

## Register Now for Camp Gizmo!

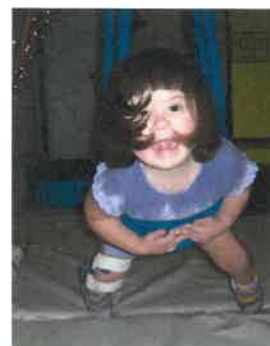
Camp Gizmo is a five day, hands-on camp where parents, professionals, and students learn how assistive technology can help young children (birth to 8 years) with significant and multiple developmental needs.

This year it will be held July 13th-17th on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, WV.

Families, professionals, college students, and others who want to learn

more about assistive technology are encouraged to come! 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. Professionals and other caregivers involved with these children are encouraged to attend the camp. Labs and workshops will be available to Camp participants daily.

Parents attend workshops on subjects that will help them better meet the needs of their child. Professionals and students attend workshops of interest that meet professional/educational needs or assist the "focus" family. Teams will meet daily to observe, discuss and implement strategies for the "focus" child.



**July 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> 2019**

**We will begin accepting applications for our 2019 camp in January.**

*Kids camp will be held in conjunction with Camp Gizmo. All children attending the camp 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.*

\*See the back page for more information about Camp Gizmo!

# Supporting Challenging Behavior

As parents and caregivers, it can be difficult to experience challenging behaviors with children. Behaviors can sometimes feel overwhelming, and often parents are unsure of how to respond. It is important for parents to keep in mind that all behavior is communicating a message.

The good news is that parents and caregivers can learn to understand and interpret the meaning behind these behaviors. Once adults have this understanding, they can begin to support the child.



Punishing the child for exhibiting behaviors will never end the behavior. “Yelling at or punishing a child for a behavior may stop the behavior for the moment, but it does not give the child support or provide alternate ways to act in difficult situations. When adults use punishment, they are sending the message that anger is a good way to solve problems. When adults help children find positive ways to communicate their needs to others, children learn important social and problem-solving skills that will help them throughout their life.” (PBS Parents [http://www.pbs.org/parents/inclusivecommunities/challenging\\_behavior2.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/inclusivecommunities/challenging_behavior2.html))

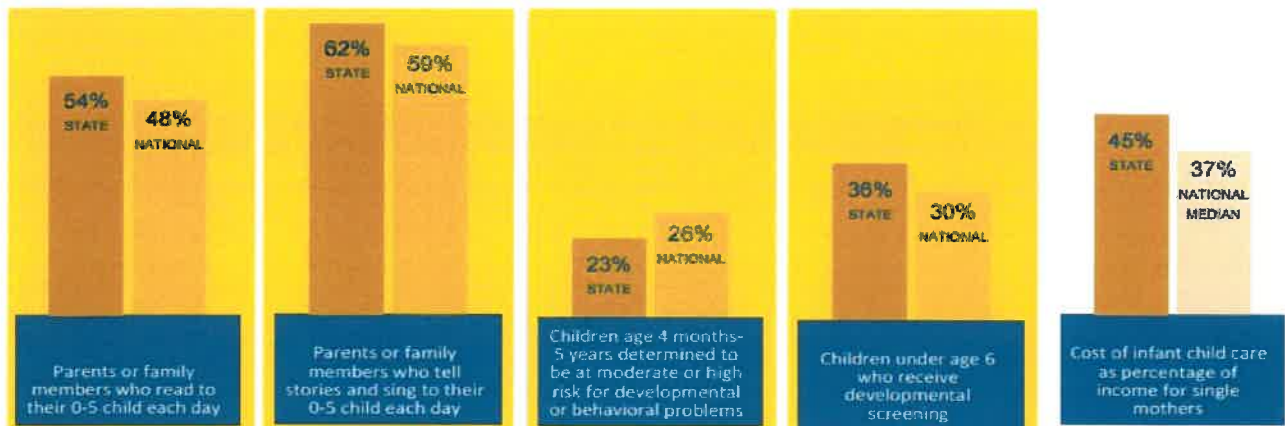
In addition to talking with your WV Birth to Three team about any concerns you may have with your

child’s behavior, here are a few things to try to help you and your little one through those difficult times:

