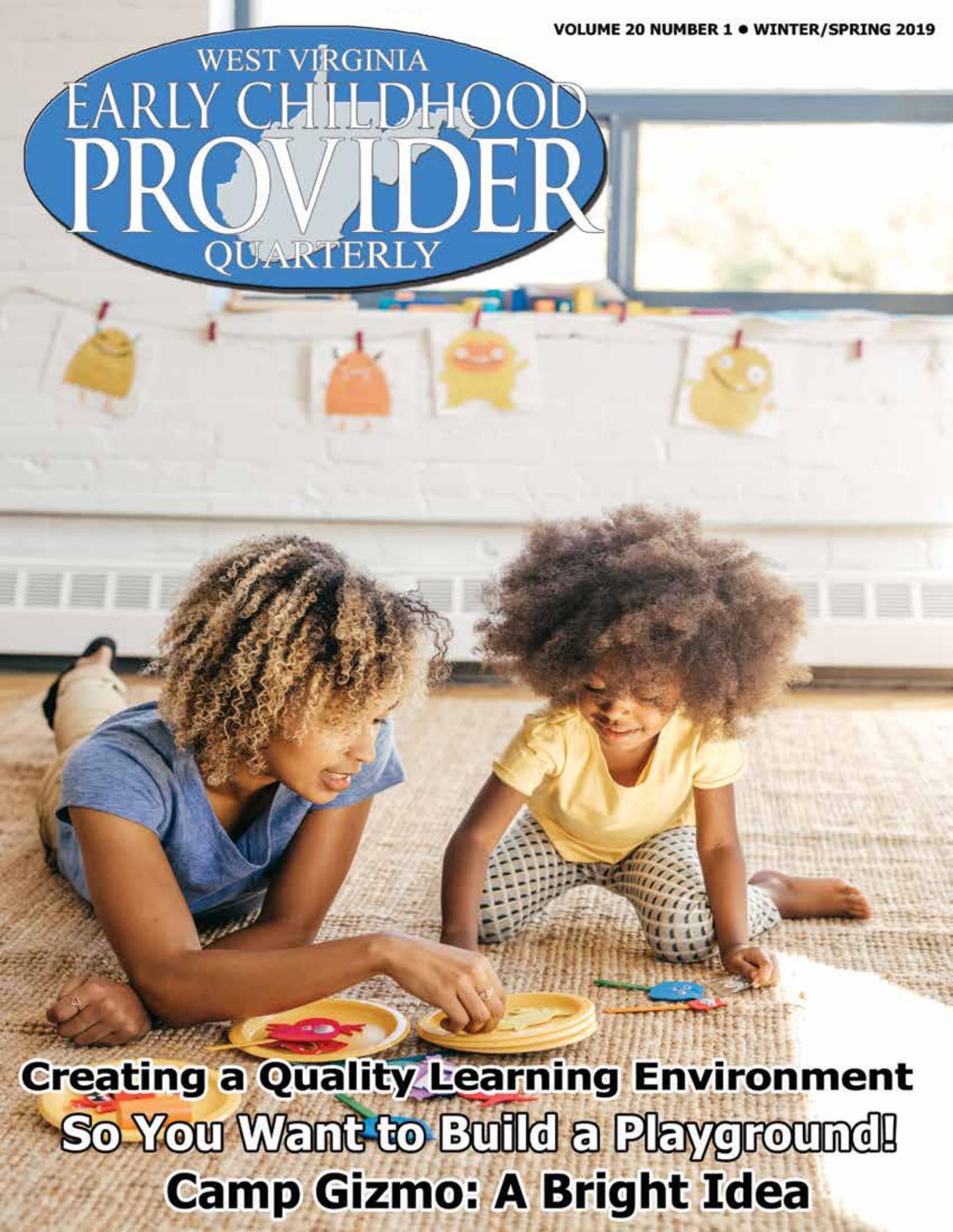


WEST VIRGINIA  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
PROVIDER  
QUARTERLY



**Creating a Quality Learning Environment  
So You Want to Build a Playground!  
Camp Gizmo: A Bright Idea**

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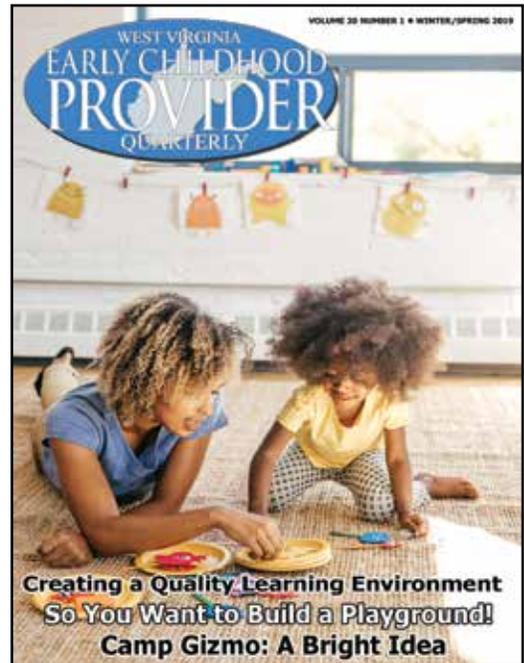
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# Camp Gizmo: What a Bright Idea!

Submitted by Ginger Huffman, Coordinator, Office of Early and Elementary Learning

Camp Gizmo is a unique summer event to promote inclusion for young children with disabilities through the use of assistive technology. The camp is for families of children with disabilities from birth to eight years old. Professionals, families, and college students come together from across West Virginia to learn about assistive technology (AT) and to explore how adaptations, modifications, and assistive technology can support children in fully participating in daily activities and routines in the home, classroom, and community settings.

Each adult attending camp is assigned to a focus child/family team. Team members attend workshops demonstrating the application of different aspects of assistive technology, visit technology labs, and observe children using assistive technology in camp activities. At the end of the week, each family leaves with an action plan of ideas, strategies, and resources to share with their educational team back home.

During camp, teams of professionals help each family identify tools and strategies to meet their assistive technology needs. The child, with their family, attends a variety of labs and sessions to focus on his or her specific needs. Camp Gizmo labs include computer and switch access, mobility, speech/language communication, sensory, make and take, feeding and swallowing, self-care/hand



skills, vision and hearing, and a resource library. There are sibling and parent groups for families to meet together to discuss concerns, feelings, and other issues while at camp. The camp also offers a family photography session.

