



## Early Childhood Education

# PREPARING YOUNG CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS

In 2015, the state's \$56.6 million investment in MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension generated more than \$1 billion for Michigan residents. Every dollar the state invested in AgBioResearch and MSU Extension leveraged an additional \$2.59 in federal funds and external contracts, grants and other revenues, including nearly \$1.3 million leveraged by MSU Extension children and youth programs alone. As a result, MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch are able to serve Michigan residents with a benefit/cost ratio of 18:1.

These cost benefits are huge, but they are not the only benefits that MSU Extension brings to the state. Through MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development, more than 200,000 youth learn lifelong skills, develop leadership abilities and discover the value of community service. In addition, MSU Extension early childhood education programs prepare thousands of Michigan's youngest children for school success.



### THE ISSUE

The future of the Great Lakes State depends on the success of its children. As a result, the education of these young people is of utmost importance: the knowledge and skills they are equipped with today will directly affect their ability to lead the state to a healthy and prosperous future. Despite this, the U.S. Department of Education's National Assessment of Educational Progress indicates that only 30 percent of Michigan fourth graders met reading proficiency standards in 2013. Studies show that children who fail to meet these standards are four times more likely to drop out of school in the future. More must be done to help Michigan's youth develop this early competency and prepare for future success.

### MSU EXTENSION ACTION

To help fight this alarming statistic and address a critical area of need, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension provides early childhood programs that help families with children from birth to age 8 prepare for school. These programs help young children develop early reading and school preparedness skills by teaching parents and caregivers methods to increase childhood science, math and reading literacy while increasing social and emotional competencies that have been proven to boost academic performance. In 2015, these programs were delivered to more than 3,000 parents and caregivers who influence nearly 45,000 children and youth on a daily basis.

### THE IMPACT

As a result of MSU Extension early childhood development programs, adults increased their knowledge of basic concepts that promote school readiness and academic success during early childhood stages of life, helping to ensure their children have a solid foundation for future success. Of those surveyed:

- 90 percent said they increased their knowledge of techniques that help young children learn and promote school readiness.

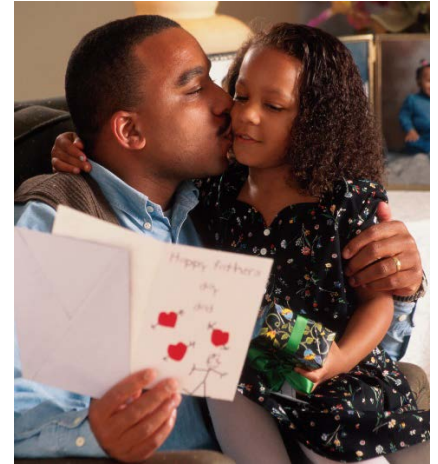
- 85 percent indicated an increase in knowledge regarding basic concepts of early childhood development.
- 80 percent reported an increase in knowledge of how to keep children safe physically, emotionally and socially.
- 40 percent indicated the program would help them reduce the number of times they do not know what to do as a parent.

MSU Extension is also making learning to read more accessible by putting books into the hands of thousands of children from families living in low-income situations. In partnership with the Molina Foundation, MSU Extension distributed 50,000 books to children in need in 55 Michigan counties.

### Creating a Deeper Bond for Parent and Child

MSU Extension's Building Early Emotional Skills class is an eight-week series that helps parents with newborns to 3-year-olds develop the skills necessary to support the social and emotional development of their children. In addition to the lessons, parents also receive educational enhancements that help them apply what they learned in class to real-life situations at home with their children. After participating in the class in 2015, Saginaw County participant Deondra Harris shared:

"This class has truly helped me cope with day-to-day feelings and actions that both my child and I have. Even though I am the mother of six children, ages 21, 20, 18, 12, 3 and 2, I couldn't have been more excited to attend this class. Times are much different now, and this class helped me to understand that you can never stop learning ways to help you parent and your child to excel in life. I now feel more at ease with our day-to-day routines and I have a deeper admiration for this smart, tiny, little person that stands before me. I have learned day by day to think before I speak or correct [myself] if I didn't think before I spoke. I am now taking time to listen to this wonderful little person I was blessed to call my child and the wonderful smart, empathic, yet imaginative things she speaks really amazes me. I see that my little one is a work of wonder and full of emotions just as I am. The bond a parent has with their child will be the most amazing thing ever known and to understand that bond in deeper depths is an educational blessing. Thank you!"



**"I learned that language and reading readiness starts in infancy, and reading and letting the children explore the books and language will help them later in life."**

- Early childhood education program participant



**"A parent thanked me for the books, saying that they loved to read but were not able to afford books because of the expense."**

- MSU Extension early childhood education educator distributing books to families living in low-income situations