

# WV-BTT-RAU<sub>2</sub>

## NEWSLETTER

# 2019-20

*Winter Edition.*

Hello! Happy Holidays, everyone!! I began in the position of Parent Partner for Region Two, the last week of June. While I have acclimated to many of the responsibilities of this position, I am still learning and familiarizing myself with the program and with the resources and happenings that our communities within our 8 counties have to offer.

As the parent of a child with multiple developmental delays who was able to improve and catch up due to early intervention from WV BTT, I am able to understand the program from a parent's perspective. I am able to relate to your concerns and questions along the way—from referral through transitioning to the school system at three years old. I am always available to provide support, answer questions, and offer resources. I am also willing to help you make connections to others who will come along side you and your family. You can contact me to simply listen and talk through these things with you during this time.

What's Our Birth To Three Story? I would love to share it with you, and more than that...I would love to hear yours? Contact me and let's join together in this crazy life, doing this happy but difficult parenting thing! I am looking forward to meeting and speaking with you soon! Thank You!

Amber D. Skidmore, Parent Partner

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### Happily Serving—

*Calhoun, Doddridge,  
Gilmer, Harrison, Pleasants,  
Ritchie, Wirt and Wood  
Counties.*

### What's in This Newsletter

### & Also, Where to Find It:

Parent Partner Letter.....	pg. 1
Featured Family .....	pg. 2
For Fun: December's "Celebrate Every Day" Calendar.....	pg. 3
Social/Emotional Article: "Toddlers Want to Help and We Should Let Them".....	pg. 4
For Fun: January's "Celebrate Every Day" Calendar.....	pg. 5
Festive Sensory Bin Ideas.....	pg.6
For Fun: February's "Celebrate Every Day" Calendar.....	pg.7
Cover Page.....	pg. 8



Skidmore Christmas Tree 2018.  
I am way behind this year...

## Family Feature From This Edition's Featured Family.

**SETH'S STORY** was shared back in late summer/early fall and we are thrilled to share it now with permission, to you. Thank you Lillian 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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My youngest son Seth was born with Pierre Robin Sequence and a cleft palate. In his first year he had two mandibular distraction surgeries and a cleft palate repair. Because of his medical conditions, we knew that he would have difficulties with his language development. When he was 2 years old he was showing a significant delay in speech. My funny, outgoing, playful boy was very frustrated by his inability to communicate and starting to withdraw from social situations. We knew he needed speech therapy, but at the time my husband worked 70+ hours per week and I had our 7 young children all at home. It would have been almost impossible for us to schedule and get him to regular therapy sessions. Our pediatrician recommended WV Birth to Three. Being able to receive services in our home was exactly what we needed! Seth has now been receiving speech therapy through WV Birth to Three for almost one year. He is showing amazing progress in his speech development. In addition to helping with his speech, his speech therapist has also taught him and us some other techniques (such as ASL for some words he struggles with) to help ease

Seth's frustration while he is learning, and his outgoing personality is shining again.

Seth is now three years old. Seth's Birth to Three team was wonderful with the transition process to ensure that he continues to receive the services he needs. We know that Seth has many years of speech therapy ahead of him,

but he has been given a strong foundation on which to build. Without the in-home services WV Birth to Three provided during a critical stage in Seth's development, his frustration with communicating could have led to long-term behavioral and social problems.

Lillian, Former WVBTT—RAU 2 Parent.



# A Fun Calendar, Just Because...

## December 2019

*Very little is  
needed to make  
a happy life*

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Christmas Lights Day  Handwashing Week	2 Cyber Monday	3 Disability Day & Giving Tuesday	4 Cookie Day	5 Ninja Day	6 Miners Day	7 Pearl Harbor Day of Remembrance
8	9 Llama Day	10	11 Mountain Day	12 Gingerbread House Day & Poinsettia Day	13 U.S. National Guard Birthday	14 National Free Shipping Day  (Is this a real thing?)
15 Cupcake Day	16	17 Maple Syrup Day (Make some spa- ghetti and watch Elf)	18 Answer the Telephone like Buddy the Elf Day	19	20 Ugly Sweater Day	21 Winter Solstice & Wreathes Across America Day
22 Cookie Exchange Day Hanukkah *begins at sun	23 Festivus	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day & Candy Cane Day	27 Fruitcake Day	28 Call a Friend Day
29 Still Need to Do Day	30 Bacon Day	31 New Years Eve		Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month	Safe Toys and Gifts Month	Universal Human Rights Month

## Toddlers Want to Help and We Should Let Them

We more often think of children as sources of extra work than as sources of help. We often think that trying to get our children to help us at home or elsewhere would be more effort than it would be worth. We also tend to think that the only way to get children to help is to pressure them, through punishment or bribery, which, for good reasons, we may be reluctant to do. We ourselves generally think of work as something that people naturally don't want to do, and we pass that view on to our children, who then pass it on to their children.

