



BTT Bits

Fall Issue

2015

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Birth to Three: My Experience



From the moment Keller was born, he was loved and adored. Month by month, he was growing and was healthy. However, month by month, I had this gut-feeling that something was different. I remember filling out his pediatrician’s questionnaires and second guessing some of my responses. He didn’t seem to raise any of their “red flags.” He was overall a happy baby, but was colicky the first few months, seemed sensitive to his environment, didn’t like to be held, wasn’t really interested in us, and didn’t play with his toys typically like other babies. My family, friends, and coworkers said I worried too much and he was fine. People would say, “He is such a good baby, and is just independent and busy. You should feel lucky.” I started feeling guilty that I had that gut-feeling that something was different with our son.

After moving to West Virginia, we went to Keller’s new pediatrician. At the end of the appointment, I voiced some of my concerns. To my surprise, his doctor recommended I contact Birth to Three. He told me I could even refer my son for an evaluation and that it didn’t need to come from a doctor. I had no clue!

During his occupational therapy evaluation I thought that there was no way he would qualify and I was just wasting their time. To my shock, he qualified for O.T services. She even noticed a few of Keller’s “quirks” and suggested a speech therapy evaluation. I burst into tears. I felt so guilty for not trusting my instincts, but most importantly, for waiting so long to give my son the therapies that he NEEDED. I felt like such a failure as a mother and as an acute care pediatric physical therapist. However, his team have always reassured me otherwise and have given me much more confidence in the decisions I make for my child.

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Is your child moving,
 hearing, seeing, learning,
 talking like others their
 age? If you have any ques-
 tions contact our office at
 304-485-2000 or
 1-866-401-8919

Parent Corner Continued



Keller started OT and speech therapy just after he turned two, and psychology services shortly thereafter. With the interventions provided by his team, daily tasks started to get easier and life was less stressful. His development started to catch up with his peers and he even started gaining weight, which had previously been a challenge. He now attends preschool, is less anxious, and is able to interact with others and communicate his needs. His therapists continue to come to our home and recommend things that will work for our family. They provide individualized interventions that are helping us reach the goals that OUR family made for our son. His therapists and service coordinator have been so genuine, caring, and such a blessing to us. They have advocated for Keller and taught me to be a better advocate, too.

Now that he is approaching his third birthday, I reflect and think how differently our lives could have been if we didn't have Birth to Three. They not only helped Keller to reach his full potential, but also were a tremendous help to me and our entire family.

They have provided great information to help us with the transition for Keller's graduation from Early Intervention and I am eternally grateful that they have played an indelible part in Keller's life.



Check Out Our Facebook Page

WV Birth to Three has created a Facebook page for friends and families. This Facebook page keeps you posted on events, pictures, and other important information to your child's development. If you have a Facebook account, you can look up WV Birth to Three, Region 2 or <https://www.facebook.com/WVBirthToThreeRegion2>.

WV Imagination Library

Imagination Library is designed to provide free, age-appropriate books monthly to all eligible children in specified counties. Eligibility factors are age (birth to fifth birthday) and residency in a participating county. The goals for the Imagination Library include:



- **Helping parents read to their children by giving them the material they need**
- **Encouraging children to be excited about reading by receiving one book a month sent directly to them at their home**
- **Giving children a solid foundation toward a successful education by helping them develop a love for reading.**

If you live in Calhoun, Gilmer or Wirt counties make sure your child is signed up for Imagination Library. Each child 0-5 years of age will receive, through the mail, a free book each month until their 5th birthday. Parents will need their child's name, current address, and age. To sign up for the program you may contact your local library at:

~ Calhoun County (304) 354-6300 ~ Gilmer County (304) 462-5620 ~ Wirt County (304) 275-4295

For more information go to: www.imaginationlibrary.wv.gov



Child Care Food Program: Parkersburg, WV

CCFP is a nutrition program offering reimbursement of costs for meals and snacks to the children that are in your care. As long as you are providing child care in your home and feeding those children, then you are eligible to participate. Call (304) 485-9238

Picky Eating - How to Cope

Picky eating is often temporary. If you don't make it a big deal, it will usually end before school age. You can do many positive things to deal with picky eating and help your child learn to try new foods.

