

## A DAY IN HIS LIFE

**It's back-to-school time! At Starfish we're committed to providing the best education possible for our youngest children, and one that supports the whole child and the whole family. Our curriculum is HighScope™, which is based on interactive, hands-on learning, and individual creativity. But what do our little ones do each day? And why? Let's take a look.**

Children aged three to five who attend Starfish preschool join in a wide variety of activities from 8:00 in the morning until 3:00 in the afternoon. All activities are designed to help them grow mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically.

Each of our classrooms provides a stimulating environment where our little ones feel love, acceptance, and understanding. And our children leave Starfish preschool prepared for kindergarten and excited about learning.

### **Routine = comfort & consistency**

A daily schedule provides consistency and balance for a small child. Schedules are posted each day, and teachers start the morning with "Let's talk about what we're doing today!"

### **Work time = creative time**

Children have the freedom to explore their own unique interests. Areas are stocked with such things as books, toys, science kits, blocks, and art supplies. Following work time, teachers help children to tidy up their spaces.

### **Small-group time = school readiness**

Focused time for children to hone their developmental skills. Skills include: sorting, classifying, and discovering relationships.

### **Large-group time = let's get moving**

Also called "Circle Time," this is activity time between teachers and children. It may include songs, finger plays, stories, or games.

### **Outside time = freedom to play**

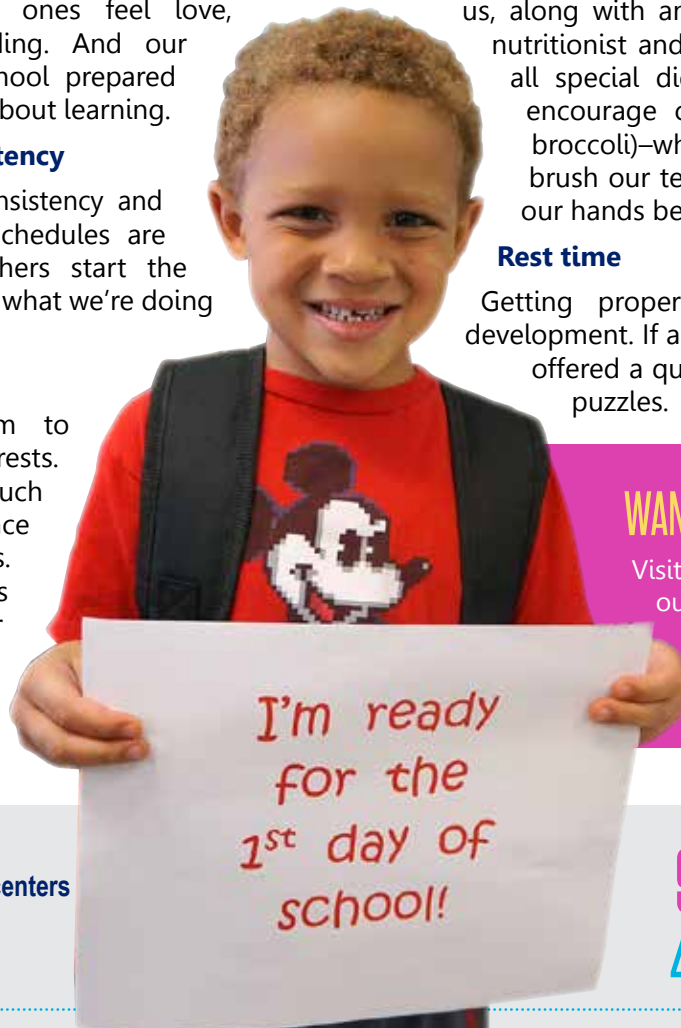
Children go outside every day. If weather prohibits, our little ones have access to indoor play spaces. This is their time for free play and strengthening muscles and motor skills (e.g., ball playing and trike riding).

