

MECC Mission

The Manchester Early Childhood Collaborative is a diverse group of community members who strive to support the families of young children, ages prenatal to age eight by:

- **Advocating** for the advancement of young children's learning
- **Encouraging** quality preschool services, programs and policies to promote the overall wellbeing of Manchester's children
- **Communicating** about school readiness among families, schools and the community, and
- **Developing** programs that support families with young children.

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MANCHESTER EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVE

Manchester Early Childhood Collaborative
c/o Manchester Youth Services Bureau

www.manchesterct.gov/mecc

The Manchester Early Childhood Collaborative, formally known as the Manchester School Readiness Council, was established in 1997 in response to a statewide initiative that increased the number of preschool and child care spaces available to Connecticut residents. The primary goal of the Collaborative is to **support the positive development, education, and well-being of young children** -- ensuring that every child in Manchester starts school "ready to learn."

Supported by  Connecticut Children's Collective

Helping
Your
Baby
Thrive

A local resource guide
for new parents

MANCHESTER, CT

If you are a parent or caregiver of young children, please take a minute to look inside at the resources available to you on our website.

Our goal is to provide useful information and tips to help you and your baby thrive.



Resources to help you every step of the way



Here are some topics of particular interest that are covered extensively on our website <https://bit.ly/3UA4sot>

Parent Support Groups

There are a variety of caregiver support groups meeting in person and virtually. Please visit our resource website for a list of options that are currently available. Groups are available to help you meet other caregivers, ask questions, get peer support and benefit from social opportunities for you and your child.

Milestones

There are many resources available to learn about your child's development. These resources all offer information on typical ranges for developmental milestones in the early childhood years. Learning about how your child is developing as well as their strengths can help you prepare them for their future.

- **Sparkler** – This phone app offers a developmental screening tool as well as 1000+ age-appropriate play activities. Get regular coaching and advice as well as connection to services if your child is in need of additional supports. Sparkler is in English and Spanish. Use code: *ManchesterFam* when registering for connection to local early childhood professionals. www.playsparkler.org



- **CDC Milestone Checklist** - This resource is available on the CDC website to print or in app form under the name Milestone Tracker. Check on your child's milestones up to age 5. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
- **Pathways Milestone Checklist** – This resource site offers checklists, play ideas, and videos. <https://pathways.org/all-ages/checklists/>
- **Connecticut Birth to Three** - This home visiting program supports families when they have concerns about their children's development. Referrals for an evaluation can be made by parents or professionals. <https://www.birth23.org/>
- **Healthy Children Ages and Stages** – The American Academy of Pediatrics offers information on development in their Ages & Stages section of their website. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/Pages/default.aspx>
- **211 of Connecticut**– 211 of Connecticut offers virtual or paper versions of the Ages & Stages Developmental Questionnaire that can be sent to you in the mail. They also include information on developmental milestones on their website. Requests can be made on their website at www.211ct.org or by calling the Child Development Infoline at **1-800-505-7000**.

Feeding

Babies and young children receive nutrition in various forms including through breastfeeding, formula, and solid foods. There are many resources available to support lactation, formula use, and starting solids that can help parents feed their little ones and make informed choices. See our resource website for more information.



Baby Care Needs

Babies have many needs to help them thrive in the first year of life. If you have questions about your baby's needs check out our resource website for more information on:

- Car Seat Safety
- Babywearing
- Diapering
- Sleep
- Teething
- Play
- Health and Wellness



Postpartum Support

Postpartum Support International reports that many parents experience some form of mild mood change during or up to 12 months after a pregnancy and that 15-20% of those parents may experience more severe mood symptoms such as anxiety or depression. Mood changes can range from mild to severe. The great news is, there are many resources available to help treat the wide range of mood changes a new parent may experience and need support to manage. Please see our resource website for more information on some of the more prominent resources available.

Here are a few of the signs of perinatal anxiety or depression:

- Feeling sad or depressed
- Feeling irritable or angry
- Having difficulty bonding with your baby
- Feeling anxious or panicky
- Problems with eating or sleeping
- Worried that you might harm yourself or your baby



If you or your partner are experiencing symptoms, please contact your care provider promptly or call Postpartum Support International's HelpLine for immediate support over the phone at **1-800-944-4773**! Help is available, there is no symptom too small or large, everyone can benefit from support.

Child Care and Education

MECC offers a printed Preschool Resource Guide that is available to be mailed or picked-up locally by request and includes information on all daycare and preschool programs licensed in Manchester as well as how to locate a licensed family childcare provider. Families can also access the basic contact list of daycares and preschools on the Manchester Early Childhood Collaborative website www.manchesterct.gov/mecc.

