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT MY CHILDREN."

"I LOVE AND APPRECIATE THIS PROGRAM. IT HAS HELPED SO MUCH AS A YOUNG ADULT AND A MOTHER OF 3 BOYS."

"VERY THANKFUL. MAY GOD BLESS YOU FOR EVERYTHING."

"WE ENJOY ALL THE BOOKS."



PARENTS AS TEACHERS IMPROVES ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

PAT did a study and found that...

1. ENROLLED FAMILIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO FIND EMPLOYMENT

PAT families were 16% higher, than the caregivers in the comparison group, to find caregiver employment

3. ENROLLED FAMILIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO ENROLL IN COLLEGE

PAT Families were 12% higher, than the comparison group to enroll in college, if they were not already

2. ENROLLED FAMILIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO GET A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

PAT Families were 69% higher, than the caregivers in the comparison group, to get a high school diploma/start the process of enrolling, if they had not already



RELEVANT RESOURCES

EAGLE VIEW COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Medical, Dental, and Behavioral Health services
- Medical Card accepted
- 230 S. Main St
Monmouth IL 61455
- 309-867-2202

PERSONAL CARE CLOSET

- Created by the University Baptist Church
- Personal care, cleaning, and homeware items
- 1st Saturday of every month: 10-2pm
- 3rd Wednesday of each month: 4-6pm
- 315 N Sherman Ave,
Macomb
- Facebook Page at:
fb.me/MacombPCC



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The WIU Psychology Department offers:

- Free services consisting of:
 - Individual therapy
 - Psychotherapy for children, adolescents and adults
 - Family Therapy
 - Marital/couples therapy
- 309-298-1919

EARLY LEARNING AT WIU

The Speech Pathology & Audiology Dept offers:

- **Little Learners:** Free language groups held Tuesday/Thursday 9-11am on campus
 - 309-298-1957
- **Speech Sprouts:** Free zoom class with music, movement and a language focus
 - NM-Pierson@wiu.edu
- **Speech therapy:** free!
- An Autism Evaluation Clinic will be opening Fall 2023!

NEW PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Hello! I would like to introduce myself as the new director of Early Beginnings. Some of you may already know me as I have been a parent educator at Early Beginnings since the fall of 2012. I have loved every second of working with parents and their children and am excited to be continuing this work in a new role.

I live in Macomb and have five children that range in age from 8 years old to 22 years old. Often I am told that it is odd but toddlers and teenagers are my favorite ages! There are few parenting topics or concerns that I haven't either experienced myself or have listened to others navigate.

Seeing the Early Beginnings program thrive is a passion of mine, as is leading discussions about parenting. I will often be participating in our group programming and enjoy collaborating with the LEAP program on community Parent Cafes.

I look forward to meeting any of you that I haven't already met! Please reach out if you ever have any questions or concerns. I would be happy to have a conversation anytime.



THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF DISCIPLINE

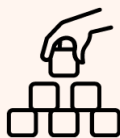
BY CHRISTINE NICHOLSON

The first few years can be challenging for parents. It is never too early to start building a good foundation with your children. A synonym of the word "discipline" is to "teach". The information you give your children during the first few years provides a structure to build on as they get older and become more independent.

The first step in creating a good environment for learning with your child is to teach him that you are someone who can be trusted. A baby's cry is their language. This is how they communicate their needs to us. In *The Discipline Book* by Dr. Sears, he reminds us that "Responding to your baby's cries is the first exercise in exercising teaching your baby to trust you." Being responsive is also a great way to get to know your child. The more you know them, the more you can predict what they will do.

The best discipline is often preventative. When you know your child, you can be one step ahead of them and prevent many problems before they occur. At times preventing a meltdown can be as simple as making sure your babies needs are met. Many behavior problems are related to being too tired or too hungry. Little ones need a lot of sleep and frequent small meals to function at their best.

Another way to be one step ahead is to set up a "yes" environment. The less you have to correct your child, the more they will listen when you need to teach them a new rule. I like to keep child safe items within reach and plastic containers in low cabinets. Setting up your house as a fun place for your child to live and explore rather than a place where many items are "off limits" provides an enriching environment and lessens the amount of struggles you will have during the day.



THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF DISCIPLINE

Little ears often hear us better when we tell them what IS okay. It is easy to get into the pattern of telling our kids what not to do, but you'll find them much more cooperative when you tell them what TO do. Even young toddlers can touch breakables if taught that using "one finger touch" is okay. In my house, "Sit on the rug so we can get your shoes on." works much better than "Stop running around the room."

Changing our language shows our children that good behavior is the expectation. When we say, "Don't hit your brother." The expectation is that they WILL hit their brother and we don't want them to.



A change in our language can often bring out some of the best changes in our children. Pam Leo, in her article Teaching Children Respect, provides a good tool for measuring how you are speaking to your child. When talking to your child, ask yourself if you would talk to a close friend this way. Young children need us to describe what we see, reflect those feelings, and protect their developing self-esteem.

There is always a way to use positive words to describe what you see in your child. A messy room can be described as "Wow! There are a lot of toys on the floor. Let's work on putting them back in the toy bin." When language like, "Look at this mess! Why are you such a slob?" is used, it detracts from the lesson we are trying to teach our children and becomes part of how they see themselves.

Finding the right balance of discipline in your family can be tricky. It is truly a rewarding experience. However, the effort you put into teaching your children will reflect during the early years will pay off in a lifetime.

PARENT SUCCESS STORIES

AND THE LONGEST FAMILY ENROLLED IS...

The Snyder Family! They have participated in the Early Beginnings Program with all six of their children. They have completed 200+ visits! Ariel enrolled when she was expecting her first son in 2006. She and Steve continued in the program with the births of the next 5 children, and are currently involved with their last child who is now 15 months old.



Steve is great at coming up with activities he wants to do with the kids- such as one year he wanted to make homemade chalk, and this year wants to do body bubbles (weather permitting). Both Steve and Ariel have recommended the program to family and friends and have been a great support in sharing the program with others.

So, the longevity award goes to The Snyder Family who have been active in Early Beginnings for 16 years and have become an extended family to all of us at Early Beginnings!



PARENT SUCCESS STORIES

Randee Nance

"Forget about the what if and worry about the what now" is something that Randee Nance says to herself often. She learned this mantra from a 72-year-old woman who was in her 13th treatment facility.

Several years ago, Randee was at her lowest point struggling with addiction. Today you can find her working in the community volunteering with social service agencies or taking her kids to every local fun event that she can find. At the dedication for the new Shepherd's Gate Clothing Closet (one of the agencies where Randee has volunteered), she was described as having "an incredible heart...through her life she will touch many."



Randee has clear visions for the future. She says, **"Nobody is the perfect parent but I want to be the best mom I can be."** She would also like to help others struggling with addiction regardless of if they are ready for change or not. She would love to work with programs at the ROE to aid in hosting recovery events for parents struggling with addiction.

When asked what advice she would offer to someone walking the same path she did years ago Randee said she would tell them **"It's OK to not be OK. Feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable asking for help is normal. You have to feel uncomfortable to be able to get comfortable. I am living proof of being at rock bottom and how a person can change."**

Randee has been sober since July 2020. We at Early Beginnings are so very thankful for Randee and the lives she touches. Every chance she gets to go the extra mile and help anyone she sees struggling she jumps at the opportunity. Way to champion our community, Randee! Through her time as a parent in the Early Beginnings program and volunteering at our agency it has been exciting to have a front row seat to watch Randee shine!