

Making Connections



A Newsletter of WV Birth To Three Region 6

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Spring 2008

My Story

Life After WV Birth to Three

My son Travis graduated from WV Birth to Three in March of 2003. Travis is paraplegic and uses a chair. He is now in the second grade. The hardest part for me was participating in the eligibility and IEP (Individual Education Plan) meetings after the initial transition meeting with my WV Birth to Three Service Coordinator and practitioners who provided additional support.

It was very hard to get the IEP team members to listen to me at these meetings. I had a lot of very stressful meetings and an even harder time getting services, assistive technology and accommodations to meet his needs. It was difficult to make sure the IEP was actually being implemented. It has been a long, hard five years, but I feel that I am beginning to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

The best thing that I did was to attend the WV Developmental Disabilities Councils, Partners in Policymaking Training. This training gave me a better understanding of the history of disability and where we are today. It empowered me to help make a difference in the future. The best outcome was to take the anger and turn it into positive energy to make things happen.

I feel the most important thing is to be knowledgeable about your and your child's rights. I now spend a lot of time reading federal regulations, state policy, and county policy. I want to know of any changes that may affect my child. There are several organizations out there that are very helpful. (West Virginia Parent Training Institute; WVPTI, West Virginia Advocates; WVA, Legal Aid of West Virginia). I have used these resources and found them to be very helpful.

Do's

- Be positive
- Know yours and your child's rights.
- Familiarize yourself with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Policy 2419.
- Make notes of what is important that they know about your child.
- Make a list of questions that you have concerning your child's needs.
- Keep copies of everything pertaining to your child's IEP process.
- Always document, any discussions that you have with the school system concerning your child's IEP and services.

Don'ts

- Don't assume that school personnel know what is right for your child.
- Don't allow an IEP to be completed without your input.
- Never sign an already completed IEP.

THEN



Note: If you have questions, or you just need someone to talk to about concerns you have about the IEP process or you would like to have resources, please call Gale Cole at: 1-866-229-0461

NOW



Gale's Corner

'Tis the Season for Allergies

Childhood allergies can strike in any season and at anytime.

What Causes Allergies?

The causes of allergies are not fully understood. Children get allergies from coming into contact with allergens. Allergens can be inhaled, eaten, injected (from stings or medicine), or can come in contact with the skin.

When to Suspect an Allergy

Some allergies are easy to identify by the pattern of symptoms that follows exposure to a particular substance. But others are subtler, and may masquerade as other conditions. Here are some common clues that could lead you to suspect your child may have an allergy.

- 🍏 Repeated cold like symptoms that last more than a week or two, or that develop at about the same time every year.
- 🍏 Nose rubbing, sniffing, snorting, sneezing, and itchy runny eyes.
- 🍏 Itching or tingling sensations in the mouth and throat. Itchiness is not usually a complaint with a cold, but is the hallmark of an allergy problem.
- 🍏 Coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, and other respiratory symptoms.

Common Allergens

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 🍏 Dust | 🍏 Latex |
| 🍏 Fungi | 🍏 Bacterial enzymes |
| 🍏 Furry Animals | 🍏 Plants |
| 🍏 Clothing and toys | 🍏 Food |
| 🍏 Medications | 🍏 Insects |

Controlling Allergy Symptoms

- 🍏 Use air conditioning, where possible, to reduce exposure.
- 🍏 Molds are present in spring and late summer.
- 🍏 Dust Mites: Padded furnishings, such as mattresses, box springs, pillows, cushions should be encased in allergen-proof, zip-up covers. Wash linens weekly, and other bedding every 2-3 weeks. Pillows should be replaced every 2-3 years.
- 🍏 If your child, has a latex allergy avoid dandelions and milkweed they both contain latex.

Treatment

Your child's allergy treatment should begin with your pediatrician. Depending on the severity of the symptoms, the pediatrician may refer your child to a pediatric allergy specialist.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

Points of Interest

Summers:

REACHH-FRC, Parents as Teachers, and Starting Points play-groups now being held weekly every Tuesday 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. at 411 Temple St. 304-466-2226

Three Rivers Avian Center, beginning in May the first Saturday of the Month will offer free tours . For more Information call: 304-466-4005

Monroe:

Monroe County Kiddie Fair/Kindergarten Registration, will be held April 8th though April 11th at the Lindsie Methodist Church. For more information call: 304-772-3284

Nicholas:

Richwood Ramp Festival, April 19th and 20th. For more information contact: Vikki Mayse at 304-846-6790

Webster:

Webster County Pre-K Event April 29th at the high school 4:30 to 7:00. For more information call Vicki Hamrick at 304-847-5638 Ext: 1090

Webster County Wood Chopping Festival, May 24th though 27th . More information contact : John Reed at 304-487-7666

Braxton:

WV Timber and Wood Show
May 11th and 12th

For more information contact: Dick Waybright at :
304-372-1955

Greenbrier:

Second Annual Lewisburg Chocolate Festival
April 11th and 12th. For more information: www.lewisburgchocolatefestival.com.

