

Parenting Leadership



Presented by:

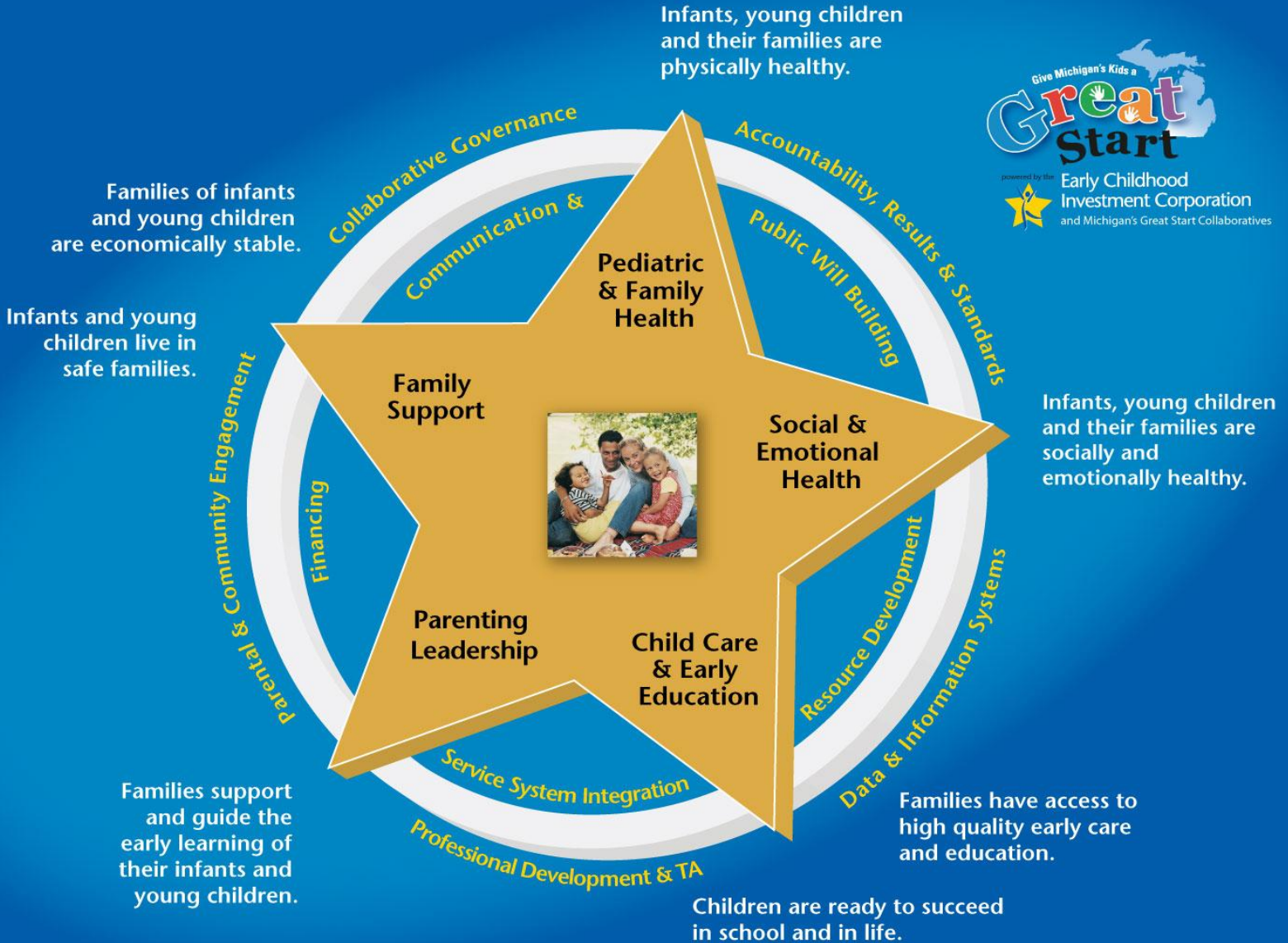
