

## FIRST STEPS FAMILIES MARCH 2014

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



### LEARN THE SIGNS. ACT EARLY

In the U.S., nearly seventeen percent of all children experience some form of developmental or behavioral disability. Recognizing a problem early for disabilities such as autism is key for parents and healthcare providers across the nation.

To help children with potential problems reach a healthier future, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) realized the impact of developmental disabilities and invested in a campaign known as 'Learn the Signs. Act Early.' The program aims to help parents measure their child's progress in terms of milestones that monitor more than just the physical. Parents can gauge how their child develops by how they play, learn, speak, and act. A delay in any of these areas could be a sign of a developmental problem. Fortunately, the earlier a delay is recognized, the more you can do to help them reach their full potential. To learn more about this great campaign visit [www.cdc.gov/actearly](http://www.cdc.gov/actearly)

### FREE AUTISM SCREENING

American Health & Wellness Institute of Lexington will be offering free Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers-Revised with Follow-Up Interview (M-CHAT-R/F) screenings and interviews for parents of children age 12 to 30 months.

- Screenings will occur on the last Thursday of the month February through April.
- Screenings will be offered from 10 am through 7 pm. No appointment is necessary, walk-ins welcome.
- Screenings will last approximately 15 to 30 minutes.
- Service providers will be present to conduct screenings, follow up interviews, provide initial consultation of available local resources, and answer any questions parents may have.
- It is not necessary for children to be present to complete the screening. Parents are welcome to bring their child, however childcare will not be provided.

For more information call the Institute at (859) 233-0010 or visit their website at [www.AHWInstitute.com](http://www.AHWInstitute.com)

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## PARENT CONSULTANT

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We are on the Web:  
<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps.htm>  
Or  
[kyfirststeps.org](http://kyfirststeps.org)

## Did you Know?



Parents play a critical role in their child's development. Providing a safe and loving home and spending time together - playing, singing, reading, and even just talking - can make a big difference!

## CONSIDERING A SERVICE PROVIDER CHANGE?

As a family, you have the right to request a change of any of your child's service providers at any time and for any reason. You may also discharge from a service at any time. You do not need to feel bad if you want to try another provider. There are many different personality types and providers use many different intervention techniques. It is important that you find the right fit for your child and family. If your child is not making significant progress after several months you may want to try another provider to see if they have a different technique that may work better for your child. If scheduling with the provider is causing a hardship for you, because you have to take off work to meet with them, ask your service coordinator if there is another provider available that has more flexible hours. **If you have any concerns or questions about your service providers, please speak with your Service Coordinator or contact Connie Coovert, First Steps Parent Consultant.**

## TEXT4BABY

If you're pregnant or a new mom, there is a new free service called **text4baby** that can help keep you and your baby healthy.

**Text4baby** will send three text messages each week to your cell phone with expert health tips to help you through your pregnancy and your baby's first year. It's free to sign up and the messages are free.

To sign up, text **BABY** to **511411**. To sign up for **text4baby** in Spanish, text **BEBE** to **511411**. You can also sign up and find more at [www.text4baby.org](http://www.text4baby.org).

**Text4baby** is an educational service of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition



## YOU JUST 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. Springtime is just around the corner! The color green will soon be all around us!



First Steps Family Newsletter is emailed each month to families and contains articles and tips highlighting current topics in early intervention, child development, and parenting. I also try to include Developmental Activities as a great way to interact with your child. Past issues are archived at [kyfirststeps.org](http://kyfirststeps.org) Check them out!