



Tidbits



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

WHAT IS CAMP GIZMO?

A five-day, hands-on camp where parents, professionals, and students learn how assistive technology can help young children (birth – 8 years) with significant and multiple developmental needs.

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 other caregivers involved with these children are encouraged to attend the camp. Labs and workshops will be available to Camp participants

daily. Parents attend workshops on subjects that will help them better meet the needs of their child. Professionals and students attend workshops of interest that meet professional/educational needs or assist the "focus" family. Teams will meet daily to observe, discuss and implement strategies for the "focus" child.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Camp Gizmo is an interagency funded learning week. Registration includes meals, sleeping accommodations, and Kids Camp. Participant costs:

Focus Families: \$50 – child and two parents/\$25 – each additional family member

Other Camp Participants: \$75 per person/\$25 each additional family member

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Pam Roush, WV Birth to Three - 1-800-642-9704

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Camp Gizmo is funded by the WV Dept of Ed/Office of Early and Elementary Learning, 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, and Assistive Technology Works, Inc. Support and coordination provided by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources.

Winter/Spring 2020

Best Toys for Babies & 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.

See the next page for a few suggestions!



Cardboard Box Creativity

Playing creatively with cardboard boxes is great for multi-age groups of children!

Drawing on cardboard boxes is a motivating way to get reluctant writers/drawers involved.

Discuss with your child/children about what they would like to make.

Discuss with your child/children what they are doing. Ask, "How are you going to play with the box after you have finished creating?"

Add other items as your child's imagination and creativity develops. For example, your child wants to turn the box into a ship and would like to add a flag.

Learning Opportunities include:

- *Fine Motor Development
- *Hand-Eye Coordination and Control




Experimenting with tools provides:

- *Language development – talking about what they are doing (the process)
- *Creativity and Imagination



<https://www.learning4kids.net/2016/01/17/cardboard-box-creativity/>

So, what toys should you consider?

<p>Babies birth to 9 months</p>	<p>Sensory-rich toys like mobiles, rattles, and teethingers.</p> <p>Pop-up toys (like baby-friendly jack-in-the-boxes) and busy boxes.</p> <p>Early pretend play toys like baby-safe rolling vehicles and dolls.</p> <p>Simple musical instruments (like maracas, drums, or xylophones).</p> <p>Board books like</p> <p><i>Please Mr. Panda</i> (by Steve Antony),</p> <p><i>Black Bird, Yellow Sun</i> (by Steve Light),</p> <p><i>Wheels on the Bus</i> (by Paul O. Zelinsky), or</p> <p><i>Peek-a-Who</i> (by Elsa Mroziewicz).</p> 
<p>Babies 9 months to Toddlers 18 months</p>	<p>Toys that imitate real life, such as toy tools, play food, and animal figurines.</p> <p>Problem-solving toys, such as stacking cups, stacking rings, and simple puzzles with knobs.</p> <p>Push and pull toys and balls that encourage active toddlers to move.</p> <p>Great stories like:</p> <p><i>Pete the Cat</i> (by James Dean and illustrated by Eric Litwin),</p> <p><i>A Good Day for a Hat</i> (by T. Nat Fuller and illustrated by Nate Hodgson),</p> <p><i>Here George</i> (by Sandra Boynton and illustrated by George Booth), or</p> <p><i>Hello Hello</i> (by Brendan Wenzel).</p> 
<p>Toddlers 18 to 36 months</p>	<p>Art materials like play dough, crayons, washable markers, and child-safe finger paints.</p> <p>Pretend play props like dress-up clothes, kitchen items, doctor's kit, telephone, toy figurines, toy vehicles/tools, dolls, and stuffed animals.</p> <p>Problem-solving toys like puzzles with knobs, shape-sorters, and different types of blocks (foam blocks, wooden blocks, chunky interlocking plastic blocks)</p> <p>Active play toys like balls or toddler-friendly bowling sets.</p> <p>Fun books like:</p> <p><i>Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!</i> (by Mo Willems),</p> <p><i>Escargot</i> (by Dashka Slater),</p> <p><i>From Head to Toe</i> (by Eric Carle), or</p> <p><i>When's My Birthday</i> (by Julie Fogliano and illustrated by: Christian Robinson).</p> 

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?>



Helping Your Toddler Understand and Manage Emotions

Emotional self-awareness involves identifying and understanding one's emotions – including “big feelings” that can sometimes overwhelm us. As Fred Rogers reminds us: “When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary.” Toddlers can learn the names of core emotions: happy, sad, scared, and excited. Naming emotions empowers toddlers and helps them understand what's going on inside their mind and body.

