



* PASSIONATE
* CONNECTED
* ACCESSIBLE

PAULDING COUNTY CHILD & FAMILY RESOURCE FAIR

Monday, October 27, 2025, 4pm—5:30pm
Little Sprouts ELC, 210 Dooley Drive, Paulding



*Learn about valuable family and children's
resources available in and around Paulding County!*

For more information about this *FREE* event, please contact:
Denise Kinder: dkinder@pauldingdd.com

PREPARING FOR PARENT—TEACHER CONFERENCES

Most parent—teacher conferences only last between 10 to 20 minutes. That's not a lot of time to connect with your child's teacher. But with a little preparation and planning, you can make the most of this time. Here are some suggestions:

GETTING READY FOR THE CONFERENCE: *Talk to your child before the conference:* Ask your child if there's anything you should talk to the teacher about, making sure your child doesn't worry about the meeting. Find out what they think are their best subjects, and what subjects they like the least and why.



List Questions or Concerns for the Teacher: Does my child hand in homework on time and is it complete? How are grades determined? How does my child handle taking tests? Does my child work better in groups or alone? How does my child get along with their peers or adults? Is there any concerns about learning or behavior problems that I should know about, and if so, what has been tried with my child? What can I do at home and school to help my child build on strengths and improve weaknesses? What are some opportunities for me to become involved at school?

AT THE CONFERENCE: *Be on time*—double check the time slot for your conference, then plan to be ready about five minutes before your assigned time. *Stay calm*—it's important to keep your emotions in check during the conference, even if you child is struggling with some things. Using a respectful tone also helps you and your teacher work together to find solutions for your child. At the same time, be sure to speak up if you disagree with the teacher, otherwise the teacher may assume you don't have concerns.

AFTER THE PARENT—TEACHER CONFERENCE: *Talk to your child*—it's important to share with your child anything positive that you and the teacher discussed. But it's also important not to shy away from problems or challenges discussed. *Follow up*—if you and the teacher agreed on next steps, follow up in the next week or so to see how things are working out. Ask for updates. Also be ready to share what you've been doing on any action steps at home.

Although parent-teacher conferences are short, they're a good time to learn more about your child's school experiences, and can help build strong parent-teacher partnerships.

Source: Understood.org, pacer.org, scholastic.com, The National PTA

Inside this issue:

CREATE A READING ROUTINE AT HOME WITH YOUR CHILD	Page 2
BENEFITS OF READING TO YOUR CHILD AT HOME	Page 2
EARLY LITERACY & DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY	Page 2
FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT (FBA)	Page 3
WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHLD'S TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD	Page 3
OHIO DEPT. OF MEDICAID-TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE	Page 3
4 WAYS PARENTS CAN GET BACK ON TRACK THIS FALL	Page 4



CREATE A READING ROUTINE AT HOME WITH YOUR CHILD

Creating a Successful Reading Routine at Home

By creating a comfortable environment and incorporating fun, interactive elements, parents can foster a lifelong love of reading in their kids!

Establish a consistent time. Schedule a specific, realistic time for reading each day. A routine is key, whether it's 15–30 minutes before bed, after dinner, or during a quiet afternoon break.



Let your child choose the books.

Giving your child a say in what they read increases engagement and builds confidence. Empower them by letting them choose from the library or home bookshelves, even if it's a favorite they want to reread.

Read with expression. Use different voices and facial expressions for the characters to bring the story to life. This makes the experience more fun and helps with comprehension.

Read more than books. Expand your definition of reading material. Point out environmental print on street signs, food labels, and logos. You can also read magazines, recipes, and instructions together.

Embrace rereading. It's common for children to want to reread favorites. Rereading helps build reading fluency, accuracy, and confidence because they master a familiar text.

Lead by example. Let your child see you reading for pleasure, whether it's a book, newspaper, or magazine. This shows that reading is a valuable and enjoyable part of life for everyone.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF READING TO CHILDREN AT HOME?

Cognitive Development. Helps them make sense of what they see, hear, and read.

Better Vocabulary. Reading at an early age helps them learn new words and ways to express themselves, and improves their grammar.

Bonding Between Parent and Child. Reading time allows parent and child to connect and unwind, and triggers conversations, questions, and positive association in the child's mind.

Develops Concentration. Regular and consistent reading helps to improve the child's concentration abilities as they sit still and listen, which builds patience that benefits them at school.

Reduce Screen Time. Children's brains need stimulation to learn and grow—books inspire children to learn and develop and explore their world—too much screen time can hamper their brain development.