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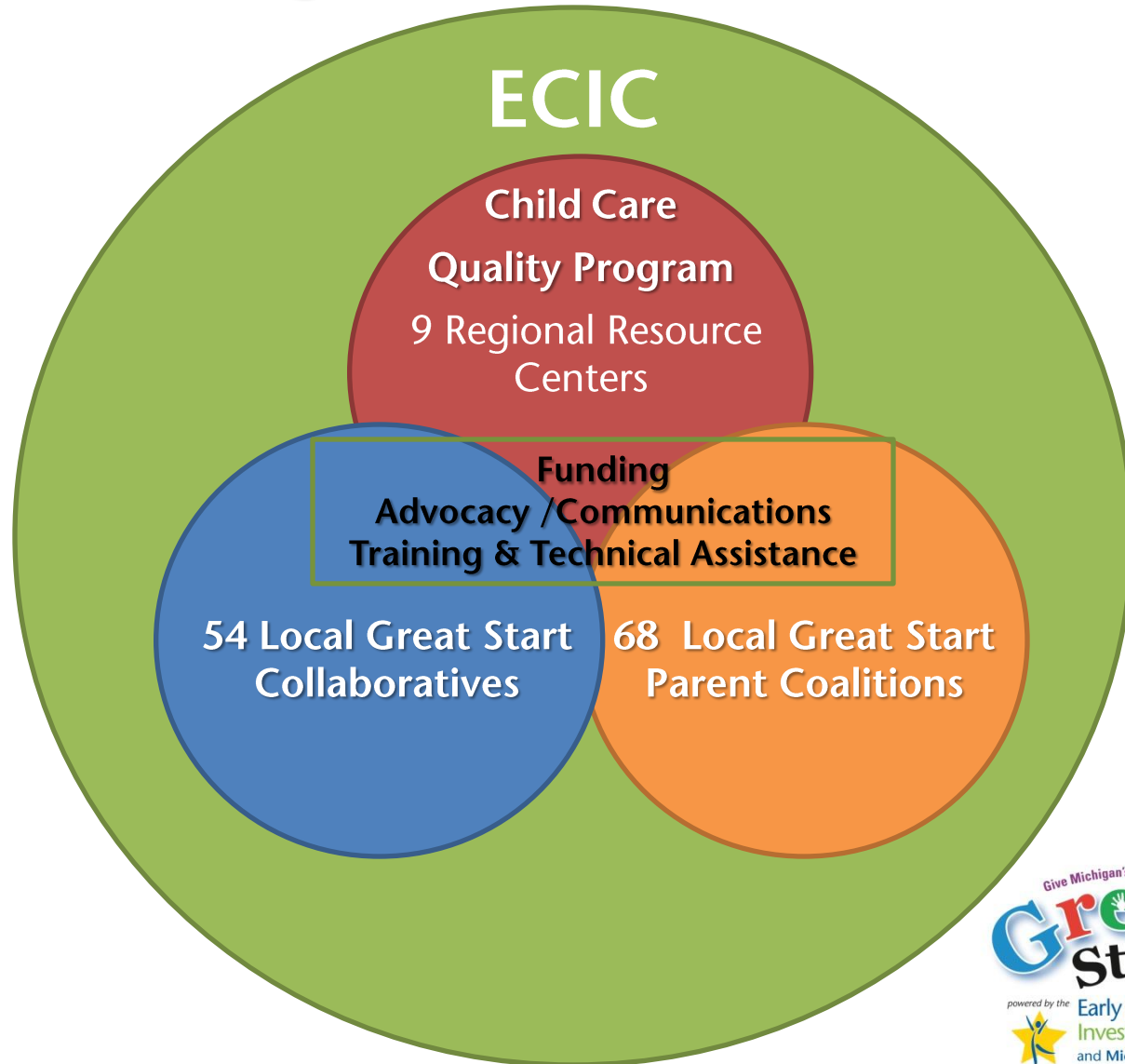


