



Family Engagement Newsletter

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program

By Wendy Overturf

The first three years of life are some of the most critical years of a child's development. The Birth to 3 Program is a federally-mandated early Intervention program ([Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—IDEA](#)) that assists in developing skills with children who might be presenting delays.

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Mission Statement

"The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is committed to serving children under the age of 3 with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. We value the family's primary relationship with their child and work in partnership with the family. We work to enhance the child's development and support the family's knowledge, skills and abilities as they interact with and raise their child."

Program Eligibility

The Birth to 3 Program is for children ages birth to 36 months. Eligibility is based on a diagnosed disability or 25% delay in one or more areas of development. A team will evaluate the child's ability to:

- Learn (cognitive development)
- Move, see, and hear (physical/motor development)
- Communicate and understand other's communication (speech and language development)
- Respond to and relate with others (social and emotional development)
- Eat, dress, and care for daily living needs (adaptive development)

The Birth to 3 team will consist of the parents, the service coordinator, and at least two professionals knowledgeable about the child's suspected areas of need. Since the child's growth and development is ever changing and evolving, the evaluation will only measure the child's abilities at a particular point in time. Through the evaluation process, the parents and the other team members will assess the child's strengths, abilities, and needs in each of the areas of his or her development. The parents' observations and knowledge are key in identifying the child's strengths and needs. Parents' knowledge about their child's medical and health history and general development is important information in helping to determine if their child is eligible for the Birth to 3 Program.

One of the guiding principles of the Birth to 3 Program is that **a child's greatest resource is their family**. Young children's needs are closely tied to the needs of their family. Both must be met to adequately serve the child. The nurturing, love, and commitment of a family cannot be replaced by any array of services. The best way to support children and meet their needs is to support and build upon the individual strengths of their family. If the child qualifies, an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) will be developed. The IFSP focuses on how the system can support the "whole" family, its cultural values, strengths, and needs.

Each county has established a [referral network, P-01968](#), (PDF) which helps find children with developmental concerns. Parents are a part of the referral network as they are often first to be concerned about their child's development. Other members of the referral network are doctors, nurses, hospitals, clinics, schools, early childhood programs, family child care, child care centers, and other organizations or agencies.

Statewide Events

[Reaching High Expectations: Success for ALL-Technology Rich Solutions for Supporting Inclusive Practices](#)

This conference with a UDL (Universal Design for Learning) lens is a great way to connect with colleagues engaging in meeting the full range of learner variability.

From the context of the learning environment, to lesson design, and the foundation mindset needed to connect every student to learning, this conference will meet a wide range of professional learning needs.

Date: February 7-8, 2019

Location: Glacier Canyon Lodge at the Wilderness, Wisconsin Dells

[Transition Conference 2019: Continuing the Pathways to Brighter Futures!](#)

Join hundreds of teachers, administrators, parents, students, support staff, community agencies and other stakeholders across the state and region for the Wisconsin Transition Conference for youth and young adults with disabilities. The conference invites participants to imagine, learn, and connect with others, share their learned experiences, evidence-based practices, advocacy, and/or resources for transition age youth receiving services.

Date: February 21-22, 2019

Location: Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells

Statewide Events

Advocacy for Change

A full-day advocacy and skills training event for parents, family members, professionals, and providers who care for, or work with children with disabilities or special health care needs.

Date: March 13, 2019

Location: Concourse Hotel, Madison, WI

Autism Society of Wisconsin's 30th Annual Conference

Providing relevant information for attendees at all levels. Keynote 4/12:

"Interoception, The Eighth Sense: Influence on Self-Regulation, Health and Emotional Well-Being."

Date: April 11-13, 2019

Location: Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells, WI

UW-Whitewater Early Childhood Conference

The pre-conference workshop on 4/12 is "I Don't Remember Learning That": A Day to Reflect, Practice and Build Relationships with Other Early Childhood Providers as We Take on Some of the Big Topics." Speaker Robin Fox will tackle some of the pressing topics in early childhood education through information sharing, hands on activities, scenario work, and developing individual professional development plans. On 4/13, keynote speaker, Ann Terrell, will share some of the lessons learned on her leadership journey to becoming an award winning, effective, and inspiring leader.