*For them, helping is not because they want or expect something from it, they just want to be doing what we are*

But researchers have found strong evidence that very young children innately want to help, and if allowed to do so will continue helping, voluntarily, through the rest of childhood and into adulthood. For them, helping is not because they want or expect something from it, they just want to be doing what we are doing, with us!

We parents tend to make two mistakes regarding our little children's desires to help. First, we brush their offers to help aside, because we are in a rush to get things done and we believe (often correctly) that the toddler's "help" will slow us down or the toddler won't do it right and we'll have to do it over again. Second, if we do actually want help from the child, we offer some sort of deal, some reward, for doing it. In the first case, we present the message to the child that he or she is not capable of helping; and in the second case, we present the message that helping is something a person will do only if they get something in return.

Additional research clearly shows that by beginning to “help” in toddlerhood, children become truly helpful as they grow up. They become a “partner” in the work it takes to be a part of a family. As that partner, they value being a part of caring for their home and their family. Whether they are picking up toys, straightening the living room, or helping to care for family members and pets, the child is validated in their early role of contributing to the quality life of their family.

So, what are some suggestions on how to help your child become a partner with you in taking responsibility for the family work, you should do the following:

Assume it is the family work, and not just your work, which means not only that you are not the only person responsible to get it done but also that you must relinquish some of the control over how it is done. If you want it done exactly your way, you will either have to do it yourself or hire someone to do it.

Assume that your toddler's attempts to help are genuine and that, if you take the time to let the toddler help, with perhaps just a bit of cheerful guidance, he or she will eventually become good at it.

Avoid demanding help, or bargaining for it, or rewarding it, or micromanaging it, as all of that undermines the child's intrinsic motivation to help. A smile of pleasure and a pleasant "thank you" is good. That's what your child wants, just as you want that from your child. Your child is helping in part to reinforce his or her bond with you.

Realize that your child is growing in very positive ways by helping. The helping is good not just for you, but also for your child. He or she acquires valued skills and feelings of personal empowerment, self-worth, and belonging by contributing to the family welfare. At the same time, when allowed to help, the child's inborn altruism is nourished, not quashed.

*Adapted from Psychology Today* [https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/freedom-learn/201809/toddlers-want-help-and-we-should-let-them?](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/freedom-learn/201809/toddlers-want-help-and-we-should-let-them?_r=0)



# JANUARY 2020

THE MORE YOU  
CELEBRATE  
YOUR LIFE,  
THE MORE THERE  
IS IN LIFE TO  
CELEBRATE.

Oprah Winfrey

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
American Heart Month Canned Food Month Snack Food Month	Macadamia Nut Month. & Hot Tea Month	Month Awareness: Bath Safety Blood Donor Month	1  New Year's Day!	2  Science Fiction Day & Buffet Day	3	4  National Spaghetti Day
5  Yum-O!  National Whipped Cream Day	6  Bean Day & Folic Acid Week	7  Bobblehead Day	8  Bubble Bath Day	9  Law Enforcement Appreciation Day	10  Cut Your Energy Costs Day.	11  Milk Day  (I'll be having almond milk. ~ Or as my kids call it, "nut juice"
12  Pharmacist Day	13  Rubber Ducky Day & Sticker Day	14  Dress Up Your Pet Day	15  Bagel Day	16  Fig Newton Day	17	18  Winnie The Pooh Day
19  Popcorn Day	20  Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	21  Squirrel Appreciation Day	22  Answer Your Cat's Questions Day	23  World Spay Day	24  Compliment Day	25  Opposites Day
26	27  International Holocaust Remembrance Day	28  Kazoo Day & Lego Day	29  Puzzle Day	30  Croissant Day	31  Hot Chocolate Day. & Bubble Gum Day	

### Sensory Play.

I have an exceptional, somewhat unusual fascination with Sensory Bins. Perhaps, some might even say odd. Maybe it's because they weren't around when I was young? Or perhaps, they were but not in this context and not with this label? Who knows? But, they seem like so much fun! Right?! What's not to love? There are lots of textures and feelings, new colors and maybe scents.

Sensory play is important for ALL children at many of their developmental stages, and is even more critical for children who have sensory processing disorder (SPD.)

