

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](mailto:cccoov2@uky.edu) to receive the newsletter electronically or call me at 859-257-6427 to arrange for a hard copy.

Connie



### THE TRANSITION CONFERENCE

Families receiving Early Intervention services are in various phases in the First Steps program—just getting started, towards the end, etc. No matter where you are, when you have a child with developmental delays, you have to plan ahead. First Steps services end when your child turns three. However, there are options that follow that third birthday.

The process of moving a child from one program to another is what transition is all about. Transition is change.

The first step in transition is called the Transition Conference. This is a meeting with your First Steps IFSP team and any folks from early childhood programs in your community that you want to know more about. Usually this means preschool offered by the local school district and Head Start. But, if you are interested in day care, or a private program, you may invite them to come to the meeting as well. This meeting occurs when your child is about 2 ½ and is arranged by your First Steps Service Coordinator.

The transition conference is not a commitment, not a time for enrollment, just a time for you to find out about the various programs, ask questions, and learn about the process. You will decide what the next steps in transition will be for your family.

**Do you have a First Steps success story or an experience you would like to share? We would love to include your story in our newsletter. What you share will likely encourage other families in similar situations. For help in putting your story here, please contact Connie at [cccoov2@uky.edu](mailto:cccoov2@uky.edu)**

### YOU MIGHT SEE A LEPRECHAUN

St. Patrick's Day is all about the green, so take this opportunity to teach your child about this color. Since this day also marks the beginning of spring in most areas, taking a walk around the neighborhood or to a park will likely yield plenty to talk about. Get down on the ground and look under the blanket of dead, brown grass of winter to find new shoots appearing. Look at tree branches and find green buds appearing. Search for green caterpillars. Ask your child simple yes and no questions like, "Is this green?" when pointing to something of another color to see if he is acquiring the concept of the color. Knowing what green *isn't* is part of this learning.



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## PARENT CONSULTANT

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



While we try  
to teach our  
children all  
about life,  
Our children  
teach us  
what life is  
all about.

~Angela  
Schwindt

## IT'S TIME TO QUIT SMOKING

Women who are planning a pregnancy or who think they might be pregnant should stop smoking and avoid being around sources of secondhand smoke, including others who smoke.

Smoking increases the possibility of preterm birth, miscarriage, stillbirth, bleeding problems and abnormalities of the placenta.

Babies born to smoking mothers are at high risk for stunted growth, breathing problems, asthma, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and behavior and learning problems.

Use of birth control pills combined with cigarette smoking dramatically increases the risk of cardiovascular problems, especially blood clots, in the mother.

Secondhand smoke is a dangerous health hazard to everyone, especially unborn babies, infants and children. It can badly damage their smaller, less-developed lungs and brains.

Health care professionals can help you quit smoking. There is also free help at the Kentucky Quit Line, 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669).

## PARENTS' VOICES COUNT

There are many ways for families to become involved with planning and developing Early Intervention services in KY. One way is to be a Parent Representative on the District Early Intervention Committee (DEIC). This group meets in your community to discuss and take action on issues affecting young children with developmental delays. The DEICs encourage local interagency coordination, identify early childhood issues and help plan district service delivery systems for families of eligible infants and toddlers from birth to age three. The DEICs often organize trainings or host guest speakers to bring current information about topics of interest to those who have, or work with, children with and without developmental delays. Interested in finding out more? Please contact Connie.

## MAKE A RAINBOW WITH FINGERPAINT

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.

To make a rainbow, paint each fingertip a different color in rainbow order (red, orange, yellow, green, blue or purple) and gently guide your toddler's fingers across the paper in a curve. Take a moment to admire the rainbow and then let him do his own thing with the colors.

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

