

# Tuscola County Parent Coalition to host free family fun night

Posted by [Alex Szwarc](#) on February 21, 2018



(Courtesy photo)

Children play together at last year's Family Fun Night hosted by the Great Start Tuscola Parent Coalition. This year's event is on March 1, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at the Tuscola Technology Center.

March is Parenting Awareness Month (PAM) in Michigan, and because of that, the Tuscola County Parent Coalition will be hosting a family fun night for families to spend time together on Thursday, March 1 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Tuscola Technology Center.

The evening is a chance for families to enjoy a free dinner, receive free books, watch a magic show by Jason Hudy and listen to a storytelling of the children's book "Pete the Cat and his Magic Sunglasses."

"We host this event to provide an opportunity for families to come together and enjoy a night out, free from worry about cost of childcare or even dinner," Great Start Tuscola Director Rachael Koepf said. "Bring your children and enjoy dinner on us, an awesome magic show and listen to the story of Pete the Cat."

Storytelling time, beginning at 6:45 p.m., is a way that parents can learn the importance of reading to their child and see how to make stories fun and interactive, a pamphlet for the event states.

“This year, we are excited to have Jason who is a magician and illusionist as the entertainment,” Koepf said.

From January 2015 to March 2017, Hudy headlined his own magic show, “The Magic of Saipan,” in the city of Sandcastle on the island of Saipan, a U.S. territory near Guam.

Hudy’s magic show will begin at 7 p.m. From 6:30 to 7:45 p.m., children can decorate sunglasses and coloring contest winners will be announced. For the coloring contest, children were asked to draw and color a picture of their family and mail it in by Feb. 12. Winners will each receive a \$25 Visa gift card.

Several local children’s service agencies, including Tuscola County Health Department, Tuscola Child Advocacy Center and Early Head Start, will be on hand to share information and answer questions about the organizations.

Door prizes, such as board games, toys and coupons for family bowling that are donated by each agency, will be given away at the end of the night.

Each family that attends will receive a free copy of “Pete the Cat and his Magic Sunglasses,” and children may also select another free book.

The purpose of parenting awareness in Michigan, as stated on the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website, is to promote awareness, education, and resources, through state outreach and local efforts, by emphasizing the importance of effective parenting in “nurturing children to become healthy, caring and contributing citizens.”

Parenting materials such as packets, posters, and bookmarks with parenting tips, and technical assistance, were provided by MDHHS to involve communities in the parenting awareness initiative in Michigan.

Many communities, like Tuscola County, have formed parent coalitions in an effort to bring people and resources together for a focused and systematic approach to increasing parenting education and involvement in the community.

The vision of the Tuscola County Parent Coalition is to have a network of parents who work together to “raise awareness of the importance of early childhood investment for our youngest citizens in Tuscola County,” its website states.

The mission of the parent coalition is to advocate, educate, and communicate about the importance of Tuscola County children to be safe, healthy, and eager to succeed in school and in life.

PAM celebrates those who raise children and seeks to draw public attention to the critical importance of parenting. It aims to create children who grow up to be healthy and caring adults, promote education and resources for developing parenting skills throughout the year, encourage and assist in the development of parent networks throughout Michigan and promote local parenting events in March.

Those interested in attending are asked to call 989-673-2144 ext. 30505 to register. Children must be accompanied by an adult.