#### **What is sensory play?**

**Have you ever tried to describe the smell of grass or feel of sand between your toes to your child?**

**Some things can not be taught be words....they require touching, tasting, listening, smelling, and feeling to truly experience. That's what sensory play is all about!**

Sensory play is any activity that stimulates the senses. It is truly 'as simple as that.' Touch, Taste, Sight, Smell, and Hearing: Stimulating ALL of the senses, help children to develop thinking, language,, social/emotional, and physical skills. In addition to those skills, sensory play is linked greatly to supporting early childhood development. (i.e. listening to new sounds supports language development, and sorting unique materials of soft vs. hard items can support fine-motor skill coordination and cognitive development.)

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/cognitive-development-and-sensory-play>

<https://www.educationalplaycare.com/blog/sensory-play-important-development/>

Sensory bins, bottles and bags allow children to explore, discover, imagine, create and learn while engaging their senses. If you have ever witnessed your child or another child in sensory play, you may have noticed that it captured their attention more that you would have anticipated.

Often, kids who will only play with a toys for a few seconds or minutes will spend ten or more playing in a sensory bin while their parents stand staring, wide eye, mouth open, wondering how in the world their active child is engaged in one activity for such a long time. This is the sensory component at work. Children aren't always able to say when their particular sensory needs aren't being met. They aren't even aware themselves. However when they come across an activity that fills that void. They know instantly that its something that they need to be doing.

### **Benefits :**

**Language Skills** – Children are able to expand their vocabulary and language skills as they describe their play experience.

**Fine Motor Skills** – Fine motor skills are improved by manipulating small objects, dumping and scooping.

**Social Skills** – Social skills are worked on by learning about sharing, playing and communicating with others while engaged in their sensory play.

**Science and Math Skills** – Children are also using skills useful for science and math in measuring, guesstimating and learning about cause and effect while manipulating sensory materials.

**Meeting sensory needs.**

*Happy Sensory Play!*

*Happy Holidays!*

*Happy Winter!!*

*Amber D. Skidmore,*

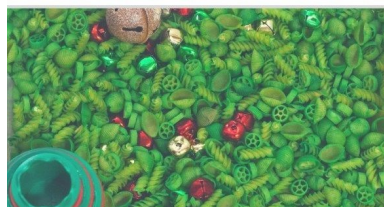
*Parent Partner*

*RAU2*



*Jingle Bell  
sensory bin  
+ activity ideas*

[rollingprairiereaders.com](http://rollingprairiereaders.com)



Please Share Your Sensory Play ideas with us,

Email them to me at—

[amber.skidmore@thearcmov.org](mailto:amber.skidmore@thearcmov.org)

And I'll be sure to add them in our spring newsletter. Thank you!

February might be the shortest month of the year, but it's chock-full of beloved national holidays from Groundhog Day (February 2) to Valentines Day (February 14). Check out these fun ways to enjoy and celebrate every single day! Don't forget to share how your family enjoys these special days—on social media or by email to add in the next newsletter.

## February 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>Black History Month.</i> <i>Dog Training Ed. Month</i> <i>Responsible Pet Owners Month</i>	<i>Bake for Family Fun Month</i> & <i>Bird Feeding Month</i>	<i>Hot Breakfast Month</i>  <i>Children's Dental Health</i>				1 <i>Tater Tot Day</i>
2 <i>Ground Hog Day</i>	3 <i>Wear Red Day</i>	4 <i>Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day</i>	5 <i>Chinese New Year!</i>	6 <i>Signing Day &amp; Safer Internet Day</i>	7 <i>Send a Card to a friend Day</i>	8 <i>(Not sure I want to celebrate this one...)</i> <i>Toothache Day</i>
9 <i>Pizza Day</i>	10 <i>Umbrella Day</i>	11 <i>Abraham Lincoln's Birthday</i>	12 <i>Plum Pudding Day</i>	13 <i>Donor Day</i>	14 <i>Valentine's Day!</i>	15 <i>Singles Awareness Day</i>
16 <i>Almond Day</i>	17 <i>Presidents Day &amp; Random Act of Kindness Day</i>	18	19 <i>Tug of War Day</i>	20 <i>Muffin Day</i>	21 <i>Sticky Bun Day</i>	22 <i>Walking the Dog Day</i>
23 <i>International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day</i>	24 <i>Tortilla Chip Day</i>	25 <i>Clam Chowder Day</i>	26 <i>Pok'e mon Day.</i>	27 <i>International Polar Bear Day</i>	28 <i>Chili Day</i>	29 <i>Leap Year!!</i>



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BTTH  
Winter Bits  
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