This five-day event is for the entire family. In addition to labs and workshops, camp also offers Kids Camp for all children attending camp. This includes the child with a disability, siblings, and the children of professionals attending camp. Kids Camp is overseen by Camp

Gizmo veterans and provides a variety of educational and recreational activities. The Kids Camp provides a safe, fun camp experience for children with or without disabilities.

Camp Gizmo also provides continuing education and graduate hours for early childhood professionals and has partnerships with West Virginia University, Wheeling Jesuit, and Marshall University. The camp provides an opportunity to teach and provide in-depth training for college students, parents, and early childhood professionals on how assistive technology can aid children with disabilities by working with professional teams. The teams consist of professionals from around the state, graduate students, and returning families. While the camp is helping individual families that are selected for camp, it is also increasing core knowledge, competencies, and awareness of assistive technology for young children.

The camp has been an annual event since July 1995. It has a long history of helping children with disabilities and their families overcome obstacles relating to access, education, and independence. Camp Gizmo staff have the knowledge to help families navigate early childhood and education systems.

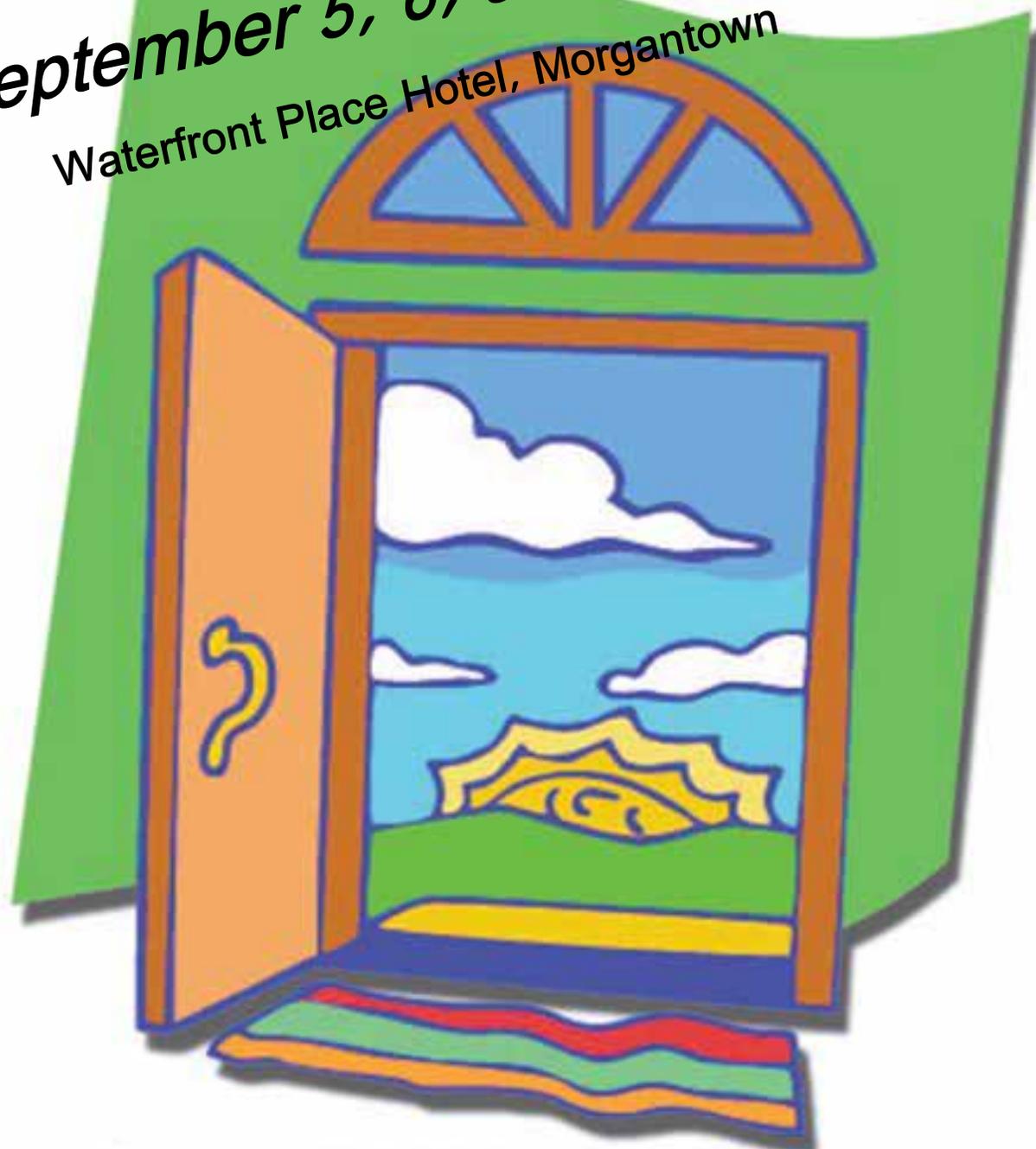
Camp Gizmo is scheduled for July 13-17, 2019, and takes place on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, WV.

To learn more about Camp Gizmo and the application process, visit [wvearly-childhood.org/Camp\\_Gizmo.html](http://wvearly-childhood.org/Camp_Gizmo.html) or call West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources at 304-529-7603 or toll free 1-888-WVECTCR.

Camp Gizmo is funded by the WV Department of Education/Office of Special Education & Early and Elementary Programs, WVDHHR/Bureau for Public Health/Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/WV Birth to Three, and WVDHHR/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education and in-kind support is provided by WVATS, WVU Center of Excellence in Disabilities, National Seating and Mobility, Assistive Technology Works, Inc. Support and coordination provided by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources.



*September 5, 6, and 7, 2019*  
*Waterfront Place Hotel, Morgantown*



**Great Beginnings  
Infant/Toddler  
Conference**

# Creating a Quality Learning Environment

Submitted by Ginger Huffman, Coordinator, Office of Early and Elementary Learning

There are many factors to a child's early learning, including parents, caregivers, and other children. Perhaps the factor with the largest scope is the early learning environment. The learning environment is the mix of spaces and context in which a young child grows and learns. The environment is often referred to as the "third teacher" (after parents and educators) due to its importance in early learning. While the environment can refer to a child's home, the outdoors, or a classroom, we will focus on the preschool as a learning environment.

