

# Parent Resource Newsletter

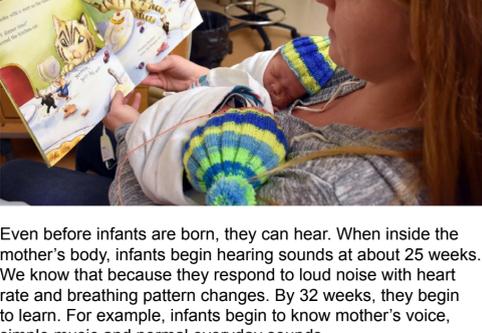
March/April 2016

**Like Us on Facebook**

If you have a good experience at Children's Therapy, we invite you to [let others know](#) with your comments.



## NICU Reading Program Launched by Children's Therapy



Even before infants can hear, they can hear. When inside the mother's body, infants begin hearing sounds at about 25 weeks. We know that because they respond to loud noise with heart rate and breathing pattern changes. By 32 weeks, they begin to learn. For example, infants begin to know mother's voice, simple music and normal everyday sounds.

When infants are born too soon and need to stay in the hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, the sounds they hear are not what they are used to. Instead of human voices and noises of daily life, they hear monitors and other equipment, as well as long stretches of no sound at all. This change in what they hear can slow down infants' language development later on. Hearing human voices early on is needed for normal speech and language skills development.

That's why Children's Therapy Speech Language Pathologist Amy Westendorf, CC-SLP, made a NICU reading program her mission. If you were coming to Children's Therapy in December, you may remember an opportunity to donate money for the NICU reading program. The goal was to provide a book or two to every family who had an infant in the NICU so that moms and family members could read to their new babies to help keep their speech and language skills on track. Thanks to the generous support of our Children's Therapy families and staff, enough books were purchased to provide two books to every NICU family for a year! Thank you to everyone who supported this important program!

## Do All Babies and Toddlers Benefit From Being Read to?



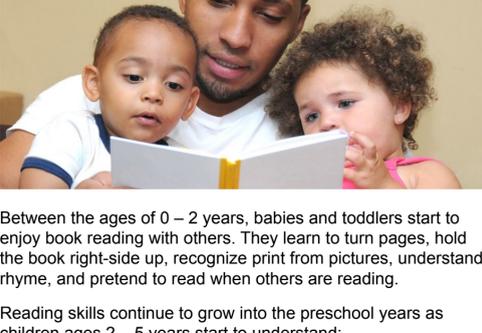
Important brain development continues from birth through the age of 3 years. This is a great window of opportunity for parents and caregivers to expose infants and toddlers to early language enrichment.

### So what can you do to help your infant's speech and language development?

- Read to your child using a calm, consistent voice. Avoid large inflections or reading in too loud of a voice.
- Monitor your infant's cues to determine readiness for participation in this shared experience. Decrease the volume or pace of your voice if you observe an increase in stress or disengagement from your infant. If your infant continues to show signs of increased stress or disengagement, stop reading and soothe your infant.
- You can also talk to or sing simple lullabies to your infant, maintaining a consistent rhythm and volume.

In addition to stimulating your infant's language development, these activities will help you bond with your infant.

### Tips for Reading to Your Toddler and Preschooler



Between the ages of 0 – 2 years, babies and toddlers start to enjoy book reading with others. They learn to turn pages, hold the book right-side up, recognize print from pictures, understand rhyme, and pretend to read when others are reading.

Reading skills continue to grow into the preschool years as children ages 2 – 5 years start to understand:

- Letters have sounds by learning the alphabet song and recognizing and naming letters
- Print is read left-right
- Pages need turning to get to the next part of the story

Toddlers and preschoolers also begin dividing sentences into words and words into syllables, rhyming, and blending sounds together to make full words. Finally, they are learning to see their own name in print and may recognize signs in their environment (e.g., store and restaurant names). However, as babies grow to toddlers and become more active, reading books together can feel more challenging! [View page 2 of this flyer for helpful tips.](#)

## New 5 Minute Parking Spots Coming Soon!

Children's Therapy is setting aside two parking spaces in the front of the clinic for patient drop off only. This will help patients arrive promptly to appointments without parking spots are tight, and then allow caregivers time park their cars after their child is in the clinic.

