



Winter

Volume 4, Issue 4

Tidbits



West Virginia Birth to Three RAU-8 Newsletter

Health Benefits to Winter Outdoor Play

When the warmer weather yields to winter, parents may be hesitant to send children outside. However, there are health benefits that accompany outdoor playtime.

Escape From Indoor Germs and Bacteria

It is impossible to shield children completely from all viruses or bacteria that can make them ill, especially in the winter. It is important to get fresh air because all of the bacteria and germs that you bring into the house get recycled over and over again through the air vents. Therefore, the more time you spend inside, the more you are exposed.

Opportunities for Better Exercise

According to the CDC, children should get 60 minutes of exercise every day,

and exercising during the winter can be even more beneficial. Larger muscles are able to get more use when children have to walk through snow, and this helps with gross-motor development. Increased exercise will help promote a better sleep cycle and can lead to children growing stronger and maintaining a healthy body weight.

Promotion of Problem-Solving, Imagination

Winter presents a whole variety of new challenges for children to overcome, both physically and cognitively. Toys and equipment that were once readily available may now be frozen or covered in snow. This forces children to use their imaginations to find alternatives or figure out a way to access their favorite toys.

Thanks to www.acuweather.com



Do you know of a child who is not moving, hearing, seeing, learning or talking like others his age? WV Birth to Three may be able to help. Call (304) 267-3593 or 1-866-681-4957.

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Holidays Present Opportunities to Create Family Traditions

Toddlers may be noticing all the celebration that happens during this time of year, making it the perfect time to start traditions.

Here are some ideas:

- ♥ Take a family portrait
- ♥ Tour the lights in your neighborhood
- ♥ Take friends and the little ones caroling
- ♥ Have a friendly snowball fight or build a snowman together
- ♥ Make snowflakes and tape them to the window
- ♥ Take a holiday walk. Bundle up and get outside!
- ♥ Display the holiday cards
- ♥ Make or purchase a countdown calendar
- ♥ Celebrate the winter solstice with a bonfire or by lighting candles



Measuring Social Emotional Development

Social and emotional milestones are often harder to pinpoint than signs of physical development. This area emphasizes many skills that increase self-awareness and self-regulation. Research shows that social skills and emotional development (reflected in the ability to pay attention, make transitions from one activity to another, and cooperate with others) are a very important part of school readiness.

Age

Milestones

Birth to Three Months

Babies spend a lot of time getting to know their own bodies. They:

- Suck their own fingers
- Observe their own hands
- Look at the place on the body that is being touched
- Begin to realize she is a separate person from others and learn how body parts, like arms and legs, are attached

Infants are interested in other people and learn to recognize primary caregivers. Most infants:

- Can be comforted by a familiar adult
- Respond positively to touch
- Interact best when in an alert state or in an inactive and attentive state
- Benefit from short, frequent interactions more than long, infrequent ones
- Smile and show pleasure in response to social stimulation

Three Months to Six Months

Babies are more likely to initiate social interaction. They begin to:

- Play peek-a-boo
- Pay attention to own name
- Smile spontaneously
- Laugh aloud

Six Months to Nine Months

Babies show a wider emotional range and stronger preferences for familiar people. Most can:

- Express several clearly differentiated emotions
- Distinguish friends from strangers
- Respond actively to language and gestures
- Show displeasure at the loss of a toy



AgeMilestones**Nine Months To Twelve Months**

As they near age one, imitation and self-regulation gain importance. Most babies can:

- Feed themselves finger foods
- Hold a cup with two hands and drink with assistance
- Hold out arms and legs while being dressed
- Mimic simple actions
- Show anxiety when separated from primary caregiver

One Year to Two Years

Children become more aware of themselves and their ability to make things happen. They express a wider range of emotions and are more likely to initiate interaction with other people. At this stage, most children can:

- Recognize themselves in pictures or the mirror and smile or make faces at themselves
- Show intense feelings for parents and show affection for other familiar people
- Play by themselves and initiate their own play
- Express negative feelings
- Show pride and pleasure at new accomplishments
- Imitate adult behaviors in play
- Show a strong sense of self through assertiveness, directing others
- Begin to be helpful, such as by helping to put things away

**Two Years To Three Years**

Children begin to experience themselves as more powerful, creative "doers." They explore everything, show a stronger sense of self and expand their range of self-help skills. Self-regulation is a big challenge. Two-year-olds are likely to:

- Show awareness of gender identity
- Indicate toileting needs
- Help to dress and undress themselves
- Be assertive about their preferences and say no to adult requests
- Begin self-evaluation and develop notions of themselves as good, bad, attractive, etc.
- Show awareness of their own feelings and those of others, and talk about feelings
- Experience rapid mood shifts and show increased fearfulness (for example, fear of the dark, or certain objects)
- Display aggressive feelings and behaviors

Children enjoy parallel play, engaging in solitary activities near other children. They are likely to:

- Watch other children and briefly join in play
- Defend their possessions
- Begin to play house
- Use objects symbolically in play
- Participate in simple group activities, such as singing clapping or dancing
- Know gender identity



From Feelings to Friendships



The bond between a parent and child builds the child's ability to form relationships with others, express emotions, and face difficult challenges. When adults are caring and show affection, young children thrive as they feel safe and protected. This is when children can explore their world, develop empathy, and understand the difference between right and wrong with the self-confidence that originates from nurturing early relationships.