Source: kidsrkids.com

“Children spell LOVE differently, they spell it T-I-M-E”

- * *Set special TIME aside for your child*
- * *Read with them*
- * *Play with them*
- * *Share your day with them*
- * *Look for teachable moments with your child*



Source: www.imom.com

EARLY LITERACY



EARLY LITERACY is much more than recognizing letters and the sounds they make. Early literacy provides a critical foundation for listening, speaking, writing, reading, and personal communication that your child will rely on and grow from throughout his or her life.

For some children with disabilities or developmental delays, these skills may develop more slowly than those of typical children. Doing activities with your child that are appropriate for his or her developmental level will encourage and support the growth of these skills.

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS.

Choose books with bright colors, simple

pictures, and rhyming words. Point to pictures and talk about them to build language skills.

FOR PRESCHOOLERS. Engage in interactive books with flaps or sounds. Encourage them to predict what will happen next and make connections to their own life.

FOR ELEMENTARY-AGED KIDS.

Take turns reading pages or chapters aloud with your child. Continue asking questions which helps develop language and listening skills and prepares them to understand the written word.

Source: pacer.org



**DOLLY PARTON
IMAGINATION
LIBRARY**

The United Way of Paulding County participates in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio, a program that mails **free** books to eligible children from birth to age five. You can sign your child up for this early literacy program, which provides monthly, age-appropriate books. To register your child, go to: **OhioImaginationLibrary.org**

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT (FBA)

What is a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)? Behavior can be a reason kids struggle at school. Kids may disrupt class, become withdrawn, or even cut class. Whether kids know it or not,



they act in certain ways for a reason.

A functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is a process schools use to

figure out what's behind challenging behaviors, and come up with possible solutions. It's like an evaluation but focused on behavior.

The FBA is done by a school team led by a person trained in understanding

behavior, like a school psychologist or a behavior specialist. The team may also include teachers, school staff, service providers, the student, and their family.

When an FBA is complete, the school should have a good idea of what's causing the behavior and how to help.

When Do Schools Use FBA? Not all students get this kind of behavioral assessment, even if they have a behavior challenge. There are three situations where schools typically use this process:

- 1) As part of a special education evaluation.
- 2) If new behavior concerns arise.
- 3) In certain school discipline situations.

An FBA isn't commonly used for kids

who don't have an IEP or 504 Plan. The law doesn't require it either. But schools often have other systems, like Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), to help students with behaviors.

Four Steps in the FBA Process:

- 1) Define the challenging behavior.
- 2) Gather and analyze information.
- 3) Find out the reason for the behavior.
- 4) Make a behavior intervention plan.

How Parents Can Help. Parents & caregivers can help by observing their child and telling the school what they are seeing at home. A parent might want to use a behavior log, such as Understood's free app at understood.org to help keep track of behavior patterns.

An FBA may not be a quick solution to behavior challenges. But, it can give a complete picture of why a student is struggling.

Source: understood.org

HOW CAN A PARENT SUPPORT THEIR CHILD'S TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD?

Ways to Support Your Child's Transition into Adulthood

When your child turns 14 years old, the individualized education program (IEP) team increases planning with a focus on preparing his or her transition into adult life. At age 14, your child will start to receive official invitations to join the IEP meetings. However, your child is welcome to attend their IEP meetings at any age. Attendance prior to age 18 is at parent discretion. Your child's team may want to consider including a portfolio of your child's preferences, interests, needs and strengths (PINS) in the years before he or she turns 14 as part of the IEP information. A portfolio of PINS will give the team a starting point for transition planning.



Additionally, your school team may want to perform an Age Appropriate Transition Assessment (AATA) before age 14 so your child's current needs for adult skill development can be identified and addressed. For more information on AATA, please visit the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) Lifespan Transition Center at: ocali.org. Transition meetings are good opportunities for your child to start earnestly thinking about and planning for his or her future.

Transition Planning Process. The transition planning process opens lots of opportunities for your child to practice independence. This is a great time for your child to start working on using his or her own voice and assertiveness for self-advocacy. It is also a time to practice independence across his/her entire day. For example, they could complete some of the following tasks:

- * Charging and keeping track of assistive technology (AT) devices;
- * Getting up independently for school;
- * Making and managing doctor appointments;
- * Speaking directly to doctors and teachers about any challenges and needs they may have.

There are many transition resources on both the OCALI Lifespan Transition Center's website at: ocali.org, and Ohio Employment First website at: ohioemploymentfirst.org. As your child ages out of school aged programs, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) can be a valuable partner to you/your school team when planning for employment experiences and learning job skills at: ood.ohio.gov

Source: ocali.org

Medicaid managed care & MyCare Ohio members can call the number below, or contact the Ohio Medicaid Hotline for consumers at: 800-324-8680.

