



New Beginnings

MomsFirst provides support to expectant mothers living in the City of Cleveland. We are dedicated to helping Cleveland moms deliver and raise healthy babies.

MomsFirst Partners with Cleveland State University's Urban Health Seminar class for Community Based Participatory Research Projects



At the beginning of the fall semester, MomsFirst was invited to present to pre-med students on the racial disparity in infant mortality and the work being done to eliminate the disparity. This was the start of MomsFirst's role as a partner organization for the Pathways to Practice Community Based Participatory Research

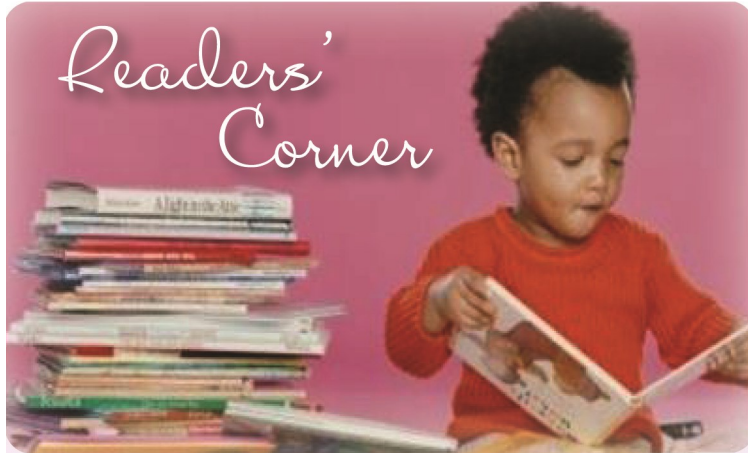
projects. The class, pictured above with professor Lena Grafton, MomsFirst Fatherhood Coordinator Ronald White and MomsFirst Deputy Project Director Megan Walsh, divided into four groups and will focus on two aspects of safe sleep and father involvement for their research projects which will begin spring semester.

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JANUARY
IS BIRTH DEFECTS
PREVENTION
MONTH





Ready to Read: Literacy Tips for Children

You can do it! Reading, Talking, Singing, Playing and Writing are the five early literacy practices you can do with your baby to ensure they have the necessary skills to become a reader and writer when the time is right. And they will be kindergarten ready!

If you haven't started already, it's not too late. Use books to help guide you as you explore Reading, Talking, Singing, Playing and Writing with your child.

Reading: Read books that interest your child. At this early age, they may want you to read the same book repeatedly. Repetition is good for building confidence, vocabulary and comprehension.

Talking: Talk as you're reading the story. Ask questions, point to pictures and talk about them and if your child is old enough, they will have a lot to say, and you can respond!

Singing: Sing familiar children's songs or choose books set to song. Find the song online and sing along! Try these books: Elvis Presley's Love Me Tender, illustrated by Stephanie Graegin; What a Wonderful World, illustrated by Ashley Bryan and performed by Louis Armstrong.

Playing: Manipulative books incorporate play. Try these: Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell; Meet Happy Bear by Carles Ballesteros; Finger Puppet books by various authors.

Writing: When your child is ready to hold a crayon let them scribble! Use books and have them trace. Try these: Wiggles, Letters or Numbers by TouchThinkLearn; A is for Apple by TigerTales.

Contributed by Sandy Nosse, Family Engagement Specialist with Cleveland Public Library.

☆ Service Spotlight ☆



**Providing
Early Intervention
and Home Visiting
Services**

Bright Beginnings provides services that promote health and development of infants and toddlers so that children start school healthy and ready to learn. Services are designed with the family's priorities and goals in mind and occur in the home or other community settings, along with virtual options.

What is Early Intervention?

Early Intervention (EI) is for infants and toddlers from birth to age three who have a medical diagnosis or developmental delay, and for families who are concerned about a child's development. Early Intervention is part of the Help Me Grow system of supports. Early Intervention can address all types of concerns, including:

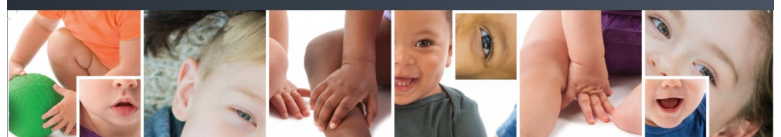
- Physical development like crawling or walking
- Speech delays
- Social interaction like playing with other children

You know your child best. If you have concerns, contact Early Intervention. Children learn best through everyday experiences and routines in places they know. EI services support your child where you live, play, and spend your day. Anyone can refer a child to EI by calling 216-698-7500 or visiting escneo.org/EarlyIntervention.aspx

Concerned about your child's development? Don't wait!

Sign up today

or call (216) 698-7500
to speak with an intake specialist



COVID Corner

PREGNANT PEOPLE with symptomatic COVID-19 have a

70%

INCREASED RISK OF DEATH.

COVID-19 during pregnancy increases the risk for adverse pregnancy and neonatal outcomes, including preterm birth and admission of the baby to an intensive care unit.



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ONLY 31%
of pregnant people have been vaccinated against COVID-19

**GET VACCINATED.
FIND A COVID-19 VACCINE NEAR YOU.
VACCINES.GOV**

Contact the Cleveland Department of Public Health Vaccine Help Line at 216-664-2222

Upcoming Events

No-Cost COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics: Ages 5 & up (minors must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian). Every Monday and Thursday at McCafferty (4242 Lorain Ave.) and J. Glen Smith (11100 St. Clair Ave.) Health Centers from 9:00am-3:00pm. Walk-in or pre-register by calling 216-664-2222.

News from Moms First

As of January 7, 2022, Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services, Inc. (NEON) will no longer be a MomsFirst provider. MomsFirst will continue to serve the entire city of Cleveland through four provider sites: Friendly Inn Settlement House, Lexington Bell Community Center, May Dugan Center and Merrick House. Contact your local neighborhood site regarding Community Health Worker positions today (see back page for contact information)!



Michael's Corner Make Smart Financial Moves

The IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. The VITA program offers free tax help to: people who generally make \$57,000 or less, persons with disabilities, and/or limited English-speaking taxpayers. For more information, visit: <https://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/>

Get Connected @   



You don't have to go it alone if you have a baby who is admitted to the newborn intensive care unit (NICU). The March of Dimes My NICU Baby App provides answers, tools and support so you can focus on your baby during what is often a difficult time. Learn about NICU staff, policies, equipment and terminology on your own schedule. The app has been developed and designed by experts to help you advocate for the best care for your baby.



Cleveland Department of Public Health
75 Erievue Plaza, Cleveland, OH 44114
(216) 664-4194 <http://www.momsfirst.org>

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Invest in Children



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MomsFirst Neighborhood Sites

Friendly Inn Settlement House
2386 Unwin Rd.
(216) 431-7656

May Dugan Center
4115 Bridge Ave.
(216) 631-5800

Lexington Bell Community Center
7724 Lexington Ave.
(216) 391-4100

Merrick House
1050 Starkweather Ave.
(216) 771-5077

Make a PACT to get healthy before and during pregnancy

PLAN AHEAD



Get as healthy as you can before you get pregnant



Get 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day



AVOID HARMFUL SUBSTANCES



Avoid smoking



Avoid drinking alcohol



Be careful with harmful exposures at work and home



CHOOSE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



Eat a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, and lean proteins



Be physically active



Work to get medical conditions like diabetes under control



TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER



Get a medical checkup



Discuss all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter



Talk about your family history