Environments should be welcoming and interesting. Unfamiliar surroundings and people can provoke a stress response. It is important that the classroom environment helps children feel more comfortable, which aids in their ability to learn. Once a feeling of comfort has been established, there should be a variety of new and interesting areas and features. Some level of uncertainty and novelty generates intellectual arousal and interest.

Different parts of an environment can have different stimulation levels, which have a direct effect on how children play. Large areas encourage movement and use of space, while closed areas with more soft features lend themselves to reading or discovery activities. With this in mind, it's clear that a diverse envi-



ronment creates a variety of experiences and opportunities for a young learner.

An effective learning environment encourages learning through play with a rich set of materials and learning opportunities. An effective environment will also be responsive, containing features that involve all five senses and provoke thinking, open-ended outcomes, and creativity. For example, consider a nature table, an indoor fixture with branches, sticks, leaves, and perhaps some simple dolls or figures. There are textures, smells, things to see, and things to compare and play with in such an environment. A rich mixture of these textures and different objects creates a valuable play experience.

The social nature of the environment

is also important. Does the environment contribute to social interaction between children or does it inhibit it? A preschool room should have more open space, collaborative activities, and stations or areas of interest. Social interaction between children gives them access to different perspectives while playing and gives them the opportunity to learn to interact.

*The Creative Curriculum* outlines the learning environment from three perspectives.

**1. Setting up and maintaining the classroom.** The physical space of *The Creative Curriculum* classroom is organized into 10 interest areas: Blocks, Dramatic Play, Toys and Games, Art, Library, Discovery, Sand and Water, Music

and Movement, Cooking, and Computers—and also Outdoors. Interest areas offer multiple opportunities for children to explore, discover, and grow. In each, the arrangement of furniture and the materials involves children not only in learning, but also in caring for the classroom and what is in it.

**2. Establishing a structure for each day.** The daily routines and schedule create a sense of order in *The Creative Curriculum* classroom. Children know what to expect, and they understand what is expected of them. With the assurance that their environment is predictable and familiar, children can settle into learning and function as part of a group. The order around them creates a sense of order inside them.

**3. Creating a classroom community.** This is the social/emotional environment of *The Creative Curriculum* classroom. Teachers relate to children in positive ways and help them do the same with one another. The positive social climate helps children feel good about school and learn to the best of their abilities.

The learning environment meets children's developmental needs. It makes all children—including those with special needs—feel safe and comfortable and that they belong. As a result, they are helped to become independent and confident learners.

Why is this important? The brain is a complex organ that is constantly physically changing itself. Throughout our

lives, the brain re-wires itself based on experiences and different environments. This is why rich environments in these early stages of development are so important. Not only are children learning new things in new environments, their brains are constantly applying knowledge of past experiences to newer ones! This is why the concept of not using learning spaces that are simply a background for learning, and instead creating responsive environments that generate interactive experiences, is so crucial to early learning.

**Resources:** Natural Pod and the Importance of Learning Environments by Christopher Roy, [www.naturalpod.com](http://www.naturalpod.com)

Trister Dodge, D., Colker, L., and Heroman, C. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. Teaching Strategies, Washington, D.C.



# So You Want to Build a Playground!

Ingrid M. Kanics, OTR/L, FAOTA, Kanics Inclusive Design Services, LLC

Spring is knocking on the door and children are itching to get outside and play. You think, “Wouldn’t it be great to have a fun playground in our neighborhood? Maybe we can get a playground in that little park around the corner or update the playground at our local school.”



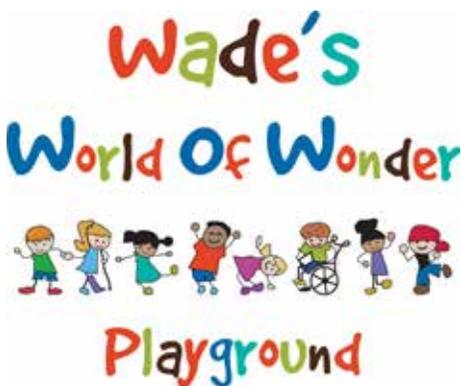
There are many ways to get a playground into your neighborhood to provide families with a great place to play. Here are the steps you need to take to make this happen. Along with these steps, we will provide you an example of what these steps look like by using a playground currently being planned in Kingwood, West Virginia. This playground, Wade’s World of Wonder Playground, also called Wade’s WOW Playground, will be a great place for all to play in the near future.

## Step 1: Develop partnerships

They say it takes a village to raise a child and the same is true for a playground. The process is a whole lot easier if you have lots of partners in the process. Different partners have different roles in making your playground a reality.

**Playground Committee Partners:** These individuals are community members in your community who feel that getting children of all abilities outside to play is important. These could be your neighbors, school members, parents, grandparents, children, business owners, and others who believe in the value of adding a quality play space to your community. The purpose of this group is to identify the need for this playground and define the vision of what this playground will be for the community.

Wade’s WOW Playground committee is a collection of families, educators, and business owners in the Kingwood region who have realized that a park with an inclusive playground would bring a whole new dimension to their community. The playground is a memorial playground remembering Wade Mazza and other children with disabilities in the community who never got the chance to really play because their lives were impacted by a medical condition of one type or another. The vision is that this playground will be a place where all children can play.



**Playground Property Partners:** It is important very early in the process to identify who owns the property where the playground will be placed. This could be a school district, community park organization, the city, or the county in which you live. It is important that the playground committee has a strong partnership with those who own the land and work with them to create a memorandum of understanding as to how the playground will be built and who will own and maintain it once the playground is completed. The property partners will help determine the best location on the property to install a playground, as well as advise you on any preparations that might have to be done to the property to make your playground successful. This partnership can look a variety of different ways depending on local codes and laws.



Wade's WOW Playground committee has worked with assorted community groups and has identified several different property locations for their playground. They have worked with these groups to identify a final location and are now working with that group to get the land surveyed to determine the best location in the park for the playground.

