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WEST VIRGINIA BIRTH TO THREE PROGRAM CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF CONNECTIONS

The West Virginia Birth to Three Program is celebrating 20 years of supporting young children and their families. Professionals statewide provide services for families of infants and toddlers who need extra help with their early development.

The WV Department of Health and Human Resources Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health along with the WV Early Intervention Interagency Coordinating Council began work in the late 80's to develop the WV Birth to Three System in line with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The program covers the 55 counties of West Virginia, providing services to all eligible infants and toddlers with developmental delays and has received the highest rating possible from the U.S. Department of Education.

The first three years of life are a critical time for development – and even more so for children who may be facing some challenges. Providing developmental support as early as possible helps to maximize a child's lifelong potential.

For the 20th anniversary celebration, West Virginia Birth To Three Program is requesting stories, videos, and pictures from families of children who have been in the program over the last 20 years. These stories and pictures will be used for a celebration slideshow and presentation. A special phone number,

(304) 278-4B23 (4223), has been set up for families to call and leave a message or share their story. They can also share their stories through the West Virginia Birth To Three Website at <http://www.wvdhhr.org/birth23/>

A special 20th anniversary reception and presentation regarding the WVBTT Program is scheduled to occur during the Celebrating Connections Conference at the Charleston Civic Center, February 22, 2010 at 5:00 pm. Past and current members of the Birth To Three Program will be present and available for interview.