Name Emotions

Two-year-olds are still developing their expressive language skills and are more likely to scream in frustration than say, “I am mad because you took my doll.” Parents can “listen” to children's behavior and then help them put a name to their emotions. It might sound something like this:

“You are sad. You had to leave the park, and you are crying because you still wanted to play.”

“You are mad! Your brother knocked your tower down, and you are yelling because you feel MAD.”

“Look at your smile! You are happy that you got to pet that soft, cute puppy.”



Build Vocabulary Through Play

You can turn emotional vocabulary building into a game. Take turns choosing a “feeling” word and then express it through exaggerated facial expressions and body language. Start with simple words like “happy” (big smiles, waving hands) and “sad” (frowning face, drooping shoulders). Let them look in the mirror or take a picture on your phone so they can see what they look like. As kids get the hang of it, add more complex words such as “excited,” “surprised” and “frustrated.”



Practitioner Spotlight

Hello, I am Brittany Dennison, I am a physical therapist. I graduated from WVU School of Medicine with my Doctorate in Physical Therapy in 2013. Prior to becoming a physical therapist I was a physical therapy assistant for over 7 years. I have been in the field of physical therapy since 2004. Physical therapy is really the art of movement, the science of the human body, and the passion to make a difference. I have worked in several areas during my career but working with children is my passion. I help families understand movement and developmental milestones in children and educate them on ways they can impact their child's ability to move around independently from rolling to running (and everything in between). Children are brilliant and often times they figure things out for themselves; but physical therapy services can help support them in doing it at a time that meets them where they are in terms of their own strengths. No two children are exactly alike and neither are the treatments they need. I work with families to figure out what works best for them and their child. Sometimes that means special equipment, braces, and/or teaching techniques that help the family nurture their child's exploration. I love being a part of the team and becoming family to the children we work with. Never be ashamed of where your child is compared to other children. We are all unique limited editions of ourselves and you should take pride in that.



Brittany



Brittany's Best Advice



The biggest thing for early development is supervised tummy time from day one. Babies like interaction so on your chest laying down when they're really small and then over a Boppy pillow as they get older for comfort. But getting to their level so you can interact with them face-to-face makes it more enjoyable for them.

Give our Facebook page a like!

WV Birth to Three Region 8



CHOCOLATE COVERED PRETZELS

- A bag of pretzel rods
- A tub of melted semi-sweet dipping chocolate
 - Colorful Sprinkles or other toppings
- Cover a tray with waxed paper. Dip the pretzels halfway into the chocolate; gently scrape off any excess chocolate.
- Coat lightly with sprinkles; place on prepared tray.
- Refrigerate 15 minutes or until chocolate is firm.

ENJOY!

Families!

You have a story
worth telling and we
want to hear it!

Wondering what kind of story to share? It can be your family's story, or a moment in time. It can be a time you felt powerless, or a time you felt powerful. What thoughts and emotions poured over you when you heard the diagnosis from the doctor? What brought you to Birth to Three? Give us your success story or your funny story, we want to hear them all! You may be chosen to be in the "Family Spotlight."

Please keep submissions between 250-300 words (about a half page) and be sure to include some cute pictures! Please email stories or questions to Katie at kathryn.heidel@wvsc.org.

Practitioners!

We also want to highlight and celebrate you and all the amazing work you do for our families!

Please send in an article for our newsletter including...



- Describing your area of discipline
 - Years of experience
 - What's the most rewarding
 - How you help families
- The importance of your area of work
 - Success stories
- Helpful tools to give families

Please send your bio/article to Katie at kathryn.heidel@wvsc.org

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