**Playground Fundraising Partners:** These are the partners who can help your group with the whole fundraising process. They may be members of your committee or an outside organization that specialize in fundraising for community projects. If you are planning on managing fundraising within your community group, then it is recommended that you create a non-profit organization to be able to manage funds raised for your project. It is important that you have team members with a strong background in grant writing, fundraising, and managing finances for a non-profit. This can be a hard skill base to find so another option is to partner with a local community foundation who will manage all donations and financial processes for your project. Going this route allows your playground committee to focus more on getting the community excited about the project and coordinating other activities around designing and installing the playground.

Wade's WOW Playground has partnered with the Tucker Community Foundation. This community foundation supports community development projects in 10 counties in northeastern West Virginia. They believe in supporting projects that

provide the greatest benefit for the communities within their reach. They have partnered with the Wade's WOW Playground committee to help manage the playground fundraising process to ensure that this playground is built, thus improving the quality of life for all in this region of West Virginia.

**Playground Manufacturer Partner:** This is the company that will provide the community with the actual playground equipment for your playground. There are a variety of playground manufacturers around the United States and it is important for your playground committee members to evaluate, interview, and ultimately choose your playground manufacturer. They should provide you with a collection of playground elements that support development of all children. Their design should meet your community vision for your playground. They should support



your property partners and fundraising partners to ensure the playground will fit properly on the property, that any property preparation is done accurately, and that the final installation is done properly to ensure that all who play on the playground can play safely. They should also support the fundraising partner by providing support documents on benefits of the playground design for all children and other documents that support the fundraising process.

Wade's WOW Playground committee looked at different manufacturers and

has partnered with Sparks@Play who provides Landscape Structures Inc. designed and manufactured playground equipment. The committee has worked with both of these groups to design a playground that supports play for children of assorted ages and abilities. The design for the playground also captures some of the unique history and activities found in Preston County. Specifically, the design captures the history and fun of the Buckwheat Festival, which this county is so well known for in West Virginia.

Creating these partnerships is a very important part of making your playground a great success. It is the foundation that needs to be in place to make the design, installation, and grand opening happen for you community.

**Project Manager:** With so many different partnerships needed to make a playground happen it is important to have a very clearly identified Project Manager.

This person has to have the authority to manage all the different interactions for the full playground project. This person is typically a member of the Playground Committee or the Playground Fundraising Partner organization. This person has to have some of their everyday time dedicated to coordinating all the different activities that make the playground come together.

For Wade's WOW Playground, the Project Manager has been provided by the Tucker Community Foundation and will be overseeing all parts of the project moving forward to completion of the playground.

## Step 2: Designing Your Playground

Designing your playground is a fun part of the process. Here you get to dream big as you look at all the possibilities available through your manufacturer partner. This is where you make the vision of your playground become real for your whole community. There are several things to think about when designing your playground.

**1. Getting to the playground:** Think about how people will get to your playground? How long will it take them to get to the playground from their home? Your Playground Property Partner can help you with some of these things to consider.



- **Will they walk there?** Then you need to consider the sidewalks that will get them there. How wide do your sidewalks need to be when you have groups of people traveling on them to your playground?
- **Will they take public transportation?** Then you need to consider the routes and stops that visitors would use to get to the park. How far do people have to walk from the bus stop to the park? What are the sidewalks like from the bus stop to the playground?
- **Will they drive there?** Then you need to consider road access and parking. How far is the parking lot from the playground area? How wide are the sidewalks from the parking area to the playground?

**2. Restrooms and other amenities:** Think about how long you would like people to play at the playground. Are they just coming for an hour or so or would you like them to come for half a day or a day, which allows them to experience your region. Is your playground going to be in a large park with a variety of other outdoor ac-

tivities? Your Playground Property Partner can help you with some of these things to consider.

- **Restrooms:** Make sure that you have restrooms that can handle the volume of visitors who will come to the playground. Make sure that they support visitors of assorted abilities by including full size changing benches for those with children or those with disabilities.
- **Drinking fountains:** Make sure that visitors have access to drinking water so that they do not dehydrate while they play.
- **Seating:** Make sure that there places throughout the playground where visitors can sit to rest and observe others at play.



- **Shade:** Make sure that there are trees or man-made shade structures around the playground to provide shade. Man-made shade structure can be integrated into different play areas and seating areas. Your Playground Property and Playground Manufacturer Partners can help you make decisions on these amenities.

- **Shelter/Picnic areas:** Make sure that there are places around the playground where families can gather for snacks, meals, and celebrations.

- **Fencing:** Many families worry about children running away from the playground into parking lots and other areas which might not be safe. Fencing is recommended around the playground area to provide additional safety for children while they play on the playground.

**3. The playground:** Now to design the actual playground! There are several things to consider about the actual playground. There are a variety of playground regulations that determine what equipment is appropriate for children of different ages as well as overall safety on the playground. Your Playground Manufacturer knows these inside and out. They will be able to guide you as you make your play equipment choices to be sure your playground meets all of these regulations. When you look at all the amazing equipment for your playground, you need to keep the following concepts in mind:

- **Developmentally appropriate play experiences:** Think about the

ages of the children who will be coming to play on the playground. Will there be infant and toddlers? Preschoolers? School Age? Teenagers? Adults? Senior Citizens? You need to have a good sense of who will come to play so that you can be sure to have the variety of play opportunities to support them.

- **Sensory play:** Make sure that the playground has sensory play experiences that are visual, auditory, and tactile in nature. Children can play with these senses on the playground. Children with autism often navigate to these types of play experiences.



- **Movement play:** Make sure that children get to feel movement through space (also known as vestibular play). This includes linear movement from swings, slides, ziplines and see-saws, rotation movement from merry-go-rounds, and spinning movement from spinners. Make sure that some of these are accessible to children who use wheelchairs or walkers so that they can experience this movement too!
- **Muscle play:** Make sure that children get to use their muscles (also known as proprioceptive play). This includes climbing, pushing, and pulling on play elements. Make sure that children get to use their arm muscles with overhead play elements.
- **Social play:** Make sure that children are able to connect with other children when they play. This could be in small groups or larger groups. Quiet places are important too for children who might get overwhelmed by all the playground activity.
- **Pretend play:** Make sure that the playground design allows children to enter into their world of make believe.
- **Ramping/Access to height:** Make sure that all visitors can access some level of height on the playground. This can be done by using ramps or using the lay of the land (topography) to get up high.