- Prepare your child for upcoming activities by telling them in advance what is going to happen
- Make them a part of planning for daily activities helps them to feel a part of the family and more “in charge”
- Give clear, simple directions
- Provide specific praise when your child has done what you wanted, such as “I really like how you put that paper in the trash” or “I like how you shared the toy with your sister”

Adapted from WV Early Childhood Provider Quarterly (Fall 2018). *Supporting challenging behavior*. Retrieved from <http://www.wvearlychildhood.org/>

## HOW DO WEST VIRGINIA’S POSITIVE EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES COMPARE TO THE U.S.?



[www.zerotothree.org/resources/1177-west-virginia-state-baby-facts](http://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1177-west-virginia-state-baby-facts)

## Family Spotlight—The Shugrue Family In their own words...



I had a perfect pregnancy. I ate right. I went on daily walks with my husband. I avoided all the foods I was told to avoid. I got plenty of rest and took it easy. So when Jack was born on May 29, 2016, with multiple congenital abnormalities, non-genetic related, we were shocked.

I could tell you about that day, about how I felt numb for days when they took my son away to the NICU in Morgantown, WV where we spent the first 70 days of his life. About how we mourned the loss of the child we were expecting. About how it took me days to be able to look at my son fully. About how I went to the darkest place and never thought I'd ever be okay again. But I'd rather talk about everything that came after.

Jack has undergone 12 surgeries, one of which was major reconstructive surgery on both his legs. He has no diagnoses, per se, but had a trach until he was 2 years old due to an obstructed airway, is 100% g-tube fed, had major knee contractures and displaced patellas thus does not bear any weight, and is immobile, non-verbal, has hypothyroidism, and is overall developmentally delayed. The first year of his life we were in and out of hospitals for minor and major issues and everything in between, he had multiple therapy appointments a week with Birth to Three, and we had very little glimpses of normalcy.

But slowly and at Jack's own pace, along with the help of all of his incredibly patient, knowledgeable, and creative doctors and therapists, Jack has made so much progress. Our visits to the hospitals have significantly decreased and we were able to return to the everyday things we love to do without hauling extra bags of medical equipment.

Jack's smile is infectious. When we're out in public, strangers have visceral reactions to him and cross rooms and part crowds just to meet him. He has the most beautiful color hair, similar to the shade aspen leaves turn near mountain tops. He is overall a very happy boy who loves watching PAW patrol and Thomas, playing with his 11-year-old sister, Delia, and reading. He spends 2 hours a day in his gait trainer, taking assisted small steps, and/or his sit-to-stand stander to build his strength and bone density so that he may one day walk.

I have no idea what Jack's future will hold, but I do know that I cannot imagine a future without Jack in it. He has taught me more about myself, love, and patience than I ever thought possible.

-Elyse Shugrue



## Helpful Resources



Early Head Start is a home based program for prenatal to 3 years. EHS focuses on early childhood education, health, developmental, and family services. Serving families in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties. Call (304)267-3595 for more information.



Head Start is a classroom based program serving children ages 4-5 years that focuses on education, health, developmental, and family services.

For more information call (304)267-3595 for Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties or (304)530-5511 for Pendleton, Grant, Hardy, and Hampshire counties.



Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers is a home visitation program that serves children and families prenatally through kindergarten. PAT is a free service with no income requirements. It focuses on parent-child interaction, development centered parenting, and family well being. Burlington's PAT program serves in Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, and Pendleton counties. Call (304)813-6107 or visit [www.bumfs.org](http://www.bumfs.org) for more information.



Help Me Grow is a statewide program that connects families with critical developmental resources for their children birth through five years. The goal of HMG is to successfully identify children at-risk and link them to the help they need. Call (800)642-8522 or visit [www.dhhr.wv.gov/helpmegrow](http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/helpmegrow) for more information.



Right From the Start is a statewide program that helps West Virginia families lead healthier lives by offering home visitation services with a Designated Care Coordinator (registered nurse or licensed social worker). Services support mothers, their new babies and families by helping create a safe, nurturing home. They will discuss any questions and concerns you may have and help you find the resources you need. Call (304)257-5400 for more information.