What can you do as a parent to develop this strong bond with your child?

Show You Care

- ♥ Comfort her when she is upset
- ♥ Sing and talk to him when he is in your arms

Observe Your Baby

- ♥ What does he like and dislike
- ♥ What calms her

Establish a Routine

- ♥ Bed time routine that might start with dinner, followed by reading a book, singing a song, and then being tucked into bed.
- ♥ Talk him through routines so he knows what is coming. "Let's get your shoes so we can go outside."

Help Your Child Develop Self-Confidence

- ♥ Allow him to express his feelings
- ♥ Allow her to solve problems with your help, instead of solving problems for her!

Adapted from Zero to Three, 2016. *Magic of everyday moments: From feelings to friendships*. Retrieved from <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/30-from-feelings-to-friendships-nurturing-healthy-social-emotional-development-in-the-early-years>.



Dress Your Toddler for Winter Play

Keeping a baby warm in winter is comparatively easy when you can cover a baby carrier or car seat with a nice blanket or coat. Toddlers still need to explore and test their independence when the cold weather arrives. Parents can make it easy for them to stay warm but not stifle their desire to explore and play.

Connect mittens to coats. My mother just knitted a long string between my two mittens, but we have quicker solutions now. Mitten clips make it easy to keep track of toddlers' mittens.

Choose two-piece snowsuits to make diaper changes easier. A toddler has places to go and less patience for a diaper change. Set the stage for the quickest change possible.

Cover your toddler's legs. Tights can cover your baby's legs, but they also add time to diaper changes. Baby stockings don't go up as far as the diaper, so add warmth without adding pit stops.



Make sure beginning walkers have good traction on their footwear. This is the case for indoor shoes or heavier, outdoor boots.

Have a handkerchief ready to wipe noses.

Toddlers don't seem to care so much if their noses run, and, left unwiped, this can lead to freezing, chapped patches on the face. Worse, they will lick at the running nose and add chapped lips to the mix. Chase, wipe, repeat.

Put a sunscreen stick in your pocket to cover exposed nose, ears, or backs of hands. A sunscreen stick is quick and very easy to apply. While you have your hand in your pocket, reapply lip balm and wipe noses.

Keep a change of socks in the diaper bag. After sledding or playing in the snow, your toddler may have cold, wet feet. A nice, dry pair of socks can go a long way toward comforting a cold child.

Thanks to www.ecobabysteps.com

I'm a Great Big Snowman

to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot"



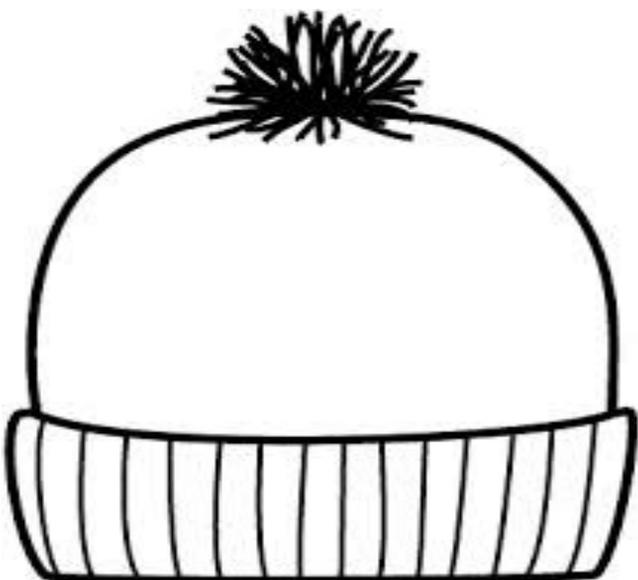
I'm a great big snowman,
Tall and fat.
Here's my tummy.
Here's my hat.
Raisins for my eyes,
And a carrot nose,
I'm all snow from head to toe!