These are all the different things to consider when you design your playground. Again, your Playground Property Partner and Playground Manufacturer Partner will be important partners to help you cover all of these areas so that you can get a playground design that you feel will meet the needs of your community!

Wade's WOW Playground has worked with their assorted partners to create their playground design over the past few years. This process can take time and will depend on the property where the playground will ultimately go. This process took some time with Wade's WOW Playground as they did shift their property location several times before landing where they will ultimately build.

**4. Fundraising around the final playground design:** Once you have a design all set, the fundraising process can happen big time. Your Playground Fundraising Partner may have been doing some fundraising while the design process was happening but it will go into major fundraising mode once there is a design that everyone can see and talk about. The Playground Committee Partners should also be sharing the playground design with everyone they meet, sharing how excited they are about the project, and sharing how it will benefit the greater community. While fundraising is happening, this is the chance to talk to community groups and get media exposure around the project. This is also the time to start planning for installing the playground and lining up contractors and volunteers to get the playground installed. The Playground Property Partners will begin preparing the playground site for this installation. This might involve adding sidewalks, parking areas, restrooms, and other amenities.

Wade's WOW Playground is currently in this stage of the playground process. With a solid design, the Tucker Community Foundation and the local Playground Committee are working to raise awareness and funds to make their playground a reality in Kingwood, WV.

**5. Installing the playground:** Once the playground funds have been raised then the installation process can begin. This can be a great event for the community. Volunteers can be part of the installation process working alongside with the Playground Manufacturer Partners to make the playground a reality of the community! It is important to have a ribbon cutting and grand opening event where everyone can celebrate!

Wade's WOW Playground Committee is already beginning to plan for their opening. They are discussing the best ways to have the community involved in the installation and when and what their grand opening will look like for the community.

**6. Ongoing maintenance of the playground:** Once the playground is open it will need to be maintained on a daily, weekly, and seasonal basis. This often falls

back on the property owner and what this looks like needs to be defined as part of the memorandum of understanding early in the playground process. Often times the fundraising process will include funds for ongoing maintenance.

Wade's WOW Playground fundraising process includes the development of a maintenance fund that the local property owner will have access to for the ongoing maintenance of the playground.

So, as you can see, building a playground involves a lot more than just picking some pretty looking playground equipment. It is a process that involves a collection of community members and partners. All of these people working together through the process can make an amazing place for a community to play, learn, and grow together!





## Concerned about your CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT?

**Help Me Grow**, a free developmental referral service, provides vital support for children from birth to age five including:

- Information and community resources to aid development
- Free developmental screening questionnaire
- Coordination with your child's doctor

Talk to a care coordinator and schedule a developmental screening for your child today.

**Help Me Grow: 1-800-642-8522**  
**[www.dhhr.wv.gov/helpmegrow](http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/helpmegrow)**



**Help Me Grow**  
West Virginia

# Let's Move!

## Improving Children's Obesity Rates

Submitted by Alex Binegar, West Virginia Child Care Health Educator

As most of us are aware, obesity is a nationwide problem. However, it's affecting our mountain state more-so than others. West Virginia is home to some of the highest obesity rates in the country and even worse, in the two to five-year-old age group, West Virginia's children are higher!

Let's Move is a training offered by the West Virginia Child Care Health Educators that includes

information about obesity rates in West Virginia, as well as the nation, and ways to keep children active and making healthier food and drink choices. In addition to obesity, lack of physical activity can lead to many health risks such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Remaining physically active and eating well balanced meals have shown improvement in mental health and mood, academics, and an increase in overall life expectancy.

In this training, the Child Care Health Educators discuss MyPlate, which has replaced the food pyramid that we are all familiar with. Children should have a serving of vegetables, fruit, grain, protein, and lastly, dairy at mealtimes. Children should steer clear of beverages that contain high amounts of sugar and should have access to water. Due to marketing schemes it can be hard to get children to eat and drink healthy because companies use themes and characters children are familiar with as a marketing technique.



Thankfully we now have an organization called Choosy Kids (originating in Morgantown, WV) who is a health conscious role model children can look up to. Children are a product of their environments, so it is especially important to ensure they have role models for healthy behaviors, as the first few years of a child's life are the most important for development.

As adults, making healthy choices ourselves sets an example for children. We need to make healthy food and drink choices and encourage participation in physical activities. Children learn best from those who do as they say. If we want our children to be healthy, we as adults need to hold ourselves to that standard as well. Luckily we have programs in West Virginia that share a wealth of knowledge on the subject and are trying their hardest to change the statistics.

Reach out to organizations such as Key 2 a Healthy Start and Choosy Kids, or collaborate with other groups in your community to talk about new ways to keep children actively involved in making positive food and drink choices.

For more information on additional trainings offered by West Virginia Child Care Health Educators, visit [http://www.wvearlychildhood.org/Child\\_Care\\_Health\\_Educators.html](http://www.wvearlychildhood.org/Child_Care_Health_Educators.html).

# Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

## What are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are serious childhood traumas that can result in toxic stress, causing harm to a child’s brain. This toxic stress may make it difficult to learn, to play in a healthy way with other children, and can result in long-term health problems.

THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) VIEWS ACEs AS ONE OF THE MAJOR HEALTH ISSUES IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

**Lowers tolerance for stress, which can result in behaviors such as fighting, checking out or defiance**

**Increases difficulty in making friends and maintaining relationships**

**Increases stress hormones which affects the body’s ability to fight infection**

**May cause lasting health problems**

**Increases problems with learning and memory, which can be permanent**

**“I can’t hear you, I can’t respond to you, I am just trying to be safe!”**

**Reduces ability to respond, learn, figure things out, which can result in problems in school**

**Exposure to ACEs can increase the risk of:**

- Adolescent pregnancy
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Asthma
- Depression
- Heart disease
- Intimate partner violence
- Liver disease
- Sexually-transmitted disease
- Smoking
- Suicide

### ACEs can include:

- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional neglect
- Physical neglect
- Mother treated violently
- Household substance use
- Household mental illness
- Parental separation or divorce
- Incarcerated household member
- Bullying (by another child or adult)
- Witnessing violence outside the home
- Witnessing a brother or sister being abused
- Racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination
- Experiencing homelessness
- Natural disasters and war

### **i** SURVIVAL MODE RESPONSE

Increased heart rate, blood pressure, breathing and muscle tension. When a child is in survival mode, self-protection is their priority.

