

Network News

e-Newsletter of the VA Infant & Toddler Specialist Network

VIRGINIA
INFANT & TODDLER SPECIALIST
NETWORK
"Achieving Excellence in Early Care"

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Brain Injuries in Infants and Toddlers

March is Brain Injury Awareness month and a great time to think about not only the causes of brain injuries but also the best ways to prevent them.

What is a brain injury?

A brain injury is damage that disturbs the function of the brain. It may occur when the head:

- is violently shaken by an external force (e.g., severe whiplash or shaken baby syndrome)
- hits a stationary object (e.g., fall or a windshield in a car accident)
- is hit (e.g., by impact from a ball)

Brain injuries in infants and toddlers can also be caused from medical conditions such as stroke, meningitis, or complications at birth.

What does a brain injury look like in infants and toddlers?

Children with a brain injury can have similar signs and symptoms as adults but it is often harder for them to let others know how they feel. A doctor should be contacted if a child has experienced a blow to the head and has any of the symptoms below:

- tiredness
- irritability (will not stop crying or cannot be consoled)

- changes in eating, sleeping, or playing
- lack of interest in favorite toys or activities
- loss of new skills, such as toilet training
- loss of balance or unsteady walking
- vomiting

What is the effect of a brain injury on an infant or toddler?

There are many factors to consider in regards to the effects a brain injury may have on an infant or toddler. Some of which may even continue into adulthood. The severity of the injury and how much rehabilitation is provided can impact the results of a brain injury. Some effects include:

- interruption in learning new skills since the child is still developing
- sensation, language, or emotion changes
- loss of parts of muscle, speech, vision, hearing, or taste function depending on the area of brain damage
- long- or short-term changes in personality or behavior
- epilepsy
- increased risk for Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and other brain disorders that become more prevalent with age

How can brain injuries in child care centers and family day homes be prevented?

- Always use car seats when transporting infants and toddlers
- Use gates at the top and bottom of stairs until children can go safely up and down
- Stay with young infants on high places such as sofas and changing tables
- Strap children in high chairs with the safety harness
- Make sure playgrounds are safe and soft enough to absorb the shock of falls
- Open windows from the top or use window guards
- Supervise young children at all times

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
The Children's Trust for Children with Brain Injury www.braininjuryhub.co.uk
KidsHealth from Nemours www.kidshealth.org
New York State Department of Health www.health.ny.gov
Stanford Children's Health www.stanfordchildrens.org

RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT



Baby Steps

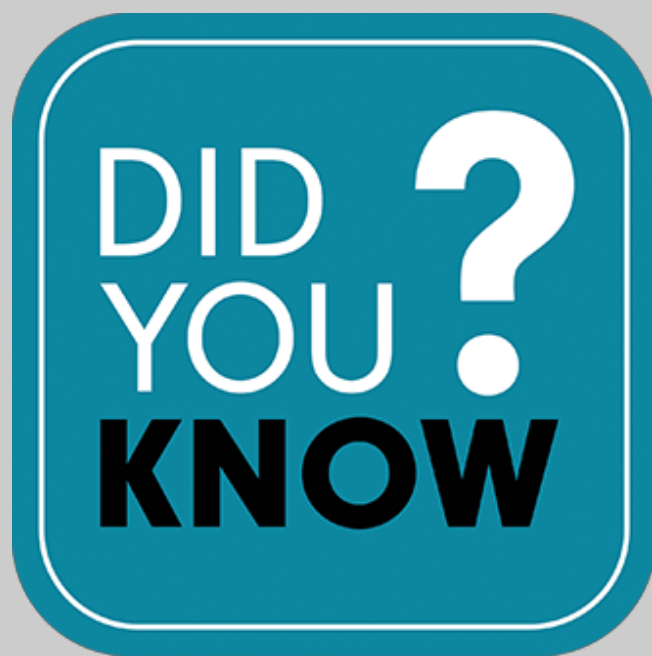
Click **Baby Steps** to receive ZERO TO THREE's latest resource.

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

2019 Annual Virginia Head Start Conference Joining Heart & Mind Leads to School Readiness



Click [Here](#) for more information.



...March 17-23 is National Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week?



Join educators across Virginia celebrating National CACFP Week and help raise awareness that CACFP provides for healthy meals and snacks for thousands of Virginia children every day.

Use CACFP Week messages from cacfp.org/cacfpweek with these Virginia tags (@VDHlivewell #VACACFP #QualitychildcareVA) to be entered into a drawing for \$100 gift cards!

For more information, contact Emily Keenum at emily@vecf.org or CACFP@VDH.Virginia.gov

Working on Wonderful (WOW)

Congratulations to the following programs that have recently completed Level 1 services with the VA ITSN!

Children's International School - Clarendon	Northern	Farrah Deeba	Northern
Faith Christian Center International	Valley	Stepping Stones Preschool & Child Care	Piedmont Southside
Tabitha Courtney	Valley	Aslan Castle	Piedmont Southside
KinderCare #888 Gum Street	Northern	Tuckaway Varina	Central
La Petite - Manchester Lakes	Northern	Amena Sultana	Northern
Carousel Children's Academy	North Central	Kiddie Academy of South Riding	Northern
Lisa Will	Valley	Bright Side	Valley
Maria Ajanel Hernandez	Northern	Gladys Clory	Central
Linda B. Goode	Piedmont Southside	Dawning Point - Stafford	North Central
Eukarya King's Cubs	Valley	ImagiNation Learning Center	North Central
Chesterbrook at Gainesville	North Central	Tyson's Corner Children's Center	Northern
Dawning Point - Fredericksburg	North Central	Child Development Center @ Wyndham	Central
Kama's Kids 4 Christ	Central	Crystal Burrows	Piedmont Southside
Apple Tree Learning Center - Suffolk	Eastern	ABury Child Care	Peninsula
Gloria Almond	Piedmont Southside	Prestige Preschool Academy	North Central
Diane's Day Care	Central	Merit School at Quantico	North Central
Terrie Doss	Piedmont Southside	Live, Laugh, Learn	Western
Little Blessings - Chilhowie Church of God	Western	The Goddard School at Glen Allen	Central
The Learning Experience	Northern	Miss Alyson's Daycare	Central
Gedell Gresham	Central		

Working on Wonderful WOW

We are striving to achieve excellence in
early care for infants and toddlers!

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For more information contact Amy Stutt, VA ITSN Statewide Director at (757)378-3167.