Date: April 12-13, 2019

Location: UW-Whitewater, Whitewater

Circles of Life Conference-Save the Date!

Wisconsin's annual conference for parents and family members who have children with disabilities and professionals who support them.

Date: May 2-3, 2019

Location: Holiday Inn – Convention Center, Stevens Point, WI

2019 Endless Possibilities Conference: Supporting Students with Learning Disabilities- Save the Date!

8/2 Shawn Robinson, Ph.D. keynotes: *Transforming the Impossible to Possible—Journey from Special Education to Ph.D.* He is the author of [Dr. Dyslexia Dude](#). Pre-conference, August 1, is Youth Mental Health First Aid. Registration opens 3/1.

Date: August 1-2, 2019

Location: UW-Whitewater



At Home Learning Strategies



Spread the love with a month of early literacy activities parents can do at home with their little ones. The [February calendar](#) is filled with craft ideas, math and science activities, book suggestions, songs, and more to celebrate not only Valentine's Day, but fun days like Tell a Fairy Tale Day, Tooth Fairy Day, and much more! Each day features a fun activity that will help your child build pre-reading skills.

Simple writing prompts for Valentine's Day

Young children with emerging writing skills can participate in Valentine's Day writing activities. Here are a few ideas to inspire even the beginning writer. Have your child dictate the words to you if your child is not yet writing.

- Create a Valentine's Day coupon book for a family member or friend, full of simple things your child will do to show her love and friendship.
- Have your child write a letter to Mom, Dad, grandparent, brother, or sister telling them why he loves them.
- Ask your child to describe a time when he felt especially loved.
- Write an acrostic poem using a word like MOM, FRIEND, LOVE, or VALENTINE. Try this interactive [acrostic learning tool](#) from ReadWriteThink. (This activity is geared toward upper elementary or middle school aged children).



Practice Graphing Skills through Use of Social Media

This is a great activity for middle schoolers. Facebook makes it easy to gather some data without ever asking a question. Your child can create a data sheet tallying how many Facebook friends were born in each month. To find the information, simply go to the upcoming birthdays page where a month-by-month list can be found. After tallying the data, go to a free spot on the web, [Create A Graph](#) and chose to create a line or bar graph to represent the data. This is sure to be a motivating, technology-integrated math activity!

TIPS: Help your Child Learn to Love Math

- Make math a fun part of everyday life. With a little thought, you can find the math in everything from shopping and cooking, to setting the table, and sorting pairs of socks.
- Even if you struggled with math as a student, don't let any negative feelings you might have influence your children. If you love math, or at least appreciate how important it is, be sure to communicate *that*, and your kids will too. Create a positive learning environment and help your child practice math on a regular basis.
- Understand what math concepts your child should be learning at every age. You can learn all about them in the [DreamBox Math Growth Chart](#), which describes math skills that kids should have and includes tips for games and activities that will aid in their development.
- Use math manipulatives! Manipulatives are designed so that a student can learn a mathematical concept by manipulating it. DreamBox offers [virtual manipulatives](#) for kindergartners, first graders, and second graders that teachers, homeschoolers, and parents can use free in the classroom or at home.
- Read math storybooks to your child. Check out this [website](#) for a few suggestions.

I ♥
Math

Online Resources: Intellectual Disabilities

[Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This website has fact sheets on intellectual disabilities. It also includes links to resources related to infants, toddlers, and school-age children. It offers tips for parents and educators. It also has links to other organizations that support individuals with intellectual disabilities.

[Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

This site has information related to eligibility criteria, programming and services, and assessment for students with intellectual disabilities.

[Exceptional Parent \(eParent\)](#)

This website had many resources related to children with disabilities. eParent is a 42-year-old, award-winning publishing and communications company. eParent provides practical advice, emotional support, and the most up-to-date educational information for families of children and adults with disabilities and special healthcare needs as well as to the physicians, allied health care professionals, and educational professionals who are involved in their care and development.

[National Down Syndrome Society \(NDSS\)](#)

The mission of the National Down Syndrome Society is to be the national advocate for the value, acceptance, and inclusion of people with Down Syndrome. The vision of NDSS is a world in which all people with Down Syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations and become valued members of welcoming communities. Their website gives facts about Down Syndrome, has a section that dispels common misperceptions, and also has numerous links related to advocacy.

