



Connecting the Dots

Birth to Three RAU-1 Newsletter • Summer 2020 Edition

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Parent Partner Corner

Hello! I'm Jade Jeffers, the RAU-1 Parent Partner.

As the parent of a child with developmental delays who saw significant improvement because of WV Birth to Three, I understand our program from a parent's point of view. I can relate to your concerns and questions every step of the way, from the moment your child is referred to our program through turning three years old and transitioning to the school system. I'm always available to provide support, answer questions, connect you with resources, or simply talk.

- Support! I'm always available to listen to your concerns or link you to families who are experiencing a similar situation.
- Resources! Do you need resources for medical, financial, or community support? Ask me!
- Fun! Follow us on Facebook and ask me about events in your area that you may be interested in!
- Car seats! Do you need assistance installing a car seat or would you like to have your car seat checked? I'm a certified Child Passenger safety Technician.

Please feel free to contact me at **(304) 214-5755**.



TODDLER Summer Bucket List

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bake Cookies | <input type="checkbox"/> Play dress up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a dance party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant flowers | <input type="checkbox"/> Make Popsicles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fly a kite | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a glow stick bath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit the Zoo | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a bird feeder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a hike | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the Park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play in the sprinklers | <input type="checkbox"/> Build a fort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Send Art to family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Put on a Play | <input type="checkbox"/> Play with Shaving Cream |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go for a Picnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a Movie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit a Splash Pad | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit an Ice Cream Shop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make a Birdfeeder | <input type="checkbox"/> Paint Rocks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blow Bubbles | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a splash party in a pool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go On a Treasure Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Look at the stars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play in the Rain | <input type="checkbox"/> Make Mud Pies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make Sidewalk Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Make an Obstacle Course |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go on a Nature Scavenger Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch fireworks |

LITTLE LEARNING CLUB

[pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Follow Us on Facebook

Are you interested in new resources, program updates, upcoming activities or local events for families? Like **Catholic Charities West Virginia Birth to Three RAU-1** on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/Catholic-Charities-West-Virginia-Birth-to-Three-RAU-1>



Santa's Silent Night

On a bright and chilly Saturday in December, sixty-one families who receive services through Birth to Three and Easter Seals participated in our second annual Santa's Silent Night. Santa's Silent Night is a Sensitive Santa event that is tailored to meet the needs of children who have special needs and developmental delays. Our team of elves worked hard throughout the year to find ways to limit or eliminate many of the factors that make visiting a traditional Santa Claus impossible – large crowds, long wait times, bright lights, loud music, overwhelming decorations, and accessibility issues. In the week before Santa's arrival, the ballroom at our Regional Administrative Unit in Wheeling was transformed into a winter forest, full of friendly (stuffed) animals, beautiful (fake) snow, and tall (artificial) trees.

When a family arrived, they were greeted in our registration area and then escorted upstairs by an elf to meet Santa – no waiting in line! After having their picture taken, every child received a hand-picked, sensory friendly toy.



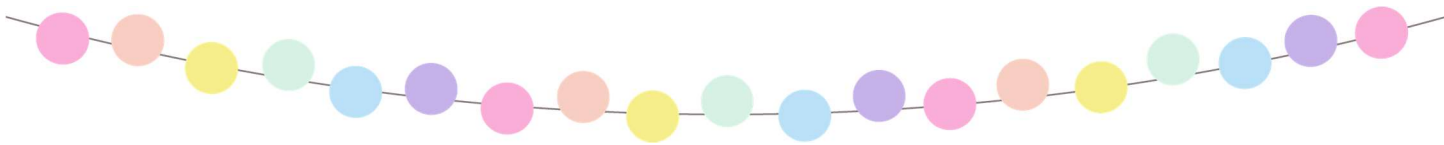
After meeting Santa, families had the opportunity to enjoy our gross motor play area, a new addition that many families who attended last year requested. Our play area had several fun activities for children to participate in, including many stuffed animals to pet, felt Christmas trees to decorate, water tiles, reindeer to feed, playhouses, blocks to stack, and obstacles to enjoy. Mrs. Claus was on hand to read Christmas stories to the children when they were done playing. After story time with Mrs. Claus, families enjoyed pizza, cookies, and drinks in our refreshment room.

All of the volunteers at our event – including all of Santa's elves and Santa himself – were trained by Birth to Three staff on the best way to work with each individual child so that the visit was enjoyable as possible. Two members of our Birth to Three staff were trained by a professional Santa Claus from Santa America, who is the official Santa Claus for the Kansas City Autism Society.

Save the Date!

Our third annual Santa's Silent Night will be held on **Saturday, December 5th, 2020**. We will begin sending out information on how to reserve your family's spot in September.

All activities require adult supervision and participation. Please be aware of allergies and small parts.



