

WV Birth to Three RAU 2

BTT BITS

Happily serving Calhoun , Doddridge, Gilmer, Harrison,
Pleasants, Ritchie, Wirt, and Wood counties in WV

Parent Partner Corner

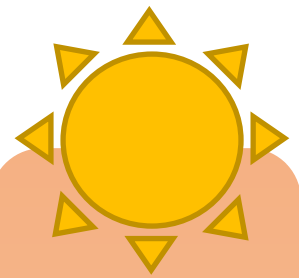
Being a parent is tough, and added stress can really take its toll on you. As the weather gets colder, often we find ourselves in some sort of funk. Taking time for yourself can feel impossible and, on occasion, make you feel guilty. But there are little things we can do every day to focus, relax, and push us in the right direction.

- ◆ Dancing— Yes you read that right. Dancing to an upbeat song can help balance your over all mood.
- ◆ Deep breathing— Just a minute of deep breathing can help you focus and redirect your energy.
- ◆ Hydrate— Drinking water will help with mental clarity and overall health.
- ◆ Unplug— This may sound obvious, but unplugging and turning off your phone/laptop can be super beneficial for your wellbeing, even if its just for a few minutes everyday.

This is in no way an attempt to diagnose or treat underlying mental illnesses. If you or a loved one is struggling, please reach out and I will help support you as best I can.



Olivia A Parsons



Fall 2021

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WV BTT RAU 2
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Featured Family

The McQuillan Family

From Mom, Jodi McQuillan: I had worked with a home visitation program for several years before becoming a mom, so I had some understanding of milestones children should meet, but I would not consider myself an expert. When my daughter was around 12 months, I noticed some things that did not seem “normal”. She would not engage in eye contact as much as I thought she should. She was very sensitive to loud noises. When she started walking, she did not stop to set to play. She was always on the go and toe walked most of the time. I had been to several meetings for work with staff from Birth to Three and mentioned my concerns. She encouraged me to make a self-referral and have Joslyn evaluated and I am so thankful that I did!

This Season's Featured Family

JOSLYN'S STORY was shared with us earlier in the year and we are thrilled to share it now with permission, to you. Thank you Jodi for sharing with us all. If you would like to share your child(ren)'s story with us to be in an upcoming newsletter contact me at :

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They worked with Joslyn on her development and sensory needs. She received speech, OT, PT and worked with a vision and developmental specialist. Her speech improved so much but she did not communicate her needs well. She did not point to things or use words to tell me what was wrong. She and I both were frustrated at times as I tried to figure out what she needed. When she was 2 ½ we had the help from a psychologist to help Joslyn work on communication. When Joslyn was 3 she was officially diagnosed with Autism, but my gut gave that diagnoses at 12 months. I am so thankful for the support that her therapist gave Joslyn, and for my husband and I as well. I learned so much from them about how to best help Joslyn. Our services coordinator, Margie, is amazing! She advocated for us and walked me through the process to get services after she turned 3 with the Board of Education so Joslyn would continue to meet those milestone and be ready for school.

I know that without this dream team from Birth to Three, Joslyn would not be where she is today. She is now a 2nd grader. My baby who could not tell me she was hungry or sick, now, never stops talking and tells me exactly how she feels about everything (even though sometimes I wish she would keep it to herself, ha ha). She is so funny and is an excellent student. She loves to play soccer, swim, dance, sing, and of course, play video games.

I want to leave a message for other parents and caregivers. Listen to your gut. Make the referral if you feel something is not quite right. Early intervention is so important and can make a huge impact on children for the rest of their lives. Parenting can be hard and we do not always have the answers. It takes a village to raise children and I will be forever grateful that I added Birth to Three to my village!

Playing with Baby is Fun—Until it's Not

Why is it sometimes hard to play like babies?!?