# The good news is **RESILIENCE** can bring back health and hope!

## What is Resilience?

Resilience is the ability to be healthy and hopeful despite experiencing stressful events. Research shows that when caregivers provide physically and emotionally safe environments for children and teach them how to be resilient, the negative effects of ACEs can be reduced.

## Resilience Trumps ACEs!

Parents, teachers and caregivers can help children by:

- Gaining an understanding of ACEs
- Helping children identify feelings and manage emotions
- Creating safe physical and emotional environments at home, in school and in neighborhoods

## What Does Resilience Look Like?

### 1. Having resilient caregivers

Caregivers who know how to solve problems, who have healthy relationships with other adults, and who build healthy relationships with the children in their care.

### 2. Building attachment and nurturing relationships

Adults who listen and respond patiently to a child in a supportive way, and pay attention to a child's physical and emotional needs.

### 3. Building social connections

Having family, friends and/or neighbors who support, help and listen to children.

### 4. Meeting basic needs

Providing children with safe housing, nutritious food, appropriate clothing, and access to health care and good education.

### 5. Learning about parenting and how children grow

Understanding how parents and caregivers can help children grow in a healthy way, and what to expect from children as they grow.

### 6. Building social and emotional skills

Helping children interact in a healthy way with others, manage their emotions and communicate their feelings and needs.



## Resources:

### 1-2-3 Care Toolkit

[srhd.org/1-2-3-care-toolkit](http://srhd.org/1-2-3-care-toolkit)

### ACES 101

[acestoohigh.com/aces-101](http://acestoohigh.com/aces-101)

### CDC Parent Information

[cdc.gov/parents](http://cdc.gov/parents)

### CDC Kaiser Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

[cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy](http://cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy)

### Community Resilience Initiative

[ciresilient.org](http://ciresilient.org)

# Do you know a child who is not \*moving \*hearing \*seeing \* learning or \*talking like others their age?

By 3 months,  
Does your baby...

- grasp rattle or finger?
- hold up his/her head well?
- make cooing sounds?
- smile when talked to?

By 9 months,  
Does your baby...

- sit alone or with minimal support?
- pick up small objects with thumb and fingers?
- move toy from hand to hand?

By 18 months,  
Does your baby...

- cling to caretaker in new situations?
- try to talk and repeat words?
- walk without support?

By 6 months,  
Does your baby...

- play with own hands/feet?
- roll over?
- turn his/her head towards sound?
- holds head up/looks around without support?

By 12 months,  
Does your baby...

- wave goodbye?
- play with toys in different ways?
- feed self with finger foods?
- begin to pull up and stand?
- begin to take steps?

By 24 months,  
Does your baby...

- point to body parts?
- walk, run, climb without help?
- get along with other children?
- use 2 or 3 word sentences?

If you are concerned about your child's development, get help early.

Every child deserves a great start.

WV Birth to Three supports families to help their children grow and learn.

To learn more about the  
WV Birth to Three services  
in your area, please call:

**1-866-321-4728**

Or visit [www.wvdhhr.org/birth23](http://www.wvdhhr.org/birth23)



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.



## Infant Mental Health Week Webinars

Hosted by the West Virginia Infant/Toddler Mental Health Association

**All webinars will be from 12 noon – 1 p.m**  
**1 Contact Hour of WV STARS available**

<p><b>Monday, May 13, 2019</b></p>	<p><b>What is Attachment? Why Does it Matter?</b>                  This session will go over the origins of the theory of attachment as postulated by John Bowlby, the biological basis for attachment and its relevance to relationships even into adulthood.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Dr. Kalpana Miriyala, Marshall University School of Medicine</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="342 569 1521 720"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 569 964 720">                     WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session.                      **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.                 </td> <td data-bbox="964 569 1521 720">                     Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser.  <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/3809729021962372865">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/3809729021962372865</a> </td> </tr> </table>	WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session. **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.	Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser. <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/3809729021962372865">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/3809729021962372865</a>
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<p><b>Tuesday, May 14, 2019</b></p>	<p><b>Trauma, Toxic Stress, and Resiliency</b>                  An overview of how toxic stress and trauma can impact neurological development in children. In addition, an overview will be provided on the ways we can teach and build resiliency in children who come from toxic stress and trauma backgrounds.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Amy Carlson, West Virginia Autism Training Center</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="342 951 1521 1102"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 951 964 1102">                     WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session.                      **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.                 </td> <td data-bbox="964 951 1521 1102">                     Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser.  <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7775256246001621505">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7775256246001621505</a> </td> </tr> </table>	WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session. **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.	Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser. <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7775256246001621505">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7775256246001621505</a>
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<p><b>Wednesday, May 15, 2019</b></p>	<p><b>Supporting Families Through Miscarriage and Infant Loss</b>                  What happens when we find out a family has experienced a miscarriage? How do we best support parents through this and other types of perinatal loss? In this session, participants will learn about the response from one home visitation program in West Virginia, as well as supports that have been developed in other parts of the country.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Michelle Comer, IMH-E®, Healthy Families America State Leader, TEAM for WV Children</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="342 1371 1521 1526"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1371 964 1526">                     WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session.                      **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.                 </td> <td data-bbox="964 1371 1521 1526">                     Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser.  <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4671814307859688449">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4671814307859688449</a> </td> </tr> </table>	WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session. **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.	Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser. <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4671814307859688449">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4671814307859688449</a>
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<p><b>Thursday, May 16, 2019</b></p>	<p><b>Ambiguous Loss</b>                  This session will discuss the definition of ambiguous loss, the implication and relationship to trauma, and brief ways to discover and begin to heal. Ambiguous loss is a form of unresolved grief that can be driving a child's behavioral issues. Recognizing this grief and beginning to help the child cope with it is a part of the process of healing from trauma. This session will examine the work of Pauline Boss who coined the term ambiguous loss.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Tina Faber, FamilyCare Health Center</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="342 1862 1521 2007"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1862 964 2007">                     WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session.                      **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.                 </td> <td data-bbox="964 1862 1521 2007">                     Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser.  <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7183547466444208641">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7183547466444208641</a> </td> </tr> </table>	WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session. **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.	Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser. <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7183547466444208641">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7183547466444208641</a>
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<p><b>Friday, May 17, 2019</b></p>	<p><b>ACEs and Resiliency in Early Childhood</b>                  During this webinar, participants will learn about resiliency techniques and understand the effects of both ACEs and resilience on the brain and body. Information will also be shared on the interconnected policies and programs for addressing systems of care for children in West Virginia.  <i>Presenter: Dr. Michael Brumage, West Virginia University School of Public Health</i></p>	
	<p>WV STARS participants please visit <a href="https://wvregistry.org">https://wvregistry.org</a> and search the training calendar for the title of the session.                  **Also check the <b>Agenda</b> section for additional registration information.</p>	<p>Other participants copy and paste the link below into your internet browser.  <a href="https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4622446235772553985">https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4622446235772553985</a></p>

