

Flint & Genesee
Literacy Network

What Can **YOU** Do Today?

Actionable approaches for lifetime literacy!

Roadmap of Cradle-to-Career Literacy Solutions



Literacy *for* **Life.**

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The foundation for a successful educational journey begins with early childhood development.

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School Success

Understanding the importance of a quality education is key to ensuring our young learners have the best possible start in life.

- Enable a Seamless Shift From Learning-to-Read to Reading-to-Learn
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Ensuring access to essential resources for advanced education and making it available to all motivated individuals is crucial.

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The bridge between education and a rewarding career is a strong understanding of the skills, attitudes, and preparation needed for the workforce.

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UNVEILING A PATH TO LIFELONG SUCCESS THROUGH SCHOOL READINESS, SCHOOL SUCCESS, POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS, AND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

In today's rapidly changing world, the importance of education, preparation, and skill development cannot be overstated, and the path to success begins with a solid foundation. The journey from early childhood through adulthood is marked by significant milestones, each of which plays a pivotal role in shaping one's future. This booklet has been carefully crafted to shed light on the critical "whys" behind school readiness, school success, post-secondary success, and gainful employment, specifically tailored to the unique needs and aspirations of our community in Flint & Genesee County.

But we don't stop at the "why" – we also empower you with the "how." Our actionable approaches provide practical steps to attain school readiness, optimize school performance, access post-secondary opportunities, and ultimately achieve gainful employment. We firmly believe that lifelong literacy is the cornerstone of this journey, and our booklet offers valuable insights into cultivating this essential skill.

Whether you're a parent, guardian, educator, or community member, this booklet is your roadmap to understanding the interconnectedness of these critical life stages. By embracing the wisdom within its pages, you'll be equipped to make informed decisions and inspire future generations.

Inside this booklet, you'll discover not only the "why" behind these critical stages of development but also the "how" to achieve them using practical and actionable approaches. This booklet is designed to be a valuable resource for individuals, families, educators, and community leaders, providing a roadmap to success that is both attainable and inspiring.

At the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network, we are dedicated to your success and the success of our community. We invite you to explore this booklet, engage with its wisdom, and embark on a journey of empowerment that will shape a brighter future for all. Together, it is our collective responsibility to harness this potential and empower every member of our community to fulfill their goals and contribute meaningfully to the growth and prosperity of Flint & Genesee County.

With anticipation for a brighter future!

School Readiness - Why?

Foster a Love of Reading Early

Emotional Development

Reading to children exposes them to various stories, which helps them learn how to empathize and understand the characters' emotions.



"By witnessing the interactions between the characters in the books you read, as well as the contact with you during story time, your child is gaining valuable communication skills."

blog.earlymoments.com

-Communication Skills-

Language Development

Reading to children can improve their speaking skills and understanding of language. Consistently reading aloud introduces them to new words and helps them learn through exposure. Listening to a story also allows them to maximize their vocabulary and practice proper grammar.

"While children are reading or listening to stories, they are thinking."

empoweredparents.co

-Logical Thinking Skills-

Cognitive Development

Reading to children can enhance their thinking and reasoning skills. They can grasp concepts better and understand things more effectively.



"Along with reading comprehension comes a stronger self-discipline, longer attention span, and better memory retention..."

blog.earlymoments.com

-Enhanced Focus Skills-



Concentration Development

When children listen to stories being read, it enhances their ability to concentrate on what they are hearing. Actively listening to stories can engage them, resulting in a more extended attention span.

"Kids who hear more vocabulary words are going to be better prepared to see those words in print when they enter school.... Even kids who are read only one book a day will hear about 290,000 more words by age 5 than those who don't regularly read books with a parent or caregiver."

sciencedaily.com

"Early reading with your child is a true one-on-one opportunity for children to communicate with their parents and parents to communicate with their children."

"It allows children to grow their vocabulary skills with exposure to new words and listening skills they develop from hearing someone read to them that become vital to their academic success."

all4kids.org

HOW? - Strategies That Help Develop Children's Literacy

- Use new words in daily conversations with your child
- Give your child time to understand new vocabulary
- Point out similar words you come across while reading
- Name the objects illustrated in the book pages as you read
- Sing a new song

- Engage in conversations with your child, ask questions, and make comments
- Encourage your child to repeat after you
- Allow your child to tell you a story and explain their ideas
- Read with passion, be interesting and playful
- Make reading a regular activity

HOW? - Recommended Approaches for Choosing Children's Books

Social Emotional:

- [Grow Happy \(Sage Foster, Jon Lasser\)](#) -[Rain Boy \(Dylan Glynn\)](#)
- [Fill a Bucket \(Carol McCloud, Katherine Martin\)](#)

