

St. Clair County RESA- Great Start Collaborative

The Great Start Collaborative (GSC) is a local partnership of parents, community leaders, business owners, charitable and faith based organizations, health and human service agencies, and educators that come together for the purpose of:

- Promoting awareness and advocating for early childhood issues
- Addressing factors that influence school readiness
- Planning and coordinating community services
- Working to improve the physical, social, emotional, educational and developmental wellbeing of our youngest children.

The GSC's Strategic Plan outlines the goals and objectives for the next three years. An identified priority is to increase literacy in St. Clair County. The GSC is seeking support for a countywide Imagination Library program. This program provides registered children a new book each month from birth until their fifth birthday. The program was founded on three essential beliefs:

- The books are a GIFT to children, not a social service or charity.
- The books are for ALL children in a community. No child is left out or singled out.
- The books are mailed in the child's name to his/her home to generate excitement, promote ownership, and deliver books with dignity.

Literacy is the foundation for success in school and life. Children in St. Clair County come from many diverse backgrounds and enter kindergarten at different levels. By providing every child a free book every month before the age of five we can decrease the literacy gap between children, giving all children the same opportunity to enter kindergarten eager to succeed.