

Chippewa Valley Schools to host 'Parent Saturday'

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MACOMB TOWNSHIP — The Chippewa Valley Coalition for Youth and Families is preparing to host a comprehensive parent education workshop event.

In conjunction with the Chippewa Valley school district, the coalition's "Parent Saturday" event will aim to help parents on a large variety of issues to parent and educate at home.

The event will take place from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. on April 25 at Chippewa Valley High School. Registration is open until April 17, and there is a \$5 fee for each parent.

Charlene McGunn, executive director of the coalition, said that the event is open to all parents within the district, and from outside districts, as well.

"It will have broad offerings for elementary through high school parents," McGunn said. "This is the largest event that we have sponsored in a number of years. It supports the mission of the coalition in partnership with the school district, which is to provide information to make parenting easier."

McGunn said that there will be 23 workshops available to choose from, and parents will be guaranteed to attend at least one of their top three choices. There will also be a book fair of scholastic books, and free childcare will be available for kids 4-10 years old.

"We even have a yoga class for relaxation. It's part of an effort to create interesting and enjoyable programming that will also provide important information for parents," McGunn said.

The workshops range from building more positive relationships, technology and college-bound students, to a dads-only workshop, one for mothers and daughters, and a parenting with love and logic class.

"We've done parenting education for many years, but this is the first, including dialogue nights at the school, to promote communication between parents and their children, especially at the middle school and high school levels," McGunn said. "I think it's this is the first time any school district in the Macomb County area, maybe even the tri-county area, have offered such a large program. It's the first time a coalition within a school district has offered so large an offering."

Donna Kirchoff, a Title I parent liaison with Chippewa Valley Schools and an executive board member of the coalition, will be presenting a workshop on parenting and educating during the summer break.

"Research shows that over the summer, kids can lose one to two months of reading achievement," Kirchoff said. "What we're going to stress to them is seven simple things to do during the summer, and we're going to be teaching them a simple and easy routine to help them when their children read, such as asking them open-ended questions about the characters or the plot."

Kirchoff stressed that many everyday activities can be turned into educational lessons for kids during the summer.

"We're going to give them stuff on how to have fun wordplay outside with chalk or painting using words, getting rhyming words, just building their vocabulary. "We're also going to help boost math skills with just a deck of cards and dice," Kirchoff said. "We're also going to encourage them to cook with their kids, because cooking is a great way to introduce fractions, and the kids love it."

Flyers for the event have already been mailed to district parents. Parents can register either through mail or online at onlinereg.cvs.k12.mi.us.

Parents are encouraged to register for up to three events, but their workshop assignments will not be known until they sign in at the event.

For more information, call (586) 723-2360 or email cmcgunn@cvs.k12.mi.us.