Cultural Fluency:

- [All Are Welcome \(Alexandra Penfold\)](#) -[I am Whole \(Shola Oz\)](#)
- [Skin Like Mine \(Latashia M. Perry\)](#)

Problem Solving:

- [I Choose To Try Again \(Elizabeth Estrada\)](#) -[Not Enough Lollipops \(Megan Maynor\)](#)
- [What if Everybody Did That? \(Ellen Javernick\)](#)

Mindfulness/Wellness:

- [I am Peace \(Susan Verde\)](#) -[The Color Monster \(Anna Llenas\)](#)
- [Calm Down Time \(Elizabeth Verdick\)](#)

Advocacy:

- [Dandi McLion Has Her Say \(Patrice McLaurin\)](#) -[Speak Up \(Miranda Paul\)](#)
- [Stand In My Shoes \(Bob Sornson\)](#)



School Success - Why?

A Seamless Shift from Learning-to-Read to Reading-to-Learn

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The Transition:

During the initial academic years, children begin to acquire the skill of reading. This foundational skill ensures success moving forward into the education system. By the time they reach 3rd grade, a remarkable shift occurs: they transition from the phase of decoding words and sentences to grasping complex texts. This evolution from learning-to-read to reading-to-learn marks a significant milestone in both children's academic and life journeys.



"...students need to learn to read before they take the giant leap into reading to learn."

journal.imse.com

Why is it Important?

In 3rd grade, subjects require independent reading and comprehension. Without proficiency, children might face challenges, leading to frustration and reduced self-esteem.

Proficient readers effortlessly absorb knowledge, broadening their interests. This skill nurtures critical thinking and confidence, qualities essential for future achievements. Especially, proficient reading instills a passion for learning, influencing their lifelong journey. Exploring diverse topics leads them to discover endless opportunities.



"...research tells us that only 35% of 4th-grade students read proficiently. Students without foundational reading skills find it much more difficult to do grade-level work in math, science, and social studies.

lexialearning.com

Preparing for the Shift:

Recognizing the importance of skilled reading, it's important for parents, educators, and communities to prioritize early literacy efforts. Ensuring every child receives the necessary assistance and resources to develop strong reading skills. Early intervention, targeted support, and fostering a positive reading mindset can greatly impact all children.



"Learning-to-read and reading-to-learn should be a simultaneous and continuous process as students make their way through school."

journal.imse.com



HOW? -Strategies to Embrace Children's Reading Proficiency

Visit Libraries, Bookstores, and Book Fairs

Regular outings to libraries, bookstores, and book fairs, present children with many different books and encourage them to explore new interests.

Local Libraries and Bookstores:

[Flint Public Library](#) [Barnes & Noble](#)
[Genesee District Library](#) [Totem Books](#)
[Comma Bookstore & Social Hub](#)

Celebrate Reading Achievements

Celebrate reading milestones with small rewards or recognition. This reinforces children with the positive aspects of reading.

Use Reading Websites & Apps

Explore educational platforms that offer interactive stories, quizzes, and games to make reading engaging and enjoyable.

Educational Reading Activity Websites:

[abcya.com](#) [starfall.com](#)
[funbrain.com](#)

Set Reading Goals

Helping children set achievable reading goals, whether it's finishing a certain number of books each month or exploring a particular genre.

Explore AudioBooks & Read-Along Stories

Audiobooks and read-along stories can be a fantastic way to engage children that are reluctant to read or introduce them to complex vocabulary and pronunciation. After listening to a story, allow them to repeat the new vocabulary.

Youtube Read-Along Channels:

[@VooksStorybooks](#)
[@Illuminatedfilms](#)
[@MissSofiesStoryTime](#)
[@PinkPenguiny](#)

Diverse Reading Materials

Offer a variety of reading materials and genres, including magazines, newspapers, fiction, non-fiction, fantasy, etc. This broadens a child's exposure to different writing styles and subjects.



School Success - Why?

Every Kid is One Caring Adult Away From
Being a Success Story

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A Mentor's Role:

A mentor is an adult who offers guidance, motivation, and emotional support as an upstanding role model.

They make sure to share their knowledge, skills, and experience to help teens progress as individuals.

"Mentors can give them the skills they need to foster healthy relationships with their peers and coworkers, resulting in teens becoming great leaders and collaborators."

tillyslifecenter.org

Why Are Mentors Beneficial?