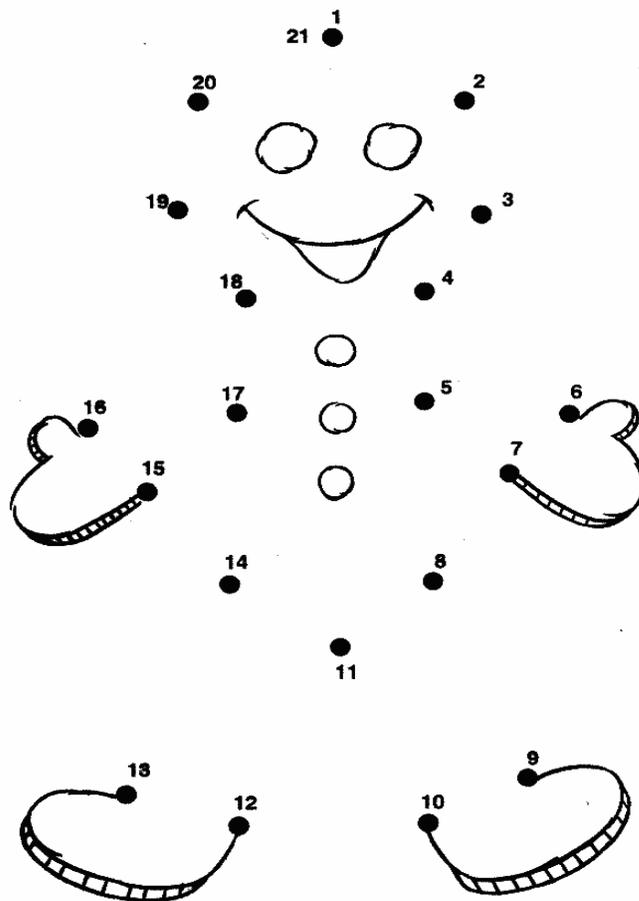
Snow Ice Cream is Easy as Pie!

Mix 1 cup of milk, 1/3 cup sugar, 1 tsp vanilla and a dash of salt together in a large bowl. Add 8 cups of Freshly Fallen Snow. Stir & serve!

What Color is Your Hat?



Connect the Dots to See a Tasty Treat!



Healthy Holiday Snack Ideas



Why Sensory Play is Important for Toddlers

Children are wired to receive and utilize sensory input from day one.

This is why children will dive in hands first, exploring a new substance. The senses are their most familiar, most basic way to explore, process, and come to understand new information.

Just as children learn through their senses, they also are developing the ability to use those senses, and they are building the neurological pathways. With added sensory experiences, children become more perceptive. Their sensory intake and processing becomes more acute.

Sensory play is really part of the scientific process.

Children investigate by grabbing, smelling, listening, rubbing, staring, licking, what have you! They are using their senses to collect data and from that, attempt to answer their own questions.

A sensory table (or bin) is usually the first place people think of for sensory play. That's logical, as the term "sensory" is shared by both. The sensory table certainly stands as an open invitation for hands-on exploration, but it is not the only place where the senses come into play.

Throughout a child's day, there are appeals being made to the five senses. The sound of toppling towers in the block area, the feel of finger-paint sliding under their fingertips, the glow of a Light Brite, the smell of play dough. The more parents and preschool teachers can attend to the sensory involvement of our planned activities, the more our children will be engaged and the more they will learn.



For example, when discussing the need for warm clothes in the wintertime, we can simply tell children about it, or we can have them hold ice cubes, one in a bare hand, and one in a gloved hand, let them really feel the difference and then meaningfully attach a verbal discussion to the sensory experience.

Sensory play builds language, social and dramatic play skills as children negotiate with one another to share tools, create stories, and build dialogues. Both small and large motor skills get a boost as well as children manipulate the medium and tools of the day.

Opportunity for Success

Sensory play provides an opportunity for every child to succeed. If you are gifted or delayed, learning a new language or mastering your first, you can't really fail with a bin full of beans or a ball of play dough. Children who struggle to succeed or anxious about failure often find solace in sensory play.

The simple act of pouring water or running fingers through rice is often cathartic and calming to many children who may be struggling emotionally. It can soothe the nervous child, distract the homesick child, and serve as an outlet for the angry child.

Find ways to optimize sensory play for your children. It's a natural and satisfying way to explore and learn!

Thanks to www.notjustcute.com

Put together your own sensory play bins with a little imagination! Here are some easy ones to start:

- ♥ Rice & Dry Beans
- ♥ Dried Pasta
- ♥ Shaving Cream
- ♥ Water & Cotton Balls
- ♥ Cornstarch & Water

Find more great ideas at www.funathomewithkids.com

Is This a Cold or Something More Serious?