- Let your kids be "produce pickers." Let them help pick out fruits and veggies at the store. Kids like to try foods they help make. It's a great idea for helping your picky eater try fruits and vegetables. Children also learn about fruits and vegetables when they help make them. And all of that mixing, mashing and measuring makes them want to taste what they are making.
- Try to make meals a stress-free time. Talk about fun and happy things. If arguments often happen at mealtimes, your preschooler may learn unhealthy attitudes toward food.
- Offer choices. Rather than asking "Do you want broccoli for dinner?" ask "Which would you like for dinner: broccoli or cauliflower?"
- Offer a variety of foods and let your child choose how much of these foods to eat. Offer the same foods for the whole family. Don't be a "short-order cook," making a different meal for your preschooler. Your child will be okay even if they don't eat a meal now and then.



Make food fun! Get creative in the kitchen with these cool ideas.

Picky eating is usually temporary and there are many things you can do to deal with picky eating in a positive way. One way is to make food fun!



Get creative in the kitchen:

- Name a food your child helps create. Make a big deal of serving "Dawn's Salad" or "Peter's Sweet Potatoes" for dinner.
- Cut a food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.
- Encourage your child to invent and help prepare new snacks or sandwiches.
- Have your child make funny faces on a plate using different types of fruit.
- Jazz up the taste of vegetables with low-fat dressings or dips. Try hummus or bean spread as a dip for veggies.

Choose smart, fun snacks and meals:

- **Bagel snake:** Split mini bagels in half. Cut each half into half circles. Spread the halves with toppings like tuna salad, egg salad, or peanut butter. Decorate with sliced cherry tomatoes or banana slices. Arrange the half circles to form the body of a snake. Use olives or raisins for the eyes.
- **Smiley sandwiches:** Top a slice of bread with peanut butter and use an apple slice for a smile and raisins for eyes.
- **Potato Pal:** Top half a small baked potato with eyes, ears, and a smile. Try peas for eyes, a halved cherry tomato for a nose, and a low-fat cheese wedge as a smile. Be creative, you'll be surprised at how many foods can turn into eyes, noses, and smiles!
- **Frozen graham cracker sandwiches:** Mix mashed bananas and peanut butter, spread between graham crackers and freeze.
- **Fruit smoothies:** Blend fresh or frozen fruit with yogurt and milk or juice. Try 100% orange juice, low-fat yogurt, and frozen strawberries.
- **Frozen juice cups:** Pour 100% fruit juice into small paper cups. Freeze. To serve, peel off the paper and eat.

Community Events

~ Election Day November 3, 2015 Don't Forget to Vote ~

FACES

Parents Guide to Transition

Presented by Betsy Peterson
October 14 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Please RSVP by October 12 to
Shannon Hedrick at
(304) 485-2000 or
shannon.hedrick@thearcmov.org

Calhoun

MHHC Health clinic

free or low cost screening clinic
October 16th from 8am- Noon

Calhoun County Halloween Party

October 31st Party Starts at 5 pm at
the Arnoldsburg Park

Doddridge

Baby and Toddler Expo

October 12 3:30-5:30 p.m.
Call Melanie Britton *at* Call Mel-
anie Britton by Thursday October 9
at (304) 873-3955, 304-266-8949,
or join us on Facebook (search
Doddridge Baby-Toddler Expo)

Doddridge County CEOS 2015

Holiday BAZAAR

November 6, 2015
Time: 9:00AM- 2:00PM
West Union Lion's Club

Veterans Day Parade

November 11 2015

Harrison

Tuesday is for Toddlers at
Meadowbrook Mall every Tues-
day morning from 11am until
Noon for free activities for your
toddler! Visit the Mall Guest Ser-
vice Desk for details

Social Skills Group

Meetings monthly the last
Thursday of the month from 6-
7:30 pm to register call HC
PERC at 304-326-7692

Bridgeport Public Library

Story time Fridays at 10:30 am
for children under the age of
three.

Clarksburg/ Harrison Public Library

Reading Buddies Story Time ages
2-5 Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
Sensory Storytime Wednesdays at
10 a.m.

Mother Goose Story Time
Wednesdays at 2 p.m.

Pleasants

Family Fun Event

October 24 6 p.m.

Enjoy Your Holidays

Halloween October 31st

Veterans Day November 11

Ritchie

Breakfast with Santa

December 12
North Bend State Park
Children 12 and Under are Free

Health and Wellness Expo

October 19 from 4 -7 p.m.
Ritchie County 4:H Grounds

Wirt

Dora B. Woodyard Library

Story Hour Mondays at 10:30 am
for ages 2-5 years

Wood

Vienna Public Library

Baby Lap Sit on Wednesdays at 11
am for ages 0-24 months

Story time on Tuesdays at 10:30
am for toddlers

Family Story Time on Thursdays
at 6 p.m.

