

Spring 2016

West Virginia Birth to Three RESA 8 Newsletter

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Volume 3, Issue 1



Ideas for Creating a Sensory Garden

Creating safe outdoor learning environments offers infants and toddlers the opportunity to explore the natural world. A sensory garden can encourage interaction with the environment.

Sight – Plant flowers of varying colors that bloom at different times of the year. Use items such as old shoes, a wheelbarrow, or playground equipment as planters. Consider adding mobiles, mirrors or sculptures.

Sound – Tune in to the sound of wind rushing through the leaves, rustling grasses or singing birds. Consider adding some wind chimes.

Touch – When planning, use soft flowers, fuzzy leaves, springy

moss, rough bark, succulent leaves, and prickly seed pods.

Smell – Smells don't just have to come from blooming flowers. Strong and subtle smells come from herbs like mint or thyme, as well as from fresh mulches, wood shavings and grass clippings.

Taste – Everything in an infant and toddler garden should be edible or non-toxic. Consider fruit trees, edible flowers, veggies, berries and herbs. Early introduction to fresh, healthy foods can have a positive impact as children begin making their own food choices.



<http://growing-minds.org>

Support Group for Parents of Special Needs Children

The WV Birth to Three Administrative Unit, under RESA8, is responsible for providing parent to parent support. Parent Partner, Laura Turman, and former WV Birth to Three parent, Christina Hollis, have launched The Eastern Panhandle Parents of Special Needs Children Support Group.

Meetings will be held in Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties. The group will provide a forum for parents to exchange information and learn more about services that may be useful to them. The group also has a Facebook page (Eastern Panhandle Parents of Special Needs Children) to easily share information online.

The group will meet Friday, April 1 at 6:00 p.m. at the Randy Smith Center in Inwood during their free, open gym. All families with special needs children are welcome. Call 304-267-3593 for more information.



Do you know of a child who is not moving, hearing, seeing, learning or talking like others his age? WV Birth to Three may be able to help. Call (304) 267-3595 or 1-866-681-4957.

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The Be-Hive in Martinsburg is “Pure Family Fun”

Be-Hive founders Robin and Mike Schaeffer opened their place for parents with young children in 2012, knowing before they retired that this is what they wanted to do.

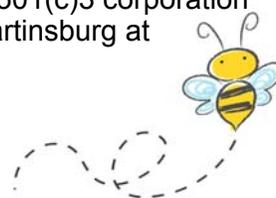
Robin had been a trainer for managers, and she had used themes in well-known books like The 7 Healthy Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey which emphasize approaching your work with good principles as a foundation.

Robin said she believes that “how you see yourself in your imagination” is vitally important, even if you have had bad luck or made a mistake. Robin says all people can benefit from this paradigm shift, especially young parents. She hopes all parents, and especially young mothers, will “look at young children with optimism and see a beautiful individual person.”

Robin believes parents can live by good principles and let children see that they’re honest. She adds, “Great principles trump bad DNA. We don’t know what environment parents come from, but we all can create our own inspiring environment,” just as she and Mike have done with the Be-Hive.

Every month the Be-Hive hosts free reading, science, nature, music and arts programs and more. It’s “pure family fun.” Parents and their children are invited to take part. For a complete schedule of events, visit <http://behivellc.wix.com/be-hive>.

The Be-Hive, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation is located in downtown Martinsburg at 205 North Queen Street.



West Virginia Children’s Health Insurance Program

The WVCHIP Benefit Plan covers a full range of dental services. WVCHIP Gold Plan and WVCHIP Blue Plan members have no copayments for dental services, while the WVCHIP Premium members have \$25.00 co-pays for some procedures. Please note the co-payment is per procedure not per visit. Go to the WVCHIP Summary Plan Description’s at www.chip.wv.gov for more information.

Regular preventive dental services include:

- ♥ dental exams every six months;
- ♥ a full-mouth x-ray every 36 months;
- ♥ sealants and fillings as needed;
- ♥ simple extractions;
- ♥ treatment of abscesses, including initial visit and follow-up if needed;
- ♥ extraction related to an abscess;
- ♥ root canal therapy;
- ♥ removal of cysts under tooth or gums and x-rays needed to diagnose the condition;
- ♥ space maintainers;
- ♥ bitewings every six months;
- ♥ cleaning and fluoride treatments every six months



If you are not sure how long it has been since your child’s last exam, or how many different types of x-rays will be covered in one visit, call HealthSmart at 1-800-356-2392.

What is Camp Gizmo? It's a five-day, hands-on camp where parents, professionals, and students learn how assistive technology can help young children (birth - 8 years) with significant and multiple developmental needs.

When & Where is Camp Gizmo? Camp will be held **July 9 – 13, 2016** on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, WV.