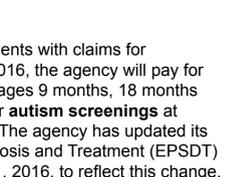
## Looking for Fun Ideas for Age Appropriate Play? Try "1-2-3 Just PLAY with Me" Cards

[Today's Parent](#) recommends [1-2-3 Play with Me cards](#) as a great, age appropriate play idea for any first-time parent. "When you're a first-time parent, it's hard to know exactly what you should do when you're playing with kids. Is three months too early to play cause-and-effect games? At what point does singing the ABCs actually matter? 1-2-3 Play with Me is a box set of easy-to-read notecards that give you age appropriate play ideas designed by a physical therapist and speech-language pathologist," says Today's Parent. The sturdy box filled with cards lists each domain of a child (fine and gross motor, cognition/thinking, speech and language, and social-emotional), for birth through three years of age with developmental milestones and creative play suggestions for each stage. Also included are 17 reference cards for topics from potty training, discipline, sign language, toy and book recommendations, sleep strategies, etc. Cost is \$42.00. (Please see [website](#) for specific ordering information.)



## Are you a Washington Apple Health Client? Your Child's Developmental and Autism Screenings will be Covered

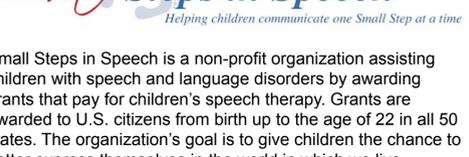
The Health Care Authority has started developmental and autism screenings for young children as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics' Bright Futures Guidelines.



For Washington Apple Health clients with claims for service dates after January 1, 2016, the agency will pay for **developmental screenings** at ages 9 months, 18 months and 24 months. They will pay for **autism screenings** at age 18 months and 24 months. The agency has updated its Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) [Provider Guide](#) as of January 1, 2016, to reflect this change.

(This change complies with Substitute Senate Bill 5317 passed in the 2015 legislative session.)

## Need Help Paying for your Child's Speech & Language Therapy? Small Steps in Speech may be Able to Help



Small Steps in Speech is a non-profit organization assisting children with speech and language disorders by awarding grants that pay for children's speech therapy. Grants are awarded to U.S. citizens from birth up to the age of 22 in all 50 states. The organization's goal is to give children the chance to better express themselves in the world in which we live.

[Visit their website](#) for more information and to apply for a grant.

## Interested in Swim Lessons? British Swim School now Open in Burien



The British Swim School offers a warm indoor heated pool, with a variety of year-round swimming classes from beginner through advanced swimmers, including swim programs for all levels of special needs children and adults. [Learn more.](#)

Questions? [Send an email](#) or call 425.318.7390.

## Come Walk with us at the 5K March for Babies event on Saturday, April 30!



You're invited to join Valley Medical Center's March for Babies walking team. It promises to be a fun day out with people who share our passion for improving the health of babies. It's a great feeling knowing we're all helping real families. Walk the 5K route with us to raise money for babies right here in our community!

[Register under team name Valley Medical Center Women's and Children's Health.](#)

Walk day registration begins at 8 AM with a 9 AM start time. Start at Seattle Center's Fischer Pavilion, 305 Harrison Street, Seattle.

VMC participants will meet for brunch after the walk, place to be decided.

## LINK OF THE WEEK

[View Link of the Week & Link Archives](#)

## RESOURCES

**Insurance Coverage Questions Answered, Special Education Navigation & Socialization Opportunities for those with Autism, Plus Parent Support—Washington Autism Alliance & Advocacy (WAAA) can be a Terrific Parent Resource!**

If you're a parent of a child with autism, then the WAAA should be on your radar! The WAAA can help families with insurance coverage (including understanding your insurance benefits, making appeals, etc.), special education, Medicaid, etc. They provide training sessions for parents about the law and understanding Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and offer respite services through their Gift of Time program. In addition, the organization sponsors two socialization programs, Aspire Girls of Puget Sound and Friendship Matters! The WAAA also has a support group, Supporting Parents of Autism. [Check them out!](#)

## Celebrate Brothers & Sisters with Kindering Center's SibShops Event, April 22 & 23

If you have a 6 to 11 year old, typically-developing brother or sister in addition to a child with special needs, consider SibShops as a great place for siblings to connect with others who share some of their experiences. SibShops is part of a national sibling support project. As part of April's National Sibling Month, the Bellevue chapter is holding an event at the Crossroads Community Center with both kid-friendly and adult sibling workshops.