Build Relationships | Character Development | Personal Growth | Identity Development
Improve Academic Achievement | Communication Skills | Teamwork Ability

"Mentoring, at its core, guarantees young people that there is someone who cares about them, assures them they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges, and makes them feel like they matter."

mentoring.org

Seeking a Youth Mentor:

"Extracurricular activities are a great way for youth to learn about themselves. Participating in a variety of activities can help youth discover where they fit in, what they like, and what they do not like. They can help teens develop critical skills as they transition to adulthood."

parentandteen.com

There are many formal mentoring programs and activities that have mentors within them but teens can also find role models and mentorship in their own life through teachers, coaches, school counselors, business leaders, and trusted adults.

How? -Teen Resources

Genesee Career Institute

GCI provides instruction and hands-on learning in different career pathway programs so students can learn and be better prepared to enter the workforce after high school

Flint School of Performing Arts

FSPA helps students discover a world of music, dance, and theatre by providing lessons, classes, and performances for you to join

Flint Repertory Theatre

Rep is a highly imaginative, thought-provoking theatre that offers challenging, entertaining, and inspiring lessons and plays for everyone

Flint Institute of Arts

FIA art school offers many workshops for all, including drawing, painting, jewelry, photography, and more



Scan Here

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Flint

BG Club empowers youth with programs for teens, academic success, the arts, and more

Genesee Early Collège

GEC is an early college high school program that prepares students for success in university-level coursework and future careers, giving students a head start to earn up to 60 transferable credits

YMCA of Greater Flint

YMCA encourages youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility with programs such as swimming lessons, family exercise, day camps, sports, and safe places

Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village

SBEV cultivates leadership capacity and empowers youth by offering programs in academics, athletics, the arts, and more

Berston Field House

Berston builds individual and community enrichment through programs around creativity, athletics, and community service

The Flint Development Center

FDC is a place where the community can engage in empowerment activities such as recreational, social, educational, and cultural courses

Big Brothers Big Sisters

BBBS ignites the power and promise of youth by providing one-to-one mentoring and community activities

Post Secondary Success - Why?

Educational Options You Have After High School

4-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

- numerous majors to choose from
- many extracurricular options
- preparing students for master level work

2-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- affordable, career-oriented courses
- two-year or less classroom study
- gain transferable credits to a four-year college

TRADE AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

- career training in a variety of fields
- training lasting a few weeks to a couple of years
- affordable with scholarship and grant opportunities

MILITARY

- training in 2000+ jobs
- nation's largest employer
- travel and advancement opportunities
- GI Bill grants free tuition and fees for education

APPRENTICESHIP

- training for skilled trades
- provides instruction and on-the-job training
- get paid while you learn

SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMS

- continued education and skill-building
- supportive services and independent living
- job training/placement & self-employment

AMERICORPS

- provides opportunities for all individuals
- volunteer or paid service opportunities
- Segal Award grants funding for higher education
- improves lives and communities

HOW? -Resources to Support Your Goals After High School:

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AVAILABLE IN THE LOCAL AREA:

[Mott Community College](#)
[University of Michigan - Flint](#)
[Michigan State University - College of Human Medicine](#)
[Ferris State University - Student Success Hub with Mott Community College](#)
[Ross Medical Education Center](#)
[Kettering University](#)
[Northwood University](#)
[Spring Arbor University](#)



CLICK THE UNDERLINED LINKS!



FINANCIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT:

Flint Promise

scholarship program for high school graduates

theflintpromise.org

(810) 600-4068



Genesee Opportunity

stipend that offers financial support to high school graduates who want to pursue post secondary education

genesee.org

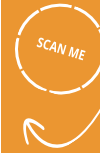
(810) 591-GCGO



FAFSA

free application for federal student aid to support college and graduate school

studentaid.org



Michigan Reconnect

provides free tuition at a community college and up to \$1,500 in tuition costs to pursue a career training program

michigan.gov



APPRENTICESHIP:

Workforce and Economic Development -Mott Community College

provides the necessary support to pursue education and training leading to gainful employment and advancement in career pathways

mcc.edu (810) 232-2555



Freedomwork Opportunites

supports and helps adults with disabilities reach their goals of employment

freedomwork.org

(810) 820-3533



SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMS:

The Disability Network

nonprofit center for independent living, helping people with disabilities live as independently as possible

disnetwork.org

(810) 742-1800



Elmer Knopf

creating educational success for students identified as moderately cognitively impaired and autistic

geneseeisd.org

(810) 591-4489



Literacy
for Life.



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Gainful Employment - Why?