Who Should Come and What Do We Do? Families, professionals, college students, and others who want to learn more about assistive technology. A limited number of "focus" children will be accepted and assigned a team of professionals who help families identify and apply new strategies for solving their multiple assistive technology needs. (Preference will be given to children who have not previously attended camp.)



Professionals and students attend workshops that meet professional/educational needs or assist the "focus" family. Teams meet daily to observe, discuss and implement strategies for the "focus" child.

Do Children Attend? Kids Camp will be held in conjunction with Camp Gizmo. All children attending Camp Gizmo with focus families or other participants will participate in Kids Camp educational and recreational activities. Kids Camp is a safe, fun camp experience for children with or without disabilities.

How Much Does it Cost? Registration includes meals, sleeping accommodations and Kids Camp. Focus Families: \$50 - child and two parents/\$25 each additional family member. Other Camp participants: \$75 per person/\$25 each additional family member.



TRAILS: Traveling Resource and Information Library System



MountainHeart Child Care Resource and Referral Services offers TRAILS, a mobile resource outreach program. It's a medium sized van equipped with resources of interest to early childhood providers.

TRAILS allows child care resources and referral agencies to utilize a system of mobile resources, to provide one-to-one assistance, and to distribute resources that will improve the quality and availability of childcare services.

What resources are available? Resources

include educational and developmentally appropriate toys for children ranging in ages from birth to thirteen years, children's books, videos, computer software, music teaching curriculum and idea books, assistive technology, art supplies, and large equipment such as highchairs and cribs.

Where are the vans found? A TRAILS van will come directly to your individual home or center and you will be allowed to check out materials.

For more information, contact MountainHeart at (888) 915-7653.





10 Tips to Get Children to Eat More Fruits & Veggies!

According to the California Department of Education, nearly half (49%) of American children do not eat at least a single serving of fruit or vegetables per day. Your child probably eats closer to the recommended 5-9 servings of fruit and vegetables per day, but many parents find it difficult to get their children to eat more of the nutritious foods they should.

Fruits and vegetables are packed with vitamins and they can help protect the body from disease, boost the immune system and fight harmful bacteria. So, how can you help your child to enjoy more fruits and veggies?

1. Eat with the Seasons

Children are discriminating eaters. They know when a strawberry is not quite ripe or a carrot is past its prime. Produce that is in season is better tasting, more nutritious and less expensive than the stuff that's shipped in from far away. Giving children the best tasting produce possible will increase the odds that they'll eat and enjoy it - and want to eat more!

2. Provide Easy Access

Keep fresh, organic fruits and vegetables in the house. Cut up some melon into cubes and keep it in a covered bowl in the fridge. Slice up some carrots and cucumbers so you can easily slip them into sandwiches. Sauté some spinach so you can add it to a burrito or quesadilla. It's easier to eat fruits and veggies if they're there and you don't have to think about them too much.

3. Shop with Your Child

Bring your children grocery shopping and encourage them to choose a new fruit or vegetable each time. Walk through the aisles and make a game of finding fruits and vegetables in all the colors of the rainbow - different colored ones contain different nutrients - so try to eat the rainbow, too. Be sure to taste any samples that are being given out.

4. Cook Together

Get your child involved in healthy eating from the start. Narrate recipes and then put children under the age of three to work. Toddlers can tear up lettuce leaves, pull herbs off the stem and cut soft foods (like bananas) with a spoon. Older children can knead pizza dough, measure ingredients and wash vegetables. To give your older children more experience in the kitchen, send them to a cooking class for kids.



5. Plant a Garden or Visit a Local Farm

A garden connects children to nature, teaches them where food comes from and how it grows. If you don't have space for a garden, try container gardening or visit a local farm.

6. Be a Good Role Model

Children will learn far more from what you do than what you say. If your children see you eating and enjoying nutritious food, they will be more likely to do so. It is confusing to children to tell them to eat fruits and vegetables if they see you eating junk food.



7. Keep Trying

If your child doesn't like a new food the first time, don't give up. Children may need ten or more times of examining and testing new foods before actually eating and enjoying them. Just be sure to include something in the meals that you know your child likes.

8. Think Small

Little hands need small morsels to grab on to. Be sure to cut your child's food into bite-sized pieces, and keep in mind that bite-sized for a child's mouth is not the same as bite-sized for you. Parents are often amazed at the difference small bites make in how their children eat.

9. Dip It!

Dunk vegetables like cucumbers, bell peppers, squash, carrots and broccoli in a creamy dip or dressing. Bananas, peaches, berries and other fruits can be dipped in yogurt, and apples are great with almond butter.