"Colds" are caused by viruses and are often called upper respiratory infections (URI's) because they infect the nose, ears, and throat but not the lungs. If your toddler has a cold, she may have a runny nose with mucus that starts out clear but can turn thick and gray, yellow, or green over seven to ten days. She may also have a headache, sore throat, or cough.

Your child may also run a fever with a cold and with some minor viruses. With a cold it's likely to be a low-grade fever. With a minor virus it can even climb to 103 degrees Fahrenheit.

If your toddler has a fever with her cold, you'll notice that when the fever comes down she'll act much less sick than she will if something more serious is going on. On the other hand, if your child is dealing with something more serious than a cold (like pneumonia, an ear infection, or influenza) she won't improve very much when her temperature goes down.

It's appropriate for your child to be irritable or sleepy when her temperature rises to 103 degrees, but it's



not appropriate for her to act that way when her temperature drops toward normal. Serious infections usually have specific symptoms. She may feel more comfortable when the temperature comes down, but the infection is still present, so she'll still have body aches or an earache, or it will still hurt to breathe or move her head or neck, depending on the infection.

More serious illnesses are usually caused by bacteria (and some viruses) and are less likely to get better without medication, although some do get better. For example, many ear infections can get better without antibiotics, and the symptoms of strep throat also sometimes go away without

treatment. But your child should be seen by a doctor if you're worried about an ear infection or strep throat.

If you've decided that your toddler has a cold, but her congestion lasts more than two weeks or she develops new symptoms, especially a new fever or irritability, it may mean that she has a new viral illness or bacterial infection, like an ear infection, sinusitis, or pneumonia. If so, it's time to have her checked out by the doctor.

[Thanks to www.babycenter.com](http://www.babycenter.com)



Friday, Nov. 24 - Dec. 23 : Christmas in Shepherdstown, parade Dec. 2, 11:00 a.m.

Saturday, Nov. 24, 7:00 p.m. Charles Town Christmas tree lighting, parade
Dec. 2, 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 2: Christmas Parade, Martinsburg, 5:45 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 1 - 10: 47th Annual Harpers Ferry/Bolivar Olde Tyme Christmas

Friday, Dec. 2: Olde Town Hedgesville Christmas 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 2: Santa Claus at Capon Bridge Community Center, 10:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 8 - 10: Old Time Christmas Weekend, Petersburg, WV

Saturday, Dec 15 - 16: Potomac Eagle Christmas Train, Romney. (304) 822-7221

Saturday, Dec. 8-9: Snowflake Express Train Ride with Santa, Southside Depot, Petersburg
southsidedepot.com, (304) 257-9266

Saturday, Dec. 20: Christmas Festival of Lights, Hampshire County Parks & Recreation





No Slowing Down: Thad's Family Takes Him to the Races



WV Birth to Three graduate, Thaddeus, is now six and a half. His family participated in early intervention services in three states, lastly with West Virginia Birth to Three. His mother, Rebekah, says it was the best experience because their occupational therapist clued them in to the significance of cortical visual impairment (CVI). That led to great experiences with vision services offered through the WV School for the Deaf and Blind. In addition, his OT connected the family with Horses With Hearts, which they enjoyed for three years.

Thaddeus's family has always enjoyed the outdoors. "The most natural form of getting out – going for a walk – is not difficult, but the second most natural form – going for a hike – is impossible with Thad," Rebekah explained. He does miss out on the woodland trail experience, but "his whole face changes when he's outside," and that's what motivates the family. "We strike hard at what it appears he does enjoy," she said.



Jacob, signed them up to join the Harpers Ferry Half Marathon (he had not run this distance before, with or without Thaddeus). The race opened Jacob's eyes to a whole new way of living life with Thaddeus, and they have since raced in the West Virginia Freedom's Run marathon and 10K events, the Publix Atlanta half marathon, a second Harpers Ferry Half Marathon, plus a Harpers Ferry 5K to support Ability Experience and local push teams.

Rebekah says that perhaps the most pervasive effect of special needs is separation, because families split up to accommodate either the child or the places that aren't ready for the child. "Jogging is something that brings us together," Rebekah says. Thad even did some of his big sister, Meg's, cross country team loops. "It's worth it because of the happy look he gets when he's outside and moving."



The family used birthday money to get an ironman jogging stroller, and at the last minute, his father,

Running has become a lifestyle for Jacob and Thad. Rebekah urges families to think about what is accessible and what they already enjoy doing. "Running has the advantage of giving a wheelchair-bound child the thrill of going fast," Rebekah says. Families can also try adding features to their yard, like a swing set, an above-ground pool. Rebekah suggests families to consider fundraising if they find equipment expensive. "You may be surprised how successful fundraising can be."

Jacob and Rebekah say the delight a child has in going for a run might be enough to make running or jogging a new lifestyle even if you have never given it a try before.

