

As your Family Resource Specialist (FRS), I have served with the Early Steps Program for twenty four years and know the importance of family involvement in the development and care of your child.

I have experienced the joys and concerns that go with caring for a child with special needs.

I am here to provide you with information and opportunities for you and your child.

I can also provide you with community resources, support groups, steps for transition to Pre-K and assist with understanding Early Steps services.

Please call or email for any assistance.

I am here for you at your request.

Your Contact for Resources, Support or to RSVP for Events:
Irma Cofield
Family Resource Specialist



Phone: 850-416-6789

Email:

icofield@ascension.org



Trever's Early Steps Journey from his parents, Tawnya and Dan

I remember February 5, 2015 like it was yesterday. It was the due date of our first child and needless to say he was pretty comfortable in there! I had a very healthy pregnancy with no need for concerns or to rush baby out, so I opted to wait as long as possible for any medical interventions to evict him. Finally, on February 17, nearly two weeks after his due date, we decided to induce labor, and we welcomed our sweet first son, Trever, into the world! The delivery was a dream! I had him naturally, we were able to do skin to skin, delayed cord clamping, and my husband and doula were right by my side encouraging me every moment... I had what most would call an ideal pregnancy, labor, and delivery.

It became evident within those first 24 hours that he was very lethargic. He constantly slept, would barely wake to feed, never did the cluster feeding everyone talked about, and never cried due to hunger. He just had a very relaxed nature about him. At his first doctors appointment we were surprised to find out that he had lost 13% of his body weight, was very hypothermic with a body temperature of 94 degrees, and he was starting to get yellow from jaundice. We instantly went back to the hospital to get fluids in him, his temperature up, and begin blue light therapy right away to get his bilirubin levels under control.

To make a long story short, we ended up going back into the hospital two more times after that visit all within the first 6 weeks of his life, due to an UTI, failure to gain adequate weight and failure to thrive. After advocating for him and seeking answers, we discovered he had a tongue tie and lip tie which were restricting him from using his tongue properly to be able to feed as needed. He was essentially burning more calories than he was taking in and he would just get extremely sleepy while eating from how much effort it took. With recommendations from an IBCLC, we drove to Jacksonville where we had Trever's tongue and lip ties revised by a pediatric dental specialist, Dr. Gary Myers. Within a few days Trever began gaining weight like a champ and eventually became our chunky monkey, breastfeeding until he was 21 months old!

It was evident early on that Trever was not progressing developmentally like other babies his age. He was always very "floppy" and had trouble holding his head up. At 4 months old, we showed concerns to his pediatrician, Dr. Amy Foland, about how he was still not yet able to roll over. She suggested we inquire about an

evaluation with Early Steps to see if Trever would qualify for physical therapy to help increase his strength. A few weeks before he turned 6 months old, he began PT with his amazing physical therapist, Jerri Quesenberry. Jerri was very compassionate, patient, and understanding of Trever's needs, and was always looking for new ways to help him overcome his challenges. She really helped educate me on ways I could help him at home throughout the week. As a stay at home mom, Trever was my number one priority!

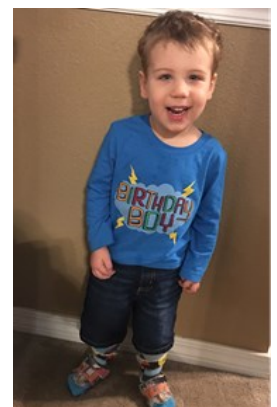
Shortly before his first birthday, Jerri suggested we look into occupational therapy which led us to the Pearl Nelson Center. Trever received OT with his therapist Kari, and soon we also included speech therapy to help with feeding issues. Trever was sitting unassisted, eating puréed foods, and showing huge improvement with his muscle tone. By this point these were all things I started to think would never happen!

Over the next two years Trever continued to show progress! He has never regressed when learning a new skill, though it has always taken him a little longer to accomplish one. Trever just turned 3, which means he officially graduates from Early Steps and transitions into pre-k with the Escambia County School District. He just started school at Escambia Westgate School this week and you can already tell how great the environment is for him!

Early Steps was also great at helping my husband and me understand the progress of transitioning into pre-k and prepared us emotionally, for which we are grateful! At this point Trever has no true diagnosis for his developmental delays, is still not walking independently or verbal, but if it weren't for the wonderful services provided by Early Steps, I have no doubt he wouldn't be as far along as he currently is!

Thank you Early Steps, Jerri, Julie, Kari, and Amy, for showing such love and support for our family!

You helped Trever get the very BEST start to life!



Escambia

Join in our Playdates and Workshops on various subjects:
Please Call or Email Irma to RSVP for your place & childcare.
Childcare is provided in playgroup setting during the learning session.

“Improving Your Toddler’s Behaviors”

- Discuss some basic principles of behavior
 - Learn how to improve skills and decrease frustration
 - Discover simple strategies to help prevent challenging behaviors and develop a plan for how to respond when they do
- Presented by Debbie Keremes,
Board Certified Behavior Analyst

Friday, April 13th

10:00-11:00AM

Pearl Nelson Center

916 E. Fairfield Dr. Pensacola



**Playdates at the
Imagination Station**
April 3rd, May 1st June 5th

9:00–10:30am

351 Cedar St. Pensacola

Located at the Blue Wahoo Stadium-Maritime Park. The Imagination Station contains books, educational toys, touch screen technology and a chance for children and adults to enjoy playing and learning together. This activity center is like no other in this region and is unique to the Public Broadcast Service system nationwide.

Join us for fun & making friends!



Transition to Pre-K

Come to receive step by step instructions for the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Pre-K enrollment process. This workshop is great for parents of children that are getting ready for Pre-K transition. There will be a time for your questions and answers about the transition from Early Steps to Pre-K.

Presented by

Marlene McCulley, Social Worker and
Angela Barnes, ESE Pre-K Coordinator for
Escambia County School System

Friday, May 4th

10:00 - 11:00AM

Pearl Nelson Center

916 E. Fairfield Dr.

Pensacola



Florida Alliance for Assistive Services & Technology (FAAST)

Gulf Coast Regional Demonstration Center
Lavesta Feagin, Assistant FAAST Program
Coordinator will be presenting information and
demonstrating assistive technology equipment for
your child that will be available through the
CIL Disability Resource Center.

Join us to learn about these available resources
for check out to promote your child’s
communication and developmental skills.

Friday, June 15th

10:00-11:00am

Pearl Nelson Center

916 E. Fairfield Dr.

Pensacola



Santa Rosa

Join in our for Playdates and the workshop. You must RSVP to Irma for your place!
The entry fee for playdates will be paid by Family Involvement Funds.

Kindermusik Playgroup

Does your child like music and movement?
This is a Mommy and Me play-time.
We will engage in music and movement that
promotes language, social emotional skills,
physical coordination and creativity.
Join in the fun!

Sarah Lalic, Licensed Kindermusik Educator &
Occupational Therapist

You must RSVP !

The Pace Studio
4634 Lori Lane, Pace, FL
April 23, May 21, June 25
Starts promptly 9:00-10:00am



Okaloosa & Walton

Jump'in Jacks Playdates

Great in-door play area with several Bounce houses.

This is a great time for children to play and parents can meet other parents.
Hosted by Irma, FRS

April 19, May 17, June 21
10:30 – 11:30am
1041 John Sims Parkway
Niceville, FL 32578



Playdates at the Fun Plex

Play, run and jump with us.
This is a great place for active play with others.

"New Day-Thursday,

April 12, May 10, June 14

10:30-11:30am

3123 Gulf Breeze Pkwy.

Gulf Breeze, FL 32563



Florida Alliance for Assistive Services & Technology (FAAST)

Gulf Coast Regional Demonstration Center
Lavesta Feagin, Assistant FAAST Program Coordinator will be presenting information and demonstrating assistive technology equipment for your child that will be available through the CIL Disability Resource Center.

Join us to learn about these available resources for check out to promote your child's communication and developmental skills.

Thursday, May 10th

6:00 - 7:30PM

Children's Center

343 Holmes Blvd. NW, FWB

Story-Time at the Crestview Library

Join in to try something new...

This story time is designed for you and your child to engage in story, music and movement lead by Ms. Heather, Librarian

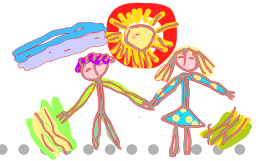
Children learn from listening and active play through stories.

April 5, May 3, June 7

Doors open at 10:00 - Story time begins at 10:15am

Crestview Library 1445 Commerce Dr., Crestview, FL 32539

Support Connections



ESCAMBIA & SANTA ROSA COUNTIES

Apraxia Support: Jennifer Boswell 850-398-6758 or emeraldcoastlife@gmail.com

Autism Pensacola Inc.: 850-434-7171 Website: www.autismpensacola.org

Email: info@autismpensacola.org

22Q.11 Deletion and other syndromes linked to 22Q: Angela Helvey 520-444-9498 or daveangela2002@yahoo.com

Emerald Coast Exceptional Families: 850-396-1008 ECExceptionalFamilies@gmail.com or <https://www.emeraldcoastexceptionalfamilies.org/>

Epilepsy Parent Support Group: 850-433-1395 Website: www.efof.org

Facing Forward: Parents of children with facial abnormalities; Frances Shell 850-476-2701

Genes of Joy: Parents of children with Down Syndrome, Christi 850-377-0018, Katie 850-375-0800 or genesofjoy@gmail.com

Pensacola Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and other Relatives: Call 850-432-1475 ext.175 to confirm meeting date & location, child care provided, Reservations requested!

Mended Little Hearts / Hearts of Hope: Parents of children with heart conditions: Heather mendedlittleheartsofpensacola@gmail.com or (850) 972-8160.

Pensacola Exceptional Parents Connection: Parents of Children with various exceptionalities: including Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Spina Bifida and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