10. Last Resort: Sneak Them In

If worse comes to worst, sneak veggies and fruits in to your children's diet. Pureed vegetables can go in pasta sauce and soup, sautéed greens can go on pizza, mashed bananas can go into muffins, and lots of fresh or frozen fruit can be blended with yogurt for a nutritious smoothie. A diet filled with fruit and vegetables instead of unhealthy fats and refined foods, combined with increased exercise, can reduce the risk of cancer by at least 30 percent - so make sure your whole family eats those fruits and veggies!



First Meals by Annabel Karmel and the wisdom and experience of Clare Bonsall, Scott Singer and Julia Thomas



Easy Crafts to Make Mom's Day!

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 8, 2016



Mark Your Calendars!



Easter Egg Hunt, Stories and Prizes, March 19, 11:00 a.m. – Noon, Hampshire Park on River Road, registration 10:30 – 11:00. www.romneyassembly.org or call 304-822-4263.

Easter Egg Hunt, Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, March 19, , 9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Jefferson County Parks & Rec. \$10/child. Breakfast, juice and milk, adult meals available for purchase, egg hunt to begin at 9:15. More at www.jcprc.org.

Spring Egg Hunt, March 20, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. for ages 2 – 6. Yankauer Nature Preserve, Shepherdstown, WV. Eggs resemble real eggs of wild birds. Other activities include a penguin egg walk, ostrich egg balance challenge as well as an egg toss game. www.potomacaudubon.org or 304-676-3397.

International Culture Night, March 22, Hampshire County Public Library. Fill up your “passport” as you visit different stations. 304-822-3185.

Shepherdstown Easter Parade, March 26, 11:00 a.m., Easter hat contest, dog outfit contest, egg hunt and more. www.shepherdstown.info

Eastern Panhandle Parents of Special Needs Support Group, April 1, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Randy Smith Center, Inwood. Call 304-267-3593 for more information.

Race for the Birds, April 9, One-mile kids fun run begins at 10:30 a.m., Wild Goose Farm, Shepherdstown, www.raceforthebirds.org

Children's Day “Be a Sport!” Foxcroft Towne Center at Martinsburg, April 9, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Pre-K registration for Berkeley and Jefferson County Schools plus lots of fun for all ages. Face painting, activities, moon bounces and more!

Morgan County Community Baby Shower at Morgan County Starting Points, April 28, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. 187 S. Green Street, 304-258-5600 for information or to reserve a spot. Event is for new and expecting mothers. Dads welcome, child care available.

Spring Fest in Franklin, WV, first full weekend in May. Trout rodeo, box car derby, baby show, music, craft vendors, flea market, square dance, rock wall and more. www.pendletoncounty.net

Good News Event for special needs family and friends, May 1, 1:00 - 4:00 Mt. Airy Fairgrounds, Mt. Airy, MD.



Family Spotlight: Henry's Story

My 21-month old son, Henry, was referred to Early Intervention in Virginia at the age of six months due to delayed milestones including feeding issues and a tightness in his hips. After six months, we moved to Jefferson County, WV. Amazingly, they were able to set up Henry's intake three days after we moved in to our new house. I was thrilled there was very little break in services. At that point, we were being threatened with a feeding tube for Henry because of him refusing to eat, so getting the intake done soon was imperative.

Fast forward to almost a year later, and I couldn't be more impressed with WV Birth to Three and the services they provide. We have been blessed with an amazing team consisting of an occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech therapist and a nutritionist. While we have no medical reason explaining Henry's delays (he is followed by a neurologist, gastroenterologist, developmental pediatrician, and soon a geneticist), his therapists through BTT continue to provide him with amazing sessions that have given us a glimpse of hope that he will one day lead a "normal" life. The guidance and education they have provided us has been priceless.



This process has been very overwhelming for me. I have two older children who not only followed typical milestone development, but exceeded them. So having Henry be more like an infant than a 2-year old at this point in his life has been very overwhelming. I have spent many days in tears wondering if I could do this. His team has been a rock for me. They have pointed out Henry's strengths and shown me how he has improved, even when I had a hard time seeing it.

There are not enough words to describe how grateful I am for early intervention. It is because of them that Henry has avoided a feeding tube...it is because of them Henry has been working on walking the stairs like his siblings...it is because of them that we have been able to manage Henry's sensory issues to a point where he is happier most of the time...it is because of them that Henry has learned to sign a few select words which has helped him to communicate better with us. I would seriously not know where we would be without them. When I think about where we were a year ago and where we are now, it brings tears to my eyes because we have been blessed with an amazing program and an even more amazing group of people who are not only knowledgeable, but caring...and it has been a life changer for us.

WV Birth to Three is administered by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health in cooperation with the Early Intervention Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC).



Region 8 Regional Administrative Unit
109 South College St.
Martinsburg, WV 25401