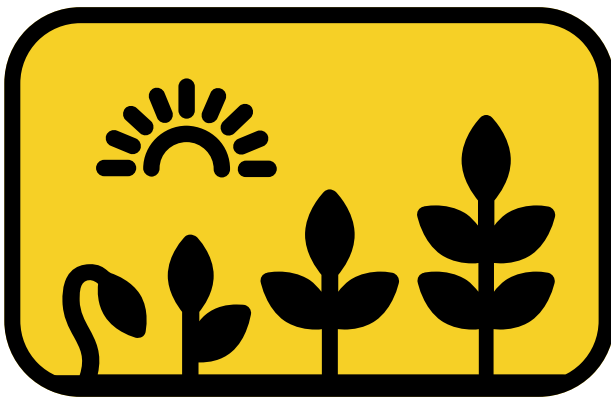
Education Starts With You: 2 Generational Approach

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The role of parents in their children's development is crucial. Parents' educational level and well-being strongly impact their children's academic and economic opportunities. Using the 2 Gen parent-child approach, families can progress together in areas such as education, finances, and social connections.



As a family unit, the parent and children are intertwined and rely on each other.



2 Generations = 1 Future

2 GEN:

The 2Gen approach focuses on improving the well-being of children and adults in a family by working with them both together. This approach emphasizes the importance of the family unit in creating a legacy of educational and economic success that can be passed down through generations.

PARENT-CHILD:

Parent-child is the aspect of 2Gen that emphasizes parents. It primarily focuses on the education and well-being of parents while also making sure the children are taken care of.

"Don't meet parents where they are. Meet parents where they dream."

-Janine McMahon
(Ascend parent advisor)

ascend.aspeninstitute.org

Literacy for Life.



Those with less than a high school diploma earned an average of \$1.2 million during their lifetimes, compared to \$2.8 million for workers with bachelor's degrees and \$4.7 million for workers with professional degrees.

www.highereddive.com

HOW? -RESOURCES & PROGRAMS

1 MICHIGAN RECONNECT:

Michigan Reconnect provides free in-district tuition at a Michigan community college to earn an associate degree or Pell-eligible skill certificate.

"Maybe someday" just became "Definitely today."

www.michigan.gov



2 ADULT LEARNING CENTERS:

Learning centers offer basic adult education, one-on-one tutoring, high school completion, and a general education diploma.

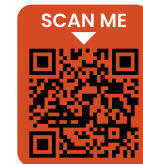
flintliteracynetwork.org (810) 232-2526



3 MCC WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Mott Community College is devoted to helping people and businesses connect with programs, resources, and customized training for our regional employers.

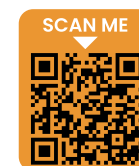
www.mcc.edu (810) 232-2555



4 GST MICHIGAN WORKS:

GST Michigan Works offers many services to those seeking employment, workshops, and resources.

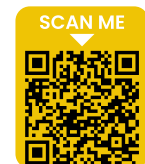
gstmiworks.org (810) 233-5974



5 GFHC'S CASES PROGRAM -FINANCAIL EDUCATION:

The Greater Flint Health Coalition provides community approaches to strengthening economic support (CASES) programs that will provide various virtual workshops to increase financial awareness.

gfhc.org (810) 232-2228



6 GENESEE DISTRICT LIBRARY -RESOURCE LIST:

Genesee District Library provides a resource list for education, employment, and skill development opportunities.

www.thegdli.org



HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network

Email: flintandgeneseeliteracy@gmail.com

Website: flintliteracynetwork.org

Phone Number: (810) 232-2526

Our Vision

Flint & Genesee Literacy Network envisions a Flint and Genesee County where children enter kindergarten ready to learn, children are successful in school, are prepared for post-secondary education, and adults earn a livable wage because low literacy rates are no longer a barrier.

Our Mission

The mission of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network is to seek out, converse, align, and build capacity in partners who improve the lives of individuals, children, and families of Flint and Genesee County by radically raising literacy levels.

The Flint & Genesee Literacy Network is a unique umbrella organization of many partners. We work as a passionate ally for our partners and community to identify gaps in service delivery, support program assessments, and bring together the best literacy resources in the county. We develop and mobilize the strengths of our partners.

Visit flintliteracynetwork.org to find out how you can be part of our work. We welcome the opportunity to provide technical assistance and professional development contractually. Complimentary consultations are available.



We at the Flint & Genesee Literacy extend our gratitude and recognition to Ashanti Reaves, our 2023 Summer Youth Intern and a talented sophomore at Carmen Ainsworth High School. Ashanti's remarkable artistic vision and content compilation have been instrumental in shaping this booklet. We are proud to acknowledge Ashanti's valuable contributions, which have enriched our work and made it more impactful.



In our seven year history, the collective impact of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network has been funded by the following partners:



Literacy *for* Life.



Flint & Genesee Literacy Network
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