Michigan's Great Start Initiative

Vision: A Great Start to make every child in Michigan safe, healthy, and eager to succeed in school and in life.



Michigan Systems Building Infrastructure



Two Views of Parents; Different Paradigms

Social Service Centered:

(Parents are uninformed and seen as passive recipients)

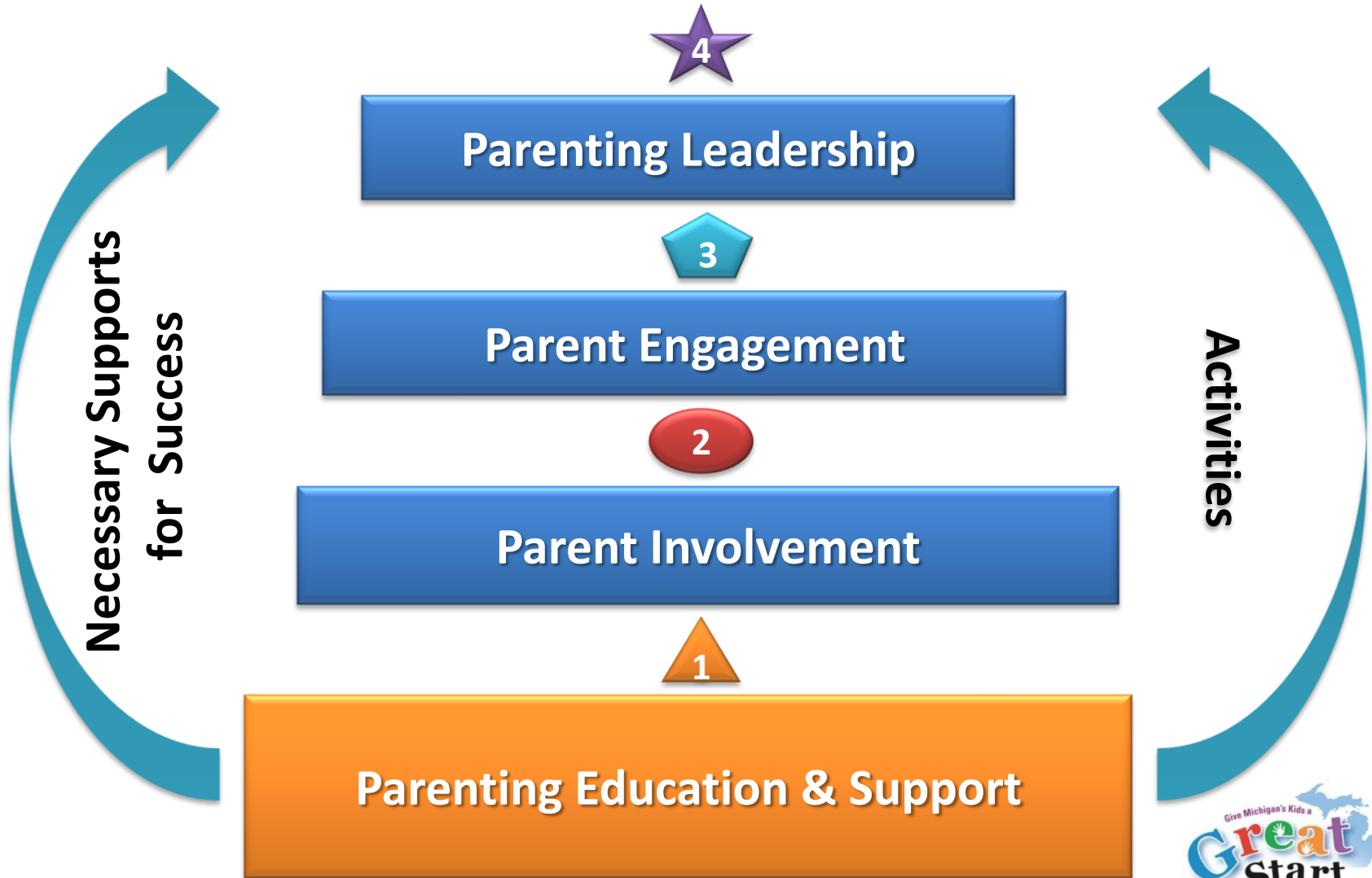
- ★ Professional staff design a new program for parents
- ★ Program goal is parent involvement, so focus groups are held **after** the program is designed to discover how to engage parents
- ★ Program outreach isn't working, so parental input is sought to improve the program
- ★ When programs fail conclusions are made that parents are apathetic even though parents weren't included in the design phase