	Managed Care	MyCare Ohio
Aetna Better Health	833-711-0773 (OhioRISE)	855-364-0974
AmeriHealth Caritas	833-764-7700	
Anthem BC/BS	844-912-0938	
Buckeye Health Plan	866-246-4358	
CareSource	800-488-0134	855-475-3163
Humana Healthy Horizons	877-856-5702	
Molina Healthcare	800-642-4168	855-665-4623
United Healthcare Community Plan	800-895-2017	877-542-9236

Ohio Department of Medicaid—TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE!

If you're covered by Medicaid and you're having trouble getting to health care services, transportation assistance may be available. Information about additional Medicaid transportation resources can be found on the Ohio Department of Medicaid website at: medicaid.ohio.gov

If you're not a Medicaid managed care or MyCare member (or you want an option besides what your plan offers), contact the Medicaid Transportation Coordinator at our local County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) county office: Defiance-Paulding JFS Consolidated, 252 Dooley Dr., Paulding, OH 45879. Phone: (419) 399-3756





- * PASSIONATE
- * CONNECTED
- * ACCESSIBLE

Cathy Ruiz, Parent Mentor

Western Buckeye, ESC
Office: 451 McDonald Pike,
Entrance #1, Paulding, OH 45879

Phone: 419-399-4800
or 419-203-7364

Email: cruiz@wbesc.org

**BRIDGING
COMMUNICATION
BETWEEN HOME and
SCHOOL**

THE PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM

WHAT IS A PARENT MENTOR?

The Parent Mentor is a parent of a child with a disability, and provides a support network to parents of children with disabilities and to the school districts who serve them. The Parent Mentor can provide information and resources to families and school districts including education laws, district programs and services, community resources, and special-need related resources, free of charge.

WHAT ARE THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE PARENT MENTOR?

- * Guide families through the special education process, including rights and responsibilities
- * Listen and provide supports to families and educators on an individual basis
- * Attend Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and other school meetings at a parent or school's request
- * Organize and conduct informational sessions or workshops based on the needs of families and school personnel
- * Builds collaborative partnership between families, schools, and committees to benefit students with disabilities.

As a Parent Mentor for Paulding County, I am just a phone call away if you need help with your child's special education services, if you need information, or if you have questions. ~ Cathy Ruiz



GET BACK ON TRACK THIS FALL!

Four Ways Parents Can Get Back on Track This Fall. With school back in session means routines are back in full swing! Whether it's work, school, or family schedules, this season can feel busy and a little overwhelming. Here are some simple strategies parents can use to keep healthy habits steady when life speeds up.



1. Build Fast, Balanced Meals.

- Use shortcuts like salad kits, frozen veggies, or pre-cooked proteins.
- Aim for 3 key pieces: protein, fiber-rich carbs, and healthy fat.
- Example: Southwest salad kit + black beans + avocado slices.

2. Anchor Your Day with Mini Routines.

- Morning: Drink water, prep a snack, take 5 minutes to breathe.
- Midday: Eat lunch away from your work place, stretch, step outside.
- Evening: Shut down screens early, prep breakfast for tomorrow.

3. Stay Active in Small Doses.

- Even 10-15 minutes of walking or stretching counts.
- Stack it onto what you already do—walk after dinner, stretch while watching TV.
- Consistency matters more than intensity when schedules are tight.

4. Plan Your Hydration.

- Busy Days = easy to forget water. Keep a reusable bottle nearby.
- Add flavor with lemon, cucumber, or a splash of 100% juice if plain water feels boring.

Source: VWASIG

WEBSITE RESOURCES

This is by no means an exhaustive list of special – need related websites, but hopefully you will find one or more of these to be beneficial:

STATE & NATIONAL:

dodd.ohio.gov (Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities)
disabilityrightsohio.org (Disability Rights Ohio)
doublearc.org (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder)
education.ohio.gov (Ohio Dept. of Education & Workforce)
epilepsycenter.com (Epilepsy Center of NWO) ncld.org
 (National Center for Learning Disabilities)
oceed.org (Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children With Disabilities)
ohiodeafblind.org (Ohio Center for Deafblind Ed.)
ohioschoolforthe deaf.org
ossb.oh.gov (Ohio State School for the Blind)
sstr1.org (State Support Team Region 1)
pacer.org (PACER Center)
parentmentor.osu.edu (Ohio Parent Mentor Project)
transitionta.org (National Tech. Assist. Center on Transition)
understood.org

AUTISM:

asno.org (Autism Society of NWO)
autismcertificationcenter.org
autismlink.com
autismohio.org
autismspeaks.com
cdc.gov/actearly
fhautism.com (Future Horizons Autism)
ocali.org (Ohio Center for Autism & Low Incidence)