6th Annual WV Kennel Club Dog Show
WV State Fairgrounds; April 25th-27th. For more information call: 304-497-2369

Mackenzie's Closet Opens, St. James' Episcopal Church, Lewisburg, March 8, 2008. More information call: Melanie, 647-3636 or Trish, 645-2588.

Pocahontas:

Free tours of Green Bank Telescope
Wednesday-Sunday; for more information call: 304-456-2150

**Women Infants Children (WIC)
for A Healthier West Virginia**

Achieves the Goals of Good Health and Nutrition for Families

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a short-term intervention program designed to influence lifetime nutrition and health behaviors in a targeted, high-risk population.

<p>WIC provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Quality nutrition education and services. ◆ Breastfeeding promotion and education. ◆ A monthly food prescription (package). ◆ Access to maternal, prenatal and pediatric health care services. <p>WIC serves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 50,000 participants each month through 57 clinics statewide ◆ 6,400 pregnant women ◆ 1,600 breastfeeding women ◆ 4,000 postpartum women ◆ 12,000 infants ◆ 26,000 children <p>WIC requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Income level has to be less than or equal to 185% of poverty level. ◆ At least one nutrition risk has to be documented. 	<p align="center">Savings Due to Participation by Pregnant Women</p> <p><i>Approximately one third of all pregnant women in West Virginia are in WIC. Numerous studies have shown that pregnant women who participate in WIC have a longer pregnancies leading to fewer premature births; have less low birth-weight babies; experience fewer fetal and infant deaths; seek prenatal care earlier in pregnancy and consume more of such key nutrients as iron, protein, calcium, and vitamins A and C.</i></p> <p align="center">Cost for a Pregnant Woman in WIC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It costs approximately \$850 a year for a pregnant woman to participate in WIC. ◆ Every dollar spent of pregnant women in WIC produces \$1.92 to \$4.21 in Medicaid savings for newborns and their mothers. 	<p align="center">Cost of Low and Very Low Birth-Weight Babies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It costs over \$21,000 per pound to raise a very low birth-weight baby to normal weight. ◆ It costs approximately \$89 per pound to provide WIC prenatal care benefits. ◆ WIC prenatal care benefits reduce the rate of low birth-weight babies by 25% and very low birth-weight babies by 44%. ◆ Medicaid costs were reduced on average between \$12,000 and \$15,000 for every low birth-weight incident prevented.
	<p align="center">Effects of Participation on Infants and Children</p> <p><i>WIC helps to ensure infants' and children's normal growth, reduce levels of anemia, increase immunization rates, improves access to regular health care and improves diets. Children are eligible for WIC up until they reach their fifth birthday. 50% of all infants born in West Virginia are on WIC.</i></p> <p align="center">Health, Weight, Anemia, Cognition and Dietary Intake</p> <p><i>Research has demonstrated that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ WIC infants are in better health than eligible infants not participating in WIC. ◆ WIC children at ages 1 and 2 have less dental related Medicaid costs compared to children who do not participate in WIC. ◆ Children who drop out of WIC are less likely to be immunized compared to children who participate in WIC. ◆ Infants receiving WIC are less likely to be underweight, but are not at greater risk for overweight. ◆ Low-income children not enrolled in the WIC program have a higher prevalence of anemia than those who are enrolled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Four and five-year-olds whose mothers participated in WIC during pregnancy have better vocabulary test scores than children whose mothers had not received WIC benefits. ◆ WIC benefits positively influence the nutrient intakes of children. ◆ Participation in WIC dramatically improve HEI (Healthy Eating Index) scores for the household. <p>We hope that this information will help you understand the critical role WIC plays in building a better future for West Virginia's children. As the nation's premier public health nutrition program, WIC provides the competitive edge that will give our state's future leaders a start in life. Thank You for your support.</p> <p><i>For further information about the WIC Program, contact your local WIC agency or the Office of Nutrition Services at 304-558-0030 or visit www.wvdhhr.org/ons.</i></p> <p><i>Submitted by: Fonda McClung; Local Agency Outreach Coordinator, Summersville Office</i></p>



July 12th—16th, 2008

and apply new strategies for solving their multiple assistive technology needs. (Preference will be given to children who have not previously attended camp. 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.

DO CHILDREN ATTEND?

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Kathy Knighton/Ginger Huffman, WV Dept of ED, 1-800-642-8541 or Pam Roush , WV Birth to Three or wvbtt@wvdhhr.org, 1-800-642-9704 or Alyson Edwards, WVECTCR, 1-888-983-2827 or aedwards@rvcds.org

WHAT IS CAMP GIZMO?

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

WHEN IS CAMP GIZMO?

July 12th-16th, 2008 on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf/Blind in Romney, WV.

WHO SHOULD COME AND WHAT DO WE DO?

Families, professionals, college students, and others who want to learn more about assistive technology. A limited number of “focus” children will be accepted and assigned a team of professionals who help families identify



RAU 6
P.O. Box 1610
Lewisburg, WV 24901



WV Birth to Three services and supports are provided under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and administered through the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health. Regional Administrative Units VI and VII are coordinated by MountainHeart Community Services, Inc.