Family/Parent Centered:

(Parents are knowledgeable and seen as decision-makers)

- ★ Parent advice and input is essential for effective program design
- ★ Program goal is parent involvement, so focus groups are held **before** the program is designed to learn how to effectively engage parents
- ★ Program outreach is designed based on parent input to learn how to effectively reach parents
- ★ Extensive field testing with parents is undertaken before any program is fully implemented

Parents Becoming Leaders



Parents Becoming Leaders

Steps

1

2

3

4

	Parenting Education & Support	Parent Involvement	Parent Engagement	Parenting Leadership
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Support for basic needs ★ Access to community services ★ Parent support groups or traditional parenting education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Attend community early childhood events ★ Attend organized parent group events ★ Attend parent conferences or workshops ★ Learn about early childhood in your community ★ Learn about local collaborative board opportunities ★ Learn about local parent groups ★ Learn about early learning and care quality choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Serve as an active parent member with a local parent group ★ Volunteer at an early childhood event ★ Serve as a parent representative on a local or statewide workgroup, advisory group or board ★ Engage in elected official education ★ Attend parent leadership or advocacy training ★ Participate in local action project or activity ★ Attend statewide advocacy event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Serve as a local parent organizer ★ Educate a state elected candidate or official ★ Co-chair a local or statewide workgroup, advisory group or board ★ Lead a workshop at a parent meeting, parent conference, or statewide conference ★ Organize, plan or host a community conversation ★ Recruit and mentor a parent to get engaged with local early childhood initiatives ★ Convene a meeting with your network (church, social, etc.) to educate on early childhood issues ★ Write an editorial for local newspaper ★ Present importance of early childhood investment at civic group ★ Inform local businesses about importance of early childhood investment
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Basic needs met ★ Parents can voice needs ★ Increases parent confidence ★ May remove parent isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Strengthens family ★ Strengthens connection and understanding of community ★ Strengthens advocacy efforts for child ★ Increases parent knowledge ★ Increases parent self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Strengthens sustainability of programs and services ★ Strengthens community involvement ★ Increases parent/professional collaboration ★ Increases parent skills ★ Increases parent empowerment ★ Parents choose quality early learning and care environments or advocate for local improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Creates better outcomes for children ★ Strengthens community participation in early childhood efforts (faith, business) ★ Strengthens understanding by professionals that parents are knowledgeable consumers and creates an openness to change ★ Strengthens decision-making on policy ★ Promotes elimination of ineffective practices ★ Creates more efficient use of funds ★ Creates peer parents and professionals ★ Increases parent leadership skills
Necessary Supports for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Invest in programs and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Invest in local parent organizer ★ Invest in “barrier busting” parent participation supports (transportation, child care and potentially food) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Provide parent orientation ★ Provide parent skill development/training opportunities ★ Provide opportunities for ACTION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Provide coaching/mentoring for specific role ★ Provide honorariums for parent expertise ★ Provide implementation tools & templates ★ Provide access to needed materials/supplies to support work

Lessons Learned

- ★ As opportunities are created for parents to organize, **some** will choose to become leaders.
- ★ Ensure that necessary funds are available to provide a Parent Organizer and “barrier busters” administered in a way that meets families needs.
- ★ Invest in Professional Development and technical assistance support for the Parent Organizer .
- ★ Ensure that training and practical opportunities are available for parents to develop their leadership skills.
- ★ Simultaneously invest in the professional cultural shift necessary to create “tables” where the importance of parental input is understood, welcomed, and valued.
- ★ Recognize you are shifting a paradigm that has a long history in the education, health, and human service systems. Be patient and build from incremental success.
- ★ Recognize that this is an evolutionary journey---pause, assess, and gather parental input to move forward in this work.

Where to Find Us

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