Save the Date

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL INSTITUTE 2019

PRESENTED BY



REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 8

[www.westsideproud.com](http://www.westsideproud.com)

# MAY 20 - 21, 2019

RUNNING RIGHT WAY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, JULIAN WV

This learning institute is an early childhood conference promoting the factors related to social emotional development, while providing quality professional development opportunities for home visitors, early childhood professionals, social workers, nurses and other professionals who work on behalf of children and youth.

This program is being presented with financial assistance as a grant from the WV Department of Health and Human Resources and is administered by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources, a program of River Valley Child Development Services



# ACDS

## Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist

You may have heard about ACDS, but do you know about the many different ways that you can become involved in the program? It is true that the ACDS program is an educational opportunity for early childhood professionals throughout WV. However, it is also true that there are many different stakeholders involved in the implementation and continuation of the program. The ACDS program is supported by numerous individuals that serve in a variety of capacities to help sustain the quality of the program. The ACDS program is continually searching for additional support from the early childhood professional community to assist with the growth and preservation of the program. For more information and details on how you can become involved with the ACDS program please contact us. We look forward to having you join our team!

Jennifer Conkle—ACDS Statewide Coordinator

Tara Kitts—ACDS Specialist



### Ways to Become Involved in the ACDS Program

- Apprentices—students in ACDS
- Journeypersons—graduates of ACDS
- Supervisors—support apprentices at the work site
- Mentors—support family providers and directors at the work site
- Local council members—local support of class scheduling and implementation
- Local council representatives—attend executive council meetings to represent local needs at the state level
- Instructors—attend instructor academy and teach ACDS curriculum
- Executive council members—state council made up of a variety of vested partners across the state that make decisions regarding ACDS

### Our Mission

ACDS promotes highly skilled, confident early childhood employees; quality early childhood classrooms; and informed, supportive early childhood professionals.

## Contact Us

611 7th Avenue  
Huntington, WV 25701  
Website: [www.wvacds.org](http://www.wvacds.org)

Phone: 304-523-0433  
Fax: 304-697-6613  
E-mail: [wvacds@rvcds.org](mailto:wvacds@rvcds.org)





## Teaching Your Child to: Become Independent with Daily Routines

### Does this Sound Familiar?

**N**adine is a single mom with two young children ages 3 and 5. Her children attend preschool while she is working. When they all get home at the end of the day, Nadine is exhausted but still has household chores to complete (i.e., making dinner, doing laundry, straightening the house, etc.). In addition, she has to help the children with bathing, getting ready for bed, and brushing their teeth. She wishes that her children would start doing some of their daily self-help routines independently. The preschool teacher has said that the 5-year-old is very helpful and independent. But at home, neither of the children will get dressed and undressed independently, and they complain and whine when asked to wash their hands, brush their teeth, or help with the

bathtime routine. When Nadine asks the children to do one of these self-help tasks, they run around the house or whine and drop to the ground. It takes every ounce of energy Nadine has to get through the evening. Often she finds herself yelling at the children and physically helping them through the entire routine, just to get it done.

## The Focus

Young children can learn how to do simple daily self-help activities—they just need to be taught what to do. When teaching a child to do self-care skills, you first need to know what you can typically expect of a young child, your child’s skill level, and how to provide clear and simple instructions about how to do a task. In addition, providing children with ample encouragement that is both positive and specific will help promote their success. Children can learn, at a very young age, how to independently wash their hands, brush their teeth, and get undressed and dressed. The information below will help you understand what you can expect from your preschooler and tips for helping your child learn how to become more independent with daily routines.



## What to Expect

Children who are 8 to 18 months old often can:

- Drink from a cup, pick up finger food, and begin to use a spoon
- Help undress and dress, put foot in shoe and arm in sleeve
- Point to body parts
- Have strong feelings and begin saying “no”
- Reach for/point to choices
- Feel a sense of security with routines and expectations (e.g., at bedtime)
- Imitate sounds and movement
- Understand more than they can say

Children who are 18 to 36 months old often can do all of the above and:

- Wash hands with help
- Drink from a straw
- Put clothes in the hamper when asked
- Feed self with spoon
- Push and pull toys; fill and dump containers
- Learn to use the toilet
- Bend over without falling
- Imitate simple actions
- Become easily frustrated
- Enjoy trying to do tasks on their own (note that this is why tasks may now take more time to complete)

- Pouring, washing, dressing
- Enjoy playing dress-up
- Become fascinated with water and sand play
- Begin learning simple clear rules

Children who are 3 often can:

- Help with brushing teeth
- Understand “now,” “soon,” and “later”
- Put dirty clothes in the hamper independently
- Get shoes from the closet
- Put on shoes without ties
- Enjoy singing easy songs
- Listen more attentively
- At times, prefer one parent over the other
- Enjoy playing house
- Imitate
- Match like objects
- Put non-breakable dishes in the sink
- Put trash in the trash can
- Wash body with help
- Wash and dry hands, though they may need some help reaching

Children who are 4 often can:

- Use a spoon, fork, and dinner knife
- Dress without help, except with fasteners/buttons
- Learn new words quickly
- Recognize stop signs and their own name in print
- Follow two-step directions that are unrelated



