

FIRST STEPS FAMILIES VOLUME 1, ISSUE 13 DECEMBER 2010

The editor of First Steps Families is a mom that had a child in the First Steps program. Hopefully the information shared will provide you with helpful resources for your family. To conserve resources and to make sure you don't miss out on helpful information, please send your e-mail address to Connie Coovert at cccoov2@uky.edu to receive the newsletter electronically or call me at 859-257-6427 to arrange for a hard copy.



Connie

EVERYDAY WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR BABY

Your baby is learning—about you, himself, and the world around him—from the moment he enters the world. The chart below gives you some ideas of the many ways you can support your child's early learning through your everyday activities.

What's Going On With Your Baby	What You Can Do
<p>Self-Control</p> <p>Over the first 3 years, your child is beginning to develop self-control—the ability to manage his feelings and actions in acceptable ways. He is also learning to wait, share, and work out problems with his friends.</p>	<p>Use words to help your child understand his feelings. <i>You are really mad because we have to leave the park.</i></p> <p>Give choices to older toddlers. <i>Would you like to read books before or after we brush teeth?</i></p> <p>Stay calm when your child is upset. This helps him feel safe and get back in control.</p>
<p>Self-Confidence</p> <p>Your child is learning that she is a very special person; that she is loved, smart, fun, and capable. When children feel good about themselves, they are more confident and willing to take on new challenges.</p>	<p>Comment on what your child does well. <i>You found the button that makes the bear pop up!</i></p> <p>Help your child be a good problem-solver. Give her the support she needs to be successful without completely solving the problem for her.</p> <p>Give your child the chance to do things for herself like pouring milk from a small plastic pitcher.</p> <p>Encourage your child to keep on trying. <i>You are working so hard to get the balls in the basket. Sometimes it takes lots of tries!</i></p>

Visit www.zerotothree.org/schoolreadiness for more information on early learning and healthy development
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CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT FUND

The Consumer Involvement Fund provides financial assistance to persons with developmental disabilities, their families, guardians and others within their support networks to attend conferences and short-term educational programs.

Interested? You can find the Consumer Involvement Fund application here:

<http://chfs.ky.gov/kcdd/cif.htm>

Or call Connie Coovert at 859-257-6427 and I would be happy to walk you through the process.

FIRST STEPS PARENT CONSULTANT

Connie Cooverrt
229 Taylor Ed. Bldg.
Lexington, KY 40506
1-859-257-6427
cccov2@uky.edu

We are on the Web:
[http://chfs.ky.gov/
dph/firststeps.htm](http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps.htm)

“It's not only children who grow. Parents do too. As much as we watch to see what our children do with their lives, they are watching us to see what we do with ours. I can't tell my children to reach for the sun. All I can do is reach for it, myself.”

*~Joyce
Maynard*

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

As a parent it is not easy to suddenly have the advice of others so intertwined in your child's development. It can even be more difficult to sift through the varying types of therapies, strategies and treatments. With so many opinions coming from a variety of sources, you should choose those involved in your child's care wisely. Your team, or Circle of Support, might be made up of family members, friends, social workers, therapists, teachers, and medical specialists. When considering your Circle of Support choices it is important to make sure that each member you choose understands and agrees with the priorities you have laid out for your child. Your First Steps Service Coordinator will assist you with identifying and prioritizing the concerns you have regarding your child's development.

Each member should also have a positive impact on your family as a whole. In some cases, such as First Steps therapists who actually work in your home, a team member can almost become part of the family. It is important that you feel comfortable enough with them to speak openly and honestly about your child and his progress. In turn they must always be made to feel welcome to offer advice in a positive and encouraging manner.

HOLIDAY FINGER PAINTING FUN

Using finger paint exposes your toddler to a unique sensory world involving sight, slippery touch and squishy sound as well. Add mint or vanilla extract and excite his sense of smell, too. Finger painting helps your toddler gain fine motor control: Each time his hand moves the way his brain directs or expects, he is closer to fully controlling a paint brush, crayon or pencil. Don't be afraid to let your toddler mix different colors of paint together. This is part of the learning experience. Finger painting is mostly about the process of art rather than producing a finished product.



Tip: Line the table with newspaper or do this activity in a high chair for easy clean-up.

PARENT TRAINING AND INFO NETWORK

KY SPIN – Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network, Inc.

KY-SPIN is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting programs which will enable persons with disabilities and their families to enhance their quality of life. SPIN (Special Parent Involvement Network) is a statewide project of KY-SPIN, Inc. SPIN-PTI (Parent Training & Information Project) is funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education. SPIN provides training, information and support to people with disabilities, their parents and families; and information on all types of disabilities and topics for all age groups. All services of the SPIN-PTI are free to all participants.

We can help you understand the transition from First Steps to Public school system. We have a wide variety of information available to you including the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, your child's rights, building partnership, etc. You can reach us by phone at (800) 525-7746 / (502) 937-6894 or by email at spininc@kyspin.com. Our Website is www.kyspin.com and join us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Kentucky-Special-Parent-Involvement-Network-KY-SPIN-Inc/136683742892>