### **Eating time = healthy bodies & minds**

Our children eat their breakfast and lunch with us, along with an afternoon snack. We have a nutritionist and dietician on staff who ensure all special dietary needs are met and we encourage children to taste foods (even broccoli)—which they love! Of course, we brush our teeth after every meal and wash our hands before and after.

### **Rest time**

Getting proper rest is essential to brain development. If a child is not sleepy, he or she is offered a quiet time activity like reading or puzzles.



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit our website for more info about our infant, toddler, and preschool programs (Early Head Start, Head Start, and Great Start Readiness Program).

**12** Early childhood education centers  
**1,618** Children enrolled

**92** Teachers & teacher assistants  
**46** Classrooms



## POWER OF PLAY!

Isn't playing a big part of preschool? Are kids really learning something by playing? Yes and yes. Children learn so many life-changing skills when play is part of the "every day." They have the freedom to:

- Develop curiosity and the power of pretend
- Make friends
- Experience other cultures
- Learn problem-solving (like how to take turns)

### DID YOU KNOW?

Starfish was the only early childhood education center to pilot the Playworks program in Michigan during the last school year. Playworks is a national nonprofit that helps enrich behavior and health through play time.

### COME PLAY WITH US!

Our kids would love to have you visit a classroom. Book your "play date" now by emailing [devpt@sfish.org](mailto:devpt@sfish.org) or call (734) 728-3400.

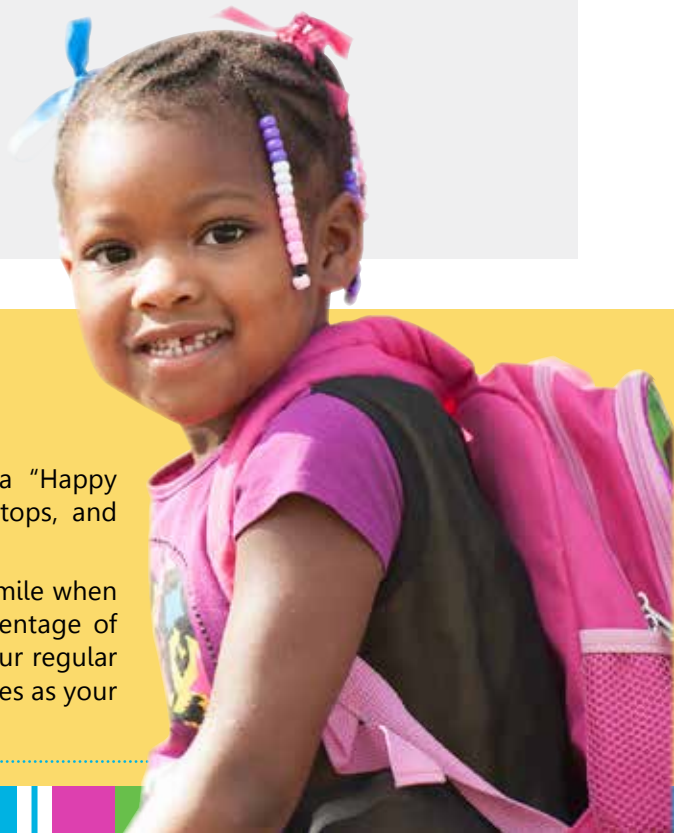


Starfish student original.  
Artists aged 3 to 5.

## ART IS (MORE THAN) AWESOME

To borrow from Picasso, "every child is an artist." At Starfish, art projects are an integral part of our preschool curriculum. We believe art encourages students to take risks, interpret their world, and express themselves.

Our teachers also use art to spark interest in other subjects; blending art into science and math inspires problem solving and innovation.



## YOU SHOP, WE SMILE!

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

Still tackling back-to-school shopping? Amazon recently launched a "Happy School Year" store featuring must-haves like classroom supplies, laptops, and school clothes all in one handy online store.