- Understand simple clear rules
- Share and begin taking turns
- Wash self in the bathtub
- Brush teeth independently
- Wash and dry hands

Children who are 5 often can:

- Follow established rules and routines (e.g., wash hands before eating, put dirty clothes in the hamper, brush teeth before going to bed)
- Independently initiate a simple routine (e.g., dress and undress, brush teeth, wash hands, eat dinner sitting at the table, take bath with adult watching)
- Understand beginning, middle, and end
- Begin to understand others' feelings
- Be independent with most self-care skills

Sometimes, children with disabilities may need special assistance to become more independent in doing daily routines. You might want to do the following:

- Expect your child to do only part of the routine, while you assist with the part that is difficult
- Provide help to your child so that he/she can complete the task
- Provide instructions in a different format, by modeling and/or using a picture or gesture so that your child understands what to do
- Allow extra time to complete the task

## Teaching Your Child to Independently Complete Daily Routines

Young children like to feel independent, but sometimes they need a parent's encouragement to feel that they are capable and that adults believe that they "can" do it. Teaching independence with self-help skills like hand washing, brushing teeth, and dressing/undressing is an important step in development that can be achieved when children are taught how to do each step in each routine. Initially, it takes an adult's focused attention to teach children how to do these skills. Once the child learns how to do a skill independently, the adult can fade out of the routine completely.

When teaching your child independence in self help routines (brushing teeth, hand washing, getting dressed/undressed), try these simple, yet effective, tips:

1. Begin by getting down on your child's eye level and gaining his attention. (i.e., touch your child gently, make eye contact, physically guide, or jointly look at the same object).

2. Break down the routine into simple steps and state each step one at a time with positive and clearly stated directions. Sometimes we make the mistake of telling children what not to do or what they did wrong, such as, "Stop splashing in the water."

However, it's more effective and clear to say, "All done washing, now it's time to turn off the water."

3. To clarify steps even further, you could take a photo of each step in the routine and post it where the routine takes place. For instance, with hand washing, you could post photos above the sink. As you state one step at a time, show your child the photograph to illustrate what needs to be done.

4. When teaching your child to do each step, model (i.e., demonstrate) how to do each step. After your child begins to learn the steps, you can take turns showing each other "how" to do the routine. Be prepared to provide your child with reminders about what to do. As a child first learns a skill, it's common to forget a step and need assistance. You can simply model and say, "Look, do this," and show how to do the step that is causing difficulty. If needed, you can gently physically guide your child in how to do the step so that he/she can feel successful.



5. For activities that might be difficult or not preferred, state the direction in a “first/then” phrase. For instance, “First wash hands, and then we can eat snack”; or “First brush your teeth, and then I can give you a minty fresh kiss”; or “First get dressed, and then you can choose milk or juice with breakfast.”
6. Offering children a “choice” during routines increases the likelihood that they will do the activity. With brushing teeth, you could say, “Do you want to use the mint toothpaste or the bubble gum toothpaste?”
7. It is very important that you encourage all attempts when your child is first learning how to do a routine. If you discourage or reprimand your child because it was not done quite right, his/her attempts at trying might stop. It’s important to let your child know you understand his/her feelings and then assist your child so that he/she feels successful. For example, “I know it’s hard to brush your teeth. Let me help. (Singing while you help brush) Brush, brush, brush your teeth; brush the front and back . . .

- brush, brush, brush your teeth, attack the germs right back.” Remember that young children need a lot of practice—and your support—before they are able to do new skills independently.
8. Encourage your child as each routine is completed and celebrate when the task is done.

## Why Do Children Sometimes Become Challenging When Learning to Do Self-Help Skills on Their Own?

As children grow, they are learning all kinds of new skills that will help them become more and more independent. A child might be using challenging behavior to communicate a variety of messages. For example, your child might need help with a task, and crying results in your providing that help. Or a child might have a tantrum to

communicate that the task is too difficult. Other children might have challenging behavior because they don’t want to leave a preferred activity (e.g., playing with toys) to do something that is less interesting (e.g., taking a bath). If you think you know the “message” of your child’s challenging behavior, a good strategy is to validate what the behavior seems to be saying. For example, you might say, “You are telling me that you don’t want to stop playing for your bath. But it’s time to be all done and get in the tub.”

## What Can You Do When Children Refuse to Independently Do Daily Routines?

Remember, preschoolers are moving from the toddler stage, where much was done for them, to a new stage where they are becoming independent little people. Your child might need a bit of help or extra cueing when learning new skills that will build his/her ability to be more independent around everyday routines. Think about what your child needs and help him/her be successful...success builds independence! For instance, your child:

- Might want your attention because inappropriate behavior got attention in the past. Your child might refuse to listen or cooperate to gain your attention because this has worked before.
  - Remember to ignore the challenging behavior and teach calmly and clearly while guiding him/her through the task.



- Praise every little attempt to do any step. Attention to your child's use of a new skill will strengthen that skill.
- Might not understand what you are trying to get him/her to do.
  - Restate your expectation in positive terms and show him/her how, with either photo cues and/or modeling.
- Could need a warning a few minutes prior to the routine.
  - Let him/her know there are only a few more minutes of "play time" and then it's time to \_\_\_\_ (i.e., wash hands, eat dinner, undress/dress, brush teeth, etc.).
- Might not have heard what you asked him/her to do.
  - Gain attention and calmly and clearly restate the direction.
  - Try pairing the verbal direction with a gesture or model.
- Might feel rushed and confused.
  - As children learn new tasks, we need to slow down the routine and expect that it might take extra time to complete.
  - If you are feeling frustrated with your child and think your child is reacting to your

frustration, you might take a few deep breaths to feel calmer. First, take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth several times, and then proceed with clearly stating your expectation to your child.

- Might find the routine too difficult and need some modeling or partial help.
  - First, model how to do the first step and then say, "Now you show me." Show one step at a time, allowing time for your child to process the information and imitate what you did before moving to the next step.
  - If needed, assist your child by gently guiding him/her through the steps.
  - Praise every attempt.

- Might need encouragement and to be validated.
  - You could say, "I see you are sad. This is hard. You can do it. Let me show you how."

It is important to try to understand your child's point of view and feelings. This will help you respond with the most appropriate cue. Encouragement and supporting your child's attempts will build confidence.