Best Toys for Babies and Toddlers

As parents, you are always thinking about how to choose toys that will spark your child’s imagination and stand the test of time.

Children explore the world through play, figuring out how things work and how people think, feel, and act in different situations. Play also provides lots of practice in using language, telling stories, and solving problems. Here’s how to choose toys that that will spark your little one’s imagination and stand the test of time.

What about electronic toys? Don’t be fooled by claims that fancy toys will make your baby smarter. There is no research that shows that adding lights and sound boosts a child’s brain power. Remember: the more the toy is doing, the less your child is learning. **So, what toys should you consider?**

Babies birth to 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensory-rich toys like mobiles, rattles, and teethingers. • Pop-up toys (like baby-friendly jack-in-the-boxes) and busy boxes. • Early pretend play toys like baby-safe rolling vehicles and dolls. • Simple musical instruments (like maracas, drums, or xylophones). • Board books like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Please Mr. Panda</i> (by Steve Antony), • <i>Black Bird, Yellow Sun</i> (by Steve Light), • <i>Wheels on the Bus</i> (by Paul O. Zelinsky), or • <i>Peek-a-Who</i> (by Elsa Mroziewicz).
Babies 9 months to Toddlers 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toys that imitate real life, such as toy tools, play food, and animal figurines. • Problem-solving toys, such as stacking cups, stacking rings, and simple puzzles with knobs. • Push and pull toys and balls that encourage active toddlers to move. • Great stories like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pete the Cat</i> (by James Dean and illustrated by Eric Litwin), • <i>A Good Day for a Hat</i> (by T. Nat Fuller and illustrated by Nate Hodgson), • <i>Here George</i> (by Sandra Boynton and illustrated by George Booth), or • <i>Hello Hello</i> (by Brendan Wenzel).
Toddlers 18 to 36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art materials like play dough, crayons, washable markers, and child-safe finger paints. • Pretend play props like dress-up clothes, kitchen items, doctor’s kit, telephone, toy figurines, toy vehicles/tools, dolls, and stuffed animals. • Problem-solving toys like puzzles with knobs, shape-sorters, and different types of blocks (foam blocks, wooden blocks, chunky interlocking plastic blocks) • Active play toys like balls or toddler-friendly bowling sets. • Fun books like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!</i> (by Mo Willems), • <i>Escargot</i> (by Dashka Slater), • <i>From Head to Toe</i> (by Eric Carle), or • <i>When’s My Birthday</i> (by Julie Fogliano and illustrated by: Christian Robinson).

Your presence is the best present you can give your child. Birthdays and holidays are a time to build traditions and make memories. Be sure to make time to slow down and “just be” during these special times. You are your little one’s favorite toy and your attention is everything. Make time for special traditions, as well as everyday moments to play and connect.

Adapted from: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2985-best-toys-for-babies-toddlers?fbclid=IwAR0YBZwu5NjtChjS4YPJQLT3ncaJqG2VUBIrL-zWRj71ii5Dwy7fstJaqbQ>

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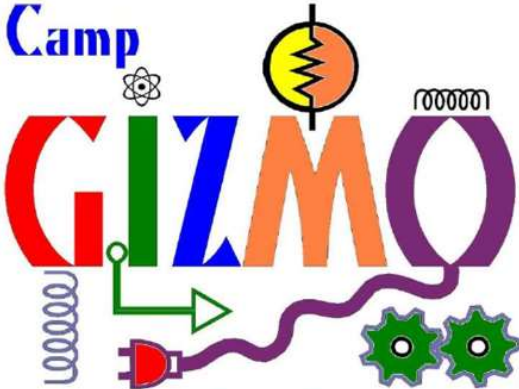
Camp Gizmo 2020

What is Camp Gizmo? It's a five day, hands-on camp where parents, professionals, and students learn how assistive technology can help you children (birth to eight years old) with significant and multiple developmental needs.

When & Where is Camp Gizmo? Camp will be held from July 11th to July 15th, 2020 on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the 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 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 students attend workshops that meet professional/educational needs or assist the "focus" family. Teams 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 Camp Gizmo with 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.



July 11th – 15th 2020

We will begin accepting applications for our 2020 camp in January.

For more information or to obtain an application, please visit http://www.wvearlychildhood.org/Camp_Gizmo.html

**Is your child moving, hearing, seeing, learning and talking like other children their age?
If you have any questions, please give us a call!**

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Suite 1103
Morgantown, WV 26508
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New Martinsville Office
1236 N. State Route 2
New Martinsville, WV 26155
(304) 455-0920, ext. 251

West Virginia Birth to Three Region 1 RAU is a program of Catholic Charities WV. West Virginia Birth to Three services and supports are provided under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is administered through the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health.

1-800-619-5697 • www.wvdhhr.org/birth23



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