Most of us love to play with our little ones. Peek-a-boo, stacking blocks, reading books and lots of things in between can be creative, fun and silly times to enjoy being together. However, there are times when what our babies and toddlers need does not match up with what we need as parents. Here are some ideas for what you can do when you have hit the wall on play-

How Babies and Toddlers Explore, Learn, and Play	Why It Might Be Challenging and What You Can Do
<p>Young children like to do the same thing over and over.</p> <p>Your baby may sit and put blocks in and out of a bin or bucket.</p> <p>Your toddler may want you to read the same book 17 times in a row.</p> <p>Your child may be happy to feed you the same plastic banana over and over (and over).</p>	<p>Grown-ups may find this boring and tedious after a while.</p> <p>Make staying engaged a game for yourself to help you stay in the moment. Try looking at each and every feature on your baby's face. Look around the room and try to find five things that are red. Take five deep belly breaths.</p> <p>Try a joke. For example, calling a banana an apple. Your toddler will love it. Babies often enjoy some slapstick humor, too. Try pretending to sneeze blocks into a bucket.</p> <p>Remind yourself that what you're doing is important. Say to yourself, "Reading this book over and over is good for my child's brain."</p>
<p>Young children move quickly from one thing to another.</p> <p>Your baby may be very focused on an activity—like shaking her rattle and smiling at you—and then after a minute or two, turn away.</p> <p>Toddlers can be among the most active humans you ever meet. They have a lot of energy and need ways to let it out.</p> <p>Your child is likely interested in anything "new" and may move all around a room touching and exploring as he goes.</p>	<p>Grown-ups may want some moments to last longer!</p> <p>Young babies quite naturally take breaks because activity and interaction are tiring for them. When you see your baby turn away, start to yawn, or get a little cranky, give her a break. Wait for her to make eye contact again—that's how you'll know she is ready to play.</p> <p>Adults can support a toddler's growing attention span by helping him re-focus on activity by asking a question or making a comment: "What do you think the dolly would like to eat next?" Or, "I see some blocks we could use to build a garage for the cars."</p> <p>It may sound crazy—but consider removing some toys from your child's environment. Fewer toys can mean fewer distractions for some toddlers. They may spend more time playing at one activity if there aren't so many options in sight.</p>
<p>Young children benefit when we let them take the lead.</p> <p>Babies love when grown-ups delight in their antics. Paying close attention to baby's actions while he plays builds your shared connection and baby's self-esteem.</p> <p>Allowing young children to choose what to play tells them that they are smart, capable, and powerful.</p>	<p>Grown-ups may be used to giving directions and "steering" the play.</p> <p>Challenge yourself to not speak or interrupt your child's play for a short period of time. Pay attention to how often you find yourself wanting to "jump in" and watch what happens when you don't.</p> <p>When playing with babies, let a few seconds pass after you say something before speaking again. Babies take longer to process and plan their responses. Giving them time to respond is an important part of letting them lead.</p> <p>With toddlers, try a statement that doesn't direct the play, like, "What next?" Or, "What should I do?"</p>

Adapted from MacLaughlin, S.S. and Parlakian, R. (n.d.). Playing with baby is fun (until it's boring). Retrieved from <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2143-playing-with-baby-is-fun-until-it-s-boring>.





September 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
National Chicken Month	September is... Baby Safety Month	National Classical Music Month	1	2 Blueberry Popsicle Day	3 National Lazy Moms Day	4 National Wildlife Day
5 National Cheese Pizza Day	6 Labor Day	7	8 International Literacy Day	9 Teddy Bear Day	10 Swap Ideas Day	11 Patriot Day
12 National Grandparents Day	13	14	15	16 Collect Rocks Day	17	18 National Dance Day
19 Nat'l Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week (19-25)	20	21 Mini Golf Day	22 First Day of Fall	23 National Dog Week	24	25 National Cooking Day
26 Better Breakfast Day	27	28 National Neighbor Day	29	30 National Love People Day		



November 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Cookie Monster's Birthday	3 National Sandwich Day	4	5	6 Basketball Day
7	8 International Tongue Twister Day	9 Go To An Art Museum Day	10 Sesame Street Day	11 Veteran's Day	12	13 World Kindness Day
14 National Family PJs Day	15 National Recycling Day	16 International Day for Tolerance	17 National Homemade Bread Day	18 Mickey and Minnie Mouse's Birthday	19 National Camp Day	20 Universal Children's Day
21 National Gingerbread Cookie Day	22 Go For a Ride Day	23 GERD Awareness Week (21-27)	24	25 Happy Thanksgiving!	26 Native American Heritage Day	27
28 National French Toast Day	29	30 Stay Home Because You're Well Day	National Family Caregivers Month	November is...		National Epilepsy Awareness Month
				National Diabetes Month	National Healthy Skin Month	