[See schedule of events](#)

For more information about getting involved with the local SibShops organization, please call Deb Weiner at 425.653.4306.

## SEMINARS AND EVENTS

### Events & FREE Classes

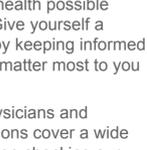
Maintaining the best health possible should be a priority. Give yourself a wellness advantage by keeping informed on health issues that matter most to you and your family.

Led by our expert physicians and specialists, presentations cover a wide range of topics, so keep checking our line-up for the events of most interest and importance to you.

[Sign up here](#) or call 425.656.INFO (4636)

## SAFE & SECURE ONLINE

**Thursday, March 24, 6 – 7 PM**  
Medical Arts Center Auditorium  
VMC's Security Systems Administrator, Sara Perrott, offers tips to help protect you and your children online. Sara Perrott, CISSP, GCIH  
[More Info | Register](#)



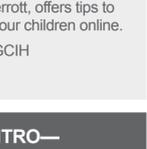
## BODYWORKS INTRO—CREATING HEALTHY EATING & EXERCISE HABITS FOR TEENS & FAMILIES

**Tuesday, April 5, 6:30 – 9 PM**  
Medical Arts Center, Rooms E & F  
Pre-cursor to an optional, 8-week comprehensive class, this introductory class provides parents and caregivers of teens ages 9-14 with guidelines to help improve family eating and activity habits, including healthy shopping and cooking strategies, meal planning and portion size, advice for reading food labels, recipes, food and fitness journals, strategies for physical activities, and more. Open to parents/caregivers and their teens.  
Joanne Montzingo  
[More Info | Register](#)



## AS GIRLS GROW UP

**Saturday, April 6, 9 AM – 12 PM**  
Medical Arts Center Auditorium  
For girls ages 9 to 12 and their parents or caregivers. Learn the physical and emotional aspects of puberty, including menstruation, body changes, sexuality and how babies are conceived.  
[More Info | Register](#)



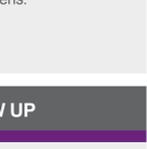
## SEAHAWKS 12K / GLOW 5K RUN-WALK AT THE LANDING

**Sunday, April 17, 5K starts at 9:20 AM**  
Save \$5— Enter code VALLEYMED5 at checkout  
• Kid's Run begins at 10:45 AM  
• Seahawks Spirit contest  
[More Info | Register](#)



## HIP & KNEE REPLACEMENT

**Thursday, May 19, 6 – 7 PM**  
Medical Arts Center Auditorium  
William Barrett, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon  
[More Info | Register](#)



## DONOR CORNER

### Donations

Now through the [Starlight Foundation's website](#), Children's Therapy has a "wish list" of items we'd love to have donated to our department!

If you are interested in purchasing an item for Children's Therapy, please do so directly through the above website.

We welcome donations and especially have a need for new construction paper and new, sealed bubbles. Unfortunately, we cannot accept plush toys or wooden toys (unless the wooden toys are certified to be lead-free).

Thank you to the following donors:

- Nathan S. for the three Superflex/ Social Thinking books!
- All of our wonderful patients families and our staff who donated books to babies in the NICU!
- Deborah L. for the seat cushion and stair stepper

## CHILDREN'S THERAPY WEBSITE

## PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS

Back Issues of the *Parent Resource Newsletter* Available Online

[Click here](#) to view back issues of the Children's Therapy *Parent Resource Newsletter*.

## If This is Your First Parent Resource Newsletter

Welcome to all of our new families! The *Parent Resource* is our bi-monthly e-newsletter, keeping you current with what's going on that may be of interest to your family. Printed copies are also available at Children's Therapy. We'll keep you up-to-date about resources and events in the area, while providing information about Children's Therapy policies and changes. We welcome your comments—please tell your therapist if you have any suggestions or input. Information about non-VMC sponsored events is for your consideration only; we cannot guarantee the accuracy/content of the listed events and services.