An easy way to support Starfish any time of year is by using Amazon Smile when shopping on Amazon. This means super savings for you, plus a percentage of your purchase benefits Starfish kids and families. Simply log in with your regular Amazon account at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and choose Starfish Family Services as your charity of choice.



## DEDICATED DTE ENERGY

The dedicated and energetic volunteers from DTE Energy Foundation pitch in wherever and whenever Starfish needs them. To prep for the new school year, they moved roomfuls of furniture at our Detroit Cecil Center and cleaned from top to bottom. From DTE volunteer Lisa Muschong: "I'm so glad we've connected with Starfish! I have kids of my own and they have everything they need and more. I know there are a lot of families that struggle and it's important for those of us who can, to give back."

## MARYGROVE P-20 PROGRESS

**Thursday, September 13, 2018, was an historic day in the life of Starfish Family Services when it was announced we were embarking on a P-20 partnership in Northwest Detroit on the Marygrove College campus. One year later, so much has happened, and we are thrilled to provide an update.**

### What is a P-20 campus?

An all-in-one campus that will offer Detroit children educational opportunities and whole family support services from birth to 5, to K-12, to college and postgraduate (also referred to as Cradle-to-Career).

### Why is P-20 so innovative?

This pilot program invests in children first as a means to revitalize a neighborhood. And by integrating best practices from a collaborative of partners, it has the potential to be replicated across Detroit and nationwide.

### What is the Starfish role?

Starfish was chosen to establish and operate a custom designed, state-of-the-art Early Childhood Education (ECE) Center. The ECE Center will provide comprehensive early childhood programming that connects young families with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to the services they need to flourish.

### What will the ECE Center look like?

The center is 28,000 sq/ft and situated on three acres. Our designs were informed by community neighbors, parents, and children, along with best practices in facility design, behavioral health, and early childhood education. Think "welcoming, peaceful, friendly, open, playful."

*The P-20 Campus is funded through a \$50M investment by The Kresge Foundation. Our education partners include Detroit Public Schools Community District, Marygrove College, and University of Michigan School of Education.*



*Starfish Special Project Director Celina Byrd previews the first ECE renderings.*

Renderings are ready to view at [starfishfamilyservices.org](http://starfishfamilyservices.org).

## UPCOMING KEY DATES

- **Groundbreaking: Late 2019**

# TLC FOR OUR TEACHERS

Our teachers see the impact of life challenges faced by their students every day---in the loud, disruptive behaviors they see in some children, or the quiet sadness they see in others. They fret about some of their students, bringing that worry home at the end of the day.

The weight of that worry is why Starfish took the innovative step of holding monthly meetings for our teachers. The sessions use an approach called "reflective supervision" that has long been used in the mental health field to help therapists and clinicians to process feelings about the difficult situations they see in their work.

It is a safe place where teachers can share their frustrations and their fears. And our teachers say it's made a difference. "It makes us better teachers because we're not carrying it inside," shared Angela Prater, an assistant teacher at our Hiveley center. "We're able to release it."

Our center leaders say they've noticed major changes since the reflective supervision sessions began. They credit the program with a drop in teacher turnover---which is a major crisis point, especially in the Detroit school system. They've also seen a positive impact on our staff and our children: We've created more of a family and there's so much more joy in the classroom.

*Our trauma-informed work is funded in part by the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, the Jacobs Family Foundation, and United Way for SE Michigan.*

**Excerpted from "How a Detroit preschool helps teachers cope with the stress of the job" by Erin Einhorn, Chalkbeat: June 26, 2019. Read the full article at [starfishfamilyservices.org](http://starfishfamilyservices.org) | [Press Page](#).**



Starfish teachers are family.  
(left to right) Carmen Price,  
Susan Ingram, Angela Prater,  
Shantell Buck, Latesha Besant.



STARFISH  
FAMILY SERVICES

## Starfish Family Services (Headquarters)

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Strengthening families to create  
brighter futures for children

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Chief Executive Officer

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