Parkersburg & Wood County Public Library

Toddle Time Ages Birth to 5 2nd
& 3rd Fridays of the month

Boo Spectacular

October 24 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
Washington Bottom Community Building
FREE! Family Fun Night
Cake walk, photo booth, car seat
check, costume contest

Holiday in the Park

Friendly Reminder from your Parent Partner, Shannon Hedrick

I will be sending out e-mails with current activities, resource guide, and fun things you can do with your family every month. If you are interested in receiving these e-mails please provide your e-mail address to shannon.hedrick@thearcmov.org. Also, If your family would like to share a short article, craft, poem, or other information that would support other WV Birth to Three families.

Are Pacifiers Really Ok?

Most babies have a strong sucking reflex. Some babies even suck their thumbs or fingers before they're born. Sucking often has a soothing, calming effect. This article will help you understand the benefits and risks of pacifier use, important safety tips and steps to help wean your baby from the pacifier.

For some babies, pacifiers are the key to contentment between feedings. Consider the advantages:

- **A pacifier offers temporary distraction.** A pacifier might come in handy during and after shots or to just soothe a fussy baby during all times of the day.
- **A pacifier might help reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).** Sucking on a pacifier at nap time and bedtime might reduce the risk of SIDS. If you're breast-feeding, wait to offer a pacifier until your baby is 3 to 4 weeks old and you've settled into an effective nursing routine.
- **Pacifiers are disposable.** When it's time to stop using pacifiers, you can throw them away.

Of course, pacifiers have pitfalls as well. Consider the drawbacks:

- **Your baby might become dependent on the pacifier.** If your baby uses a pacifier to sleep, you might have middle-of-the-night crying spells if the pacifier falls out of your baby's mouth.
- **Pacifier use might increase the risk of middle ear infections.** However, rates of middle ear infections are generally lowest from birth to age 6 months — when the risk of SIDS is the highest and your baby might be most interested in a pacifier.
- **Prolonged pacifier use might lead to dental problems.** Normal pacifier use during the first few years of life doesn't cause long-term dental problems. Prolonged pacifier use might cause a child's teeth to be misaligned or not come in properly.



If you choose to offer your baby a pacifier, keep these tips in mind:

- **Wait until breast-feeding is well-established.** If you're breast-feeding, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends waiting to offer a pacifier until your baby is 3 to 4 weeks old, and you've settled into an effective nursing routine.
- **Don't use a pacifier as a first line of defense.** Sometimes a change of position or a rocking session can calm a crying baby. Offer a pacifier to your baby only after or between feedings.
- **Let your baby set the pace.** If your baby's not interested in the pacifier, don't force it. If the pacifier falls out of your baby's mouth while he or she is sleeping, don't pop it back in. Do not put sweet substances on the pacifier to make it more appealing.
- **Keep it clean.** Before you offer your baby a pacifier, clean it thoroughly. Frequently boil pacifiers or run them through the dishwasher. Resist the temptation to "rinse" the pacifier in your own mouth. You'll only spread more germs to your baby.
- **Keep it safe.** Replace pacifiers often and watch for loose parts or signs of deterioration. Never use a string or strap long enough to get caught around your baby's neck.

The risks of pacifier use begin to outweigh the benefits as your baby gets older. While most kids stop using pacifiers on their own between ages 2 and 4, others need help breaking the habit. Depending on your child's age, consider these techniques to wean your child from the pacifier:

- **Younger infants.** Swaddling, rocking, singing, playing soft music and infant massage can be effective alternatives to pacifier use.
- **Older infants and toddlers.** Activities, toys or other objects of affection, such as a blanket with satin edging, might help distract your child from his or her desire for the pacifier.
- **Toddlers and older children.** Allow your child to trade in his or her pacifier for a special book or toy. Your child's dentist or doctor also might be able to help your child stop using the pacifier.

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Call- 1-304-485-2000 or
1-866-401-8919
www.wvdhhr.org/birth23



Thank You, Families, for your Assistance

As children transition from WV Birth to Three when they reach their third birthday, the state WV Birth to Three office, sends a survey for families to complete. It is important the survey be completed and returned. Your feedback is very important to us. Each survey is carefully reviewed in order to ensure the best quality services are provided for children and their families. Thank you in advance for your time and assistance.