



OUR VISION:

Children in Montcalm County have the opportunity to be healthy, eager, and prepared to succeed in school and life.

For more information about early childhood in Montcalm County or to provide feedback regarding this data, please go to:

www.GreatStartMontcalm.org

Visit us on Facebook:

[greatstartmontcalmcounty](https://www.facebook.com/greatstartmontcalmcounty)



**For more information you can contact the MCGSC at:
(616) 225-6146**

Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative

Status of Young Children 2025

Dear Community Member,

The [Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative](http://www.GreatStartMontcalm.org) (MCGSC) is proud to support Early Childhood initiatives. We continue to drive conversations around the data that identifies the work we need to do to build a system that supports the wellbeing of all young children throughout Montcalm County. Please share our annual Status of Young Children report to grow the opportunities for conversations around the MCGSC vision. As partners in our community, we ask that you continue to advocate for young children and their families to be a priority. We know that the first five years of a child's life is a time of great opportunity! Research tells us that by age six, most of a child's brain is developed. This is a critical time for investments that stimulate brain development and build environments where young children thrive. In 2022, there were 697 births and a total of 2023 children birth to age eight living in Montcalm County. We must continue to make decisions that help families to raise healthy children prepared to succeed in school and life.

Parents and community leaders in Montcalm County who understand the vital importance of investing in young children continue to work together to implement the 2022-2025 MCGSC Strategic Plan. We invite you to join us in fighting for a **continued investment in research based, high quality early childhood supports**. Please contact us with any feedback at www.GreatStartMontcalm.org

Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative Members

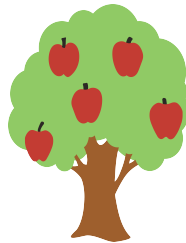


WHAT THE DATA SHOWS US:

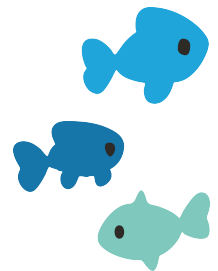
- In 2023, 18% of children ages birth to seventeen live in poverty. State of MI is 17%.
- 57% of students receive free or reduced school lunch assistance, a decrease from 2023 at 67%. State of MI is 50%.
- 31% of Montcalm County mothers who gave birth did not receive appropriate health care in 2022. The State of MI is 31%.
- Medicaid paid for 38% of Montcalm County births in 2022. State of MI is 39%.
- 66% of 19-to 35-month-old children in Montcalm County are up to date on their immunizations. The State average is 70%. Unfortunately, this number is trending in the wrong direction.
- 47% of children ages 0-4 participate in Women, Infants, & Children (WIC). State of MI is 42%. Data from the last five-plus years shows a decreasing enrollment trend despite being above the state average.
- In 2023, Montcalm County was lower than the state average in the number of children birth to five that were substantiated for child abuse and neglect. Montcalm County stands at a rate per 1,000 of 14, while the state average is at a rate per 1,000 of 15.8.
- 140 ages birth to two children were served through Early ON & Special Education services in 2023. This number has increased from 112 children in 2020. Children from birth to 5 years old receiving special education in Michigan and Montcalm County was at 5%.

Report Data Sources: Michigan Kids Count & MAISD EO

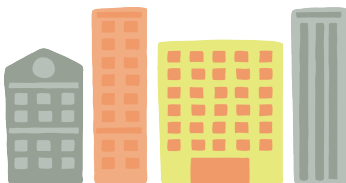
LET'S GO ON
A NATURE
WALK!



WELCOME TO
MONTCALM COUNTY!

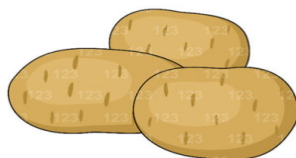


WHAT TOWN DO
YOU LIVE IN?



LET'S
TALK
ABOUT
MONTCALM
COUNTY

DO YOU
LIVE BY
A LAKE?



Montcalm County
www.GreatStartMontcalm.org

TALK
READ
SING
TALKING IS TEACHING.ORG