



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) 267-3593 or 1-866-681-4957.

Now you can find us on Facebook.



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Ideas for Playing Outside This Winter

Before heading outside, make sure that your kids are bundled up to be warm. You should bundle up, too. Be sure to wear gloves, coats and warm socks, along with weather-appropriate footwear. Also, be sure to stay hydrated. Just like any other time of the year, it's important that you and your kids drink enough.

Here are some new and old ideas for playing outside this winter:

Build a Snowman

Do you remember rolling the snow into balls to create three parts for a special snowman? It was a lot of fun, but that's not all. Making a snowman is also awesome exercise.

Bubble Time

You might associate blowing bubbles with sundresses, bare feet and green grass. But in the winter time, it takes on a whole new (and fun!) dimension. On very cold days, bubbles turn into ice bubbles and look amazing!

Shoveling Help

It goes without saying that shoveling snow is hard work. It's also awesome exercise and it's fun! Pick up a kid-sized shovel and have them help out by clearing a path in the snow, or digging to make fun patterns. Afterwards, they can look from second story windows to see their winding snow walks!

Geocaching

The mere mention of the word "treasure" is guaranteed to light up

kids' eyes! So, why not take them on a real-life treasure hunt with geocaching? People use global positioning devices and the internet to seek out items hidden by others. Check geocaching.com for more information.



Look for Animal Tracks

Grab a camera and your kids and check out the animal tracks in your freshly fallen snow. Take photos so you can compare them to photos of animal tracks later. That can be a fun way to investigate the mystery of which animal track you saw and to get used to looking up answers to questions together.

Flashlight Tag

Love the game of tag? Flashlight tag is like the fun classic game, except players tag each other with beams of light, instead of hands. Try it on a cloudy day!





Winter Sky Poem

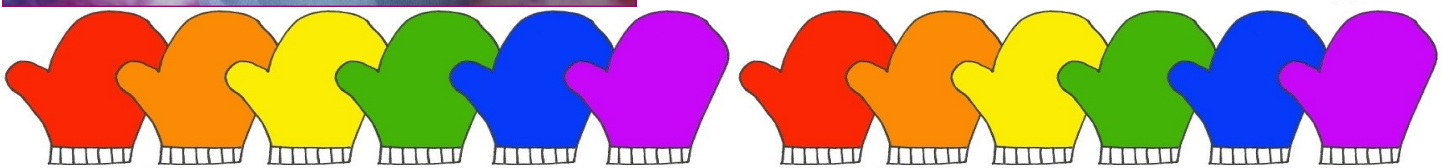


Two little snowflakes caught my eye. (Point 2 fingers to sky)
 Down to the ground they fell without a sound. (Twist around)
 And before very long, It was snowing all around. (Hold arms out)

Enjoy Making a Sensory Snack Together

Trail mix is a high-energy snack that is easy to pack and fun to make! You can personalize it to accommodate dietary restrictions such as nut or wheat allergies. Here are some ideas of things you can mix together to include a variety of textures, colors and shapes:

peanuts, raisins, dried cranberries, pretzels, chocolate candies, peanut butter chips, dry breakfast cereal, dried blueberries, goldfish, graham cracker cookies, marshmallows, cashews, cheese-flavored crackers, popcorn, & white chocolate chips



Birth to Three Team Includes the Whole Family

Chessie and Joshua Vetter's third child, Ava, was born pre-term with multiple heart defects and Ruby Memorial Hospital referred Ava to West Virginia Birth to Three. Chessie had a career in child education, and so she was familiar with the program which provides services to families who have a child who is not meeting developmental milestones. Still, the referral felt like a surprise. "I was hesitant at first, but I made myself a deal that I would become educated about the program."

Now Ava is 10 months old and her Birth to Three team includes a vision therapist, a physical therapist, a developmental specialist and an ongoing service coordinator. "Our team is great – I love all of them!" Chessie said. She is thankful that they come to their home.

Chessie said their team has been very flexible accommodating the family's many medical appointments. "I put my trust in them," she said about altering the frequency of visits as Ava progresses.

The whole family has been involved to help Ava's development, and her brother, Brady (age 9) and her sister, Madelynn (age 5) are frequently included in their activities. Because they're both working parents, Chessie appreciates how flexible her team has been. "They completely work with us and it's great." She adds that the team is willing to meet them at different locations,

including Ava's grandparents' house, in order to accommodate their many appointments.



Chessie says that she is concerned about the amount of attention Ava has required. "It's very meaningful that they (Brady and Madelynn) feel included." Brady reads to Ava and Madelynn often joins in, doing the same exercises given to Ava. Having two typically developing children before Ava, Chessie soon realized that there were many developmental stages that she took for granted. As a parent, Chessie thought she "knew everything." She quickly admitted that her Birth to Three team has "taught

me so much!"

Chessie said the whole family works with Ava between practitioner visits, and she makes a point of asking what they can do with her. "I obviously need to fill in those gaps," she said as they are eager to see progress between appointments. The result is a busy household with everyone on board. "We call it, 'Welcome to the circus!'"



New Staff Member in Martinsburg

RAU-8 is pleased to welcome Linda Bell as Interim Service Coordinator. Linda grew up in Bridgeport, WV, and earned her bachelor's degree in community psychology from Fairmont State University.

Linda has had a long career working with West Virginia families, most recently as a Family Community Partnership worker for Head Start.

Linda enjoys hiking, jogging, cooking and baking. She been married to her husband, Chris, for nearly twenty years, and they have three wonderful children. Welcome aboard, Linda!





Brett weighed only 3 pounds at birth, and doctors told us that Brett would not be able to walk. But, with the help of PT from Birth to Three, he's now walking and running everywhere!



Birth to Three was involved in both of our sons' lives. They were amazing people to work with, and we don't think either of our sons would be where they are today without their help!

Do you have a Birth to Three graduate? It's great to see how our friends are growing up! Please contact Parent Partner, Laura Turman, to share your Birth to Three story! Call (304) 267-3593.



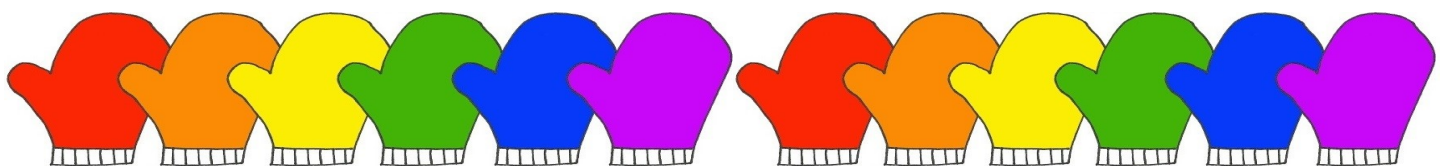
There is So Much to Talk About With Toddlers!

Talking directly to babies — even though they can't 'talk' back — is fundamental to language development. Describe the world around them. Talk about what is happening and what you are doing.

- **Tell your baby what you are doing before you do it.** "I'm going to change your diaper now." Soon your baby will know what you mean and be able to respond when you say those words!
- **Name body parts.** This is easy to do during bath time or when getting dressed in the morning.
- **Converse with your child.** When babies coo and babble, adults should pause (waiting until the baby is "done" in the same manner you would wait for someone to finish a sentence) and then respond with a comment or sentence of your own. This helps babies understand the pattern of a conversation.
- **Sing and dance.** Babies learn patterns of speech through music.

- **Make up songs with your baby's name in them.** For example, sing, "This is the way we change Emma's diaper so early in the morning."
- **Recite nursery rhymes.** Children naturally respond to rhythm and rhymes.
- **Tell stories without a book.** The good thing about made-up stories is that you can make them up as you go along. Babies usually find the voice of a caregiver calming and soothing. Older infants and toddlers will be able to recognize some of the words in your story and develop their own images in their minds!
- **Go for a walk and narrate the world.** Look at the world around you! Name objects in the environment. Remember that for an infant, almost everything is exciting and new.

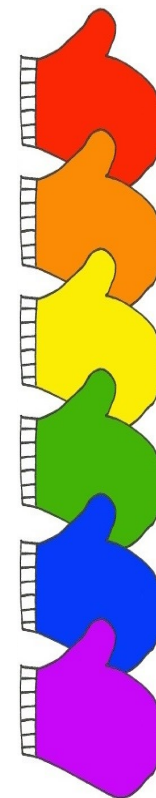
<http://nyceducate.org/zero-three.html>



Easy and Versatile Crock-Pot Vegetable Stew

- 1 medium carrot
- 1 medium onion
- 1 stalk celery
- 1 medium sweet potato
- 1 medium russet potato
- 4 cups chopped kale
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 1 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 1 can pumpkin puree
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 chicken breasts, chopped
- Salt & pepper to taste

Few meals are easier to prepare than Crock-Pot stew. Ask your little ones to help chop, and allow them to pick the veggies they want to add! Homemade soup gets even better as the days pass!



Put everything into a Crock-Pot for 8 hours on low. You can leave out the chicken for a vegetarian version, or you can puree the soup for a less chunky texture!



For more tasty, healthy cooking ideas, visit www.superhealthykids.com

Six Specialty Clinics for West Virginia Families

The Center for Excellence in Disabilities offers six Specialty Clinics that use an interdisciplinary approach to work one-on-one with individuals, family members and other supports to provide comprehensive diagnostic and treatment services.

- Alternatives to Impulsive Behavior Clinic**
- Assistive Technology Clinic**
- Feeding and Swallowing Clinic**
- Intensive Autism Service Delivery Clinic**
- Next Step (LEND) Clinic**
- Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic**

To make an appointment or a referral for services, call 888-829-9426 or visit cedclinics@hsc.wvu.edu

Eastern Panhandle Parents of Special Needs Children Support Group

Are you the parent or caregiver of a child with special needs? West Virginia Birth to Three is pleased to offer a group for families to network and share ideas as well as get information about community resources. Meetings will be held on the last Wednesday of each month from 1:00 - 2:30 at The Orchard House on Rt. 45 between Martinsburg and Shepherdstown. This space is very accommodating to all, and it is located near Horses with Hearts!

Our Facebook page allows families to access and share information online.

For more information, contact Laura Turman, Parent Partner, at 304-267-3593.



Know the Importance of Infant Mental Health



Infant mental health is the optimal social, emotional, and cognitive well being of children ages 0 - 3, developed by secure and stable relationships with nurturing caregivers. Every child who has been removed from one home and placed in another has been traumatized and is re-traumatized with every move, according to the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health. Infant mental health matters for three key reasons:



♥ **Brain Architecture** to support a lifetime of learning. A reliable caregiver who is responsive to a baby's needs is the base for secure attachment, which allows an infant to explore and learn.

♥ **Body & Health** to minimize toxic stress from broken caregiver-infant relationships. When stress hormones are constantly present, they disrupt brain and physical development. The antidote to toxic stress is affection and protection by a nurturing caregiver.

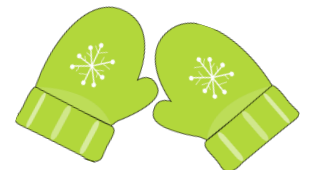
♥ **Behavior & Relationships** to form secure attachments which are fundamental

building blocks of social function. Children need relationships with sensitive caregivers to self-regulate, get along with others, solve problems and be productive. These behaviors form the basis for civil prosperity.

<http://mi-aimh.org>



Tips for Siblings of Children with Autism



1. Remember that you are not alone. Every family has challenges and nearly every family has difficulties to face.
2. Be proud of your brother or sister. Try to discuss autism openly with others. If you can feel comfortable with the topic, others will feel more comfortable, too.
3. You may feel sad or angry about the situation, but feeling that way will not change it. It is okay to be sad, and your parents may have those feelings, too.
4. Spend time alone with your parents. Even if your brother or sister did not have autism, you would still each need to have time with Mom or Dad alone.



5. Try finding an activity you can enjoy together. Doing something together creates closeness, even if it's putting together a simple puzzle.

www.autismspeaks.org





Ideas for Reading With Infants and Toddlers

Ways to Share Books with Infants and Toddlers

Remember you do not need many books to share with your child, although it is recommended that households have at least 10 books on a variety of subjects. Your local library is a great place to get books. The most important part of sharing books with your child is the time and interaction you dedicate to him or her.

Make Sharing Books Part of Every Day

Read or share stories at bedtime

A Few Minutes is OK—Don't Worry if You Don't Finish the Story

Young children can only sit for a few minutes for a story, but as they grow, they will be able to sit longer.

Talk or Sing about the Pictures You do not have to read the words to tell a story.

Let Children Turn the Pages Babies need help turning pages, but a three-year-old can do it alone. Remember, it's OK to skip pages!

Show Children the Words Run your finger along the words as you read them.

Make the Story Come Alive Create voices for the story characters and use your body to tell the story.

Make It Personal Talk about your own family, pets, or community when you are reading about others in a story.

Ask Questions about the Story, and Let Children Ask Questions, too! Use the story to engage in conversation and to talk about familiar activities and objects.

Infants 0 - 6 months:

*Books with simple, large pictures or designs with bright colors

*Stiff cardboard, "chunky" books, or fold out books that can be propped up

*Cloth and soft vinyl books with simple pictures of people or familiar objects that can go in the bath or get washed



Infants 6 - 12 months:

*Board books with photos of other babies

*Books with photos of familiar objects like balls and bottles

*Books with sturdy pages that can be propped up or spread out; plastic/vinyl books for bath time

*Small plastic photo albums of family and friends

Young Toddlers 12 - 24 months:

*Sturdy board books that they can carry

*Books with photos of children doing familiar things like sleeping or playing

*Goodnight books for bedtime

*Books about saying hello and good-bye

*Books with simple rhymes or predictable text

*Animal books of all sizes and shapes

Toddlers 2 - 3 years:

*Books that tell simple stories

*Simple rhyming books that they can memorize

*Bedtime books

*Books about counting, the alphabet, shapes or sizes

*Animal books, vehicle books, books about play-time

*Books about saying hello and good-bye



Imagination Library Connects Kids With Books!

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library allows registered residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton counties to receive a new, carefully selected book each month, mailed directly to your home!

Founded in 1996, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a non-profit organization that gives hundreds of thousands of books each month to registered children in participating communities in West Virginia, the United States and Canada.

To register your child, visit www.imaginationlibrary.wv.gov, or call 304-558-2440 to receive a form. Forms can also be found at local public libraries.

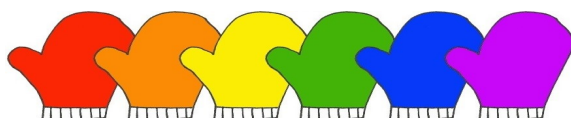




Holiday Season Calendar of Events



- * November 25—December 18, weekends. Christmas in Shepherdstown. Enjoy a festive holiday celebration in historic Shepherdstown.
- * November 26 - January 1, 5:00 - 10 p.m. Christmas Festival of Lights, Hampshire County Parks & Recreation, Romney. 304-822-7300 or visit <http://hampshirecountyparks.com>. Bring an ornament!
- * December 2, 6:00 Tree Lighting at Capon Bridge Library, (304) 856-3777
- * December 2, 6:00 Christmas Tree lighting in Downtown Martinsburg kicks off the holiday season
- * December 2, 5:45 p.m. Christmas Parade in Downtown Martinsburg
- * December 2 & 3 at 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Santa's North Pole Express Train in Moorefield. Call (304) 530-2080 or visit <http://heritageweekend.com>
- * December 3, 10:00 a.m. Shepherdstown Christmas Parade
- * December 3, 2:00 p.m. Charles Town Christmas Parade, (304) 725-2311
- * December 3, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Santa at Capon Bridge Community Center
- * December 3 - 11, Dickens of a Christmas, Berkeley Springs, WV. TreeFest at The Ice House at Independence and Mercer Streets. Check DickensChristmasinBerkeleySprings on Facebook.
- * December 3 - 11, 46th Annual Harpers Ferry Old Tyme Christmas. Live entertainment, children's activities, and extended shopping hours.
- * December 8, 7:00 p.m. Christmas Concert at Harr Theater, Petersburg High School Chorus and Band
- * December 9 - 13, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever at the Apollo Theater in Downtown Martinsburg, (304) 263-6766
- * December 9 & 10, 6:00, 7:30 & 9:00 p.m. Snowflake Express Train Ride with Santa at the South Side Depot. Passengers ride the train, enjoying entertainment on the way to Welton Park to view the Christmas Festival of Lights. Visit southsidedepot.com or call (304) 257-9264.
- * December 10, 12:00 p.m. A Storybook Christmas Parade in Petersburg
- * December 11, 3:00 p.m. Highland Arts hosts "Brasstacular" at the Church-McKee Center in Keyser
- * December 16 at 4:30 p.m. and December 17 at 10:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. Ride the Potomac Eagle Excursion Train and visit with Santa and his elves. For tickets, call Hampshire County Chamber of Commerce, (304) 822-7221.



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

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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).