

# BECAUSE OF YOU...



*SAMANTHA CAIN, 23, OF DOWAGIAC*

During a home visit from Melody Long, an educator with the “Parents as Teachers” program, offered by the Cass County Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District, Melody suspected Samantha’s daughter might have torticollis, a condition in which the neck muscles contract, causing the head to twist and tilt to one side.

Melody encouraged Samantha to fill out a referral to the Cass County “Early On” program, which offers early-intervention services to qualified young children with special needs and their families. After an evaluation with “Early On,” the baby began weekly physical therapy visits to help with the torticollis.

*“Parents as Teachers” is an internationally recognized program that seeks to empower the families of young children prenatal to age three in their home environment and in community playgroups. This program is one of the free early childhood services offered to families in the community by the Cass County Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District. **The district’s “Parents as Teachers” program is an impact partner of United Way of Southwest Michigan.***



*SCARLETT, BORN IN DECEMBER 2022*

*As part of the program, specially trained educators travel to family homes to support parents in their role in their children’s development. An individualized program is designed for different parenting styles with screenings, resources, and referral networks as part of the plan. Everyday activities in the home are used that help children learn and grow. When parents aren’t certain of the next step as a parent, the program helps parents sort out the best way to keep families and children strong.*

*Families who participate in “Parents as Teachers” have children who are healthier and are more ready for learning later on, leading to more positive outcomes in life.*

**How will you help your neighbor?**



United Way of  
Southwest Michigan