[Disability Scoop](#)

According to their website, Disability Scoop is one of the premier sources for Developmental Disability News. While the website provides news related to many disabilities, this link is specifically related to Intellectual Disabilities. There is also the ability to sign up to receive frequent email updates.

[Arc](#)

The mission of Arc is to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes. Local chapters provide *individual advocacy*, programs, services, and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Information on local, state and national programs is available on the website.

[American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(AAIDD\)](#)

The AAIDD definition manual contains the world's most current and authoritative information on intellectual disability, including best practice guidelines on diagnosing and classifying intellectual disability and developing a system of supports for people living with an intellectual disability. There are also archived [free webinars](#) on the website.



WI FACETS

Webinars
Trainings
Workshops

Event title links to information & registration for WI FACETS

FREE workshops & webinars:

By phone, Sandra: 877-374-0511

All webinars 12:00—1:00 PM
(unless otherwise noted)

[WSEMS-Facilitated IEPs](#)

Date: February 4, 2019

Presenters: Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7
and Courtney Salzer, WI FACETS

[ABLE Accounts and Financial Planning for Families of Individuals with Special Needs](#)

Date: February 6, 2019

Presenter: Kathleen Oberneder,
Financial Advisor

[ADHD-Revisited](#)

Date: February 13, 2019

Presenter: Nomsa Gwalla Ogisi,
UW-Whitewater

[Individual Education Program- Part 1 \(Spanish\)](#)

Date: February 14, 2019

Presenter: Nelsinia Ramos,
WI FACETS

[IEP Checklist](#)

Date: February 19, 2019

Presenter: Matthew Zellmer,
WI FACETS

[Partnering with your Child's Doctor for a Better School Outcome](#)

Date: February 20, 2019

Presenter: Tim Markle, Director
Southern Regional Center

[Culturally Responsive Family Engagement](#)

Date: February 21, 2019

Presenter: Kedibonye Carpenter,
WI FACETS

[Supported Decision Making](#)

Date: February 27, 2019

Presenter: Tami Jackson, Public
Policy Analyst, BPDD

[Intellectual Disabilities Criteria](#)

Presenter: Molly Bever

Date: 1/18/17 (archived webinar)



[Best Buddies International](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

[Best Buddies Wisconsin](#) has [fifty-three chapters](#).



[Best Buddies Friendship programs](#) represent one of the organization's three key mission pillars. These programs build one-to-one friendships between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), offering social mentoring while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded. Through their participation, people with IDD form meaningful connections with their peers, gain self-confidence and self-esteem, and share interests, experiences and activities that many other individuals enjoy. There are friendship programs at the middle, high school, and college levels. The e-buddies program provides a safe place online to develop one-to-one friendships between people with and without IDD. Check-out this [video](#) from WISN-TV to see one of the programs in action.

Research to Read

Students with Intellectual Disabilities Going to College? Absolutely!

L. Kleinert, Harold & Jones, Melissa & Sheppard-Jones, Kathleen & Harp, Beverly & M. Harrison, Elizabeth. (2012). *TEACHING Exceptional Children*. 44. 26-35

[Article Link](#)

ABSTRACT:

In a pilot project in Kentucky, called SHEP, young people with intellectual disabilities (ID) are pursuing career goals and learning important life skills. They participate in college courses, work with mentors and coaches, and experience supported employment opportunities—all through partnerships among school systems, institutions of higher learning, and community agencies. For example, one student pursuing a career in graphic design works at a screen-printing business while simultaneously taking college courses to pursue his career goal. This article describes the rationale for such programs, the scope of the programs, and benefits to students and the community. Additionally, postsecondary education opportunities for students with ID have tremendous implications for goal setting and transition planning that IEP teams should prioritize with students.



This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please [click here](#) or contact: Wendy Overturf at woverturf@wifacets.org.*



Contributions to the Newsletter

Upcoming newsletter topic: **March: Early Childhood**
April: Autism Spectrum Disorders
May: Mental Health

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources, you may use the attached word document. Send submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org. If unable to access form, you may send information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.



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