# Reading Tips for Parents of Babies

It's never too early to read to your baby. As soon as your baby is born, he or she starts learning. Just by talking to, playing with, and caring for your baby every day, you help your baby develop language skills necessary to become a reader. By reading with your baby, you foster a love of books and reading right from the start. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

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## Snuggle up with a book:

When you hold your baby close and look at a book together, your baby will enjoy the snuggling and hearing your voice as well as the story. Feeling safe and secure with you while looking at a book builds your baby's confidence and love of reading.

## Choose baby-friendly books:

Books with bright and bold or high-contrast illustrations are easier for young babies to see, and will grab their attention. Books made of cloth or soft plastic (for the bathtub) or "board books" with sturdy cardboard pages are easier for a baby to handle.

## Keep books where your baby can reach them:

Make sure books are as easy to reach, hold, and look at as toys. Remember, a baby will do with a book what he does with everything else — put it in his mouth. And that's exactly what he's supposed to do, so you may only want to put chewable books within reach.

## Talk with your baby — all day long:

Describe the weather or which apples you are choosing at the grocery. Talk about the pictures in a book or things you see on a walk. Ask questions. By listening, your child learns words, ideas, and how language works.

## Encourage your baby's coos, growls, and gurgles:

They are your baby's way of communicating with you, and are important first steps toward speech. Encourage attempts to mimic you. The more your baby practices making sounds, the clearer they will become. Go ahead and moo, woof and honk!

## Give baby a hand!

Encourage your baby to pick up crackers or peas, touch noses and toes, point to pictures and grab toys. The muscles in those little hands will grow strong, agile, and ready to turn pages.



## Develop a daily routine (and make reading a part of it):

Routines can soothe a baby, and let a baby learn to predict what will happen next. The ability to predict is important when your child is older and is reading independently.

## Sing, Read, Repeat:

Read favorite stories and sing favorite songs over and over again. Repeated fun with books will strengthen language development and positive feelings about reading.

## "Read" your baby:

Pay attention to how your baby reacts to the book you are reading. Stop if your baby isn't enjoying the story and try another book or another time.

[www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-babies](http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-babies)

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Did you know Dolly Parton's Imagination Library gifts free books to children ages birth-5 every month, at no cost to families?



Log on to [www.imaginationlibrary.com](http://www.imaginationlibrary.com) to see if this amazing program is available in your area!

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## Camp Gizmo Continued

Camp Gizmo is an interagency funded learning week. Registration includes meals, sleeping accommodations, and Kids Camp. Participant costs per week:

Focus Families: \$50 - child and two parents/\$25 - each additional family member

Other Camp participants: \$75 per person/\$25 each additional family member

For more information, contact:

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Ginger Huffman	Pam Roush	LeAnn Ruddle
WV Department of Education	WV Birth to Three	WVECTCR
1 (800) 642-8541	1 (800) 642-9704	1 (888) 983-2827 or lruddle@rvcds.org

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Camp Gizmo is funded by the WV Dept of Ed/Office of Special Education and Early Learning, WVDHHR/Bureau for Public Health/Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/WV Birth to Three and WVDHHR/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education and in-kind support is provided by WVATS, WVU Center of Excellence in Disabilities, National Seating and Mobility and Assistive Technology Works, Inc. Support and coordination provided by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources

A Program of River Valley Child Development Services

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## The Grandfacts about Grandfamilies

Many of you are raising, or know someone raising grandchildren. The GrandFacts state fact sheet is a wonderful resource to help find state-specific data, programs, and information about public benefits, educational assistance, legal relationship options and state laws that may help. If you or someone you know is raising a relative, please visit [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org) to get more information.

- Relatives as Parents Program of the Panhandle (RAPP)

Support groups, information and referral, legal assistance for kinship care issues and respite care.

Berkeley County: Annie Otto 304-754-3802 [anniem36@frontier.com](mailto:anniem36@frontier.com)

Jefferson County: Gwen Twyman 304-724-2044 [thyvein@aol.com](mailto:thyvein@aol.com)

Morgan County: Lisa Osborne 304-258-5600

- MissionWV, West Virginia University Extension Services, Legal Aid of WV and the Dept. on Health & Human Services - Statewide support groups, workshops, email listserv, resource referrals and toll-free warm line. [www.missionwv.org](http://www.missionwv.org)

Carolyn Suppa or Kelly Thompson: 304-562-0723 or 1-866-CALL-MWV

Email: [info@missionwv.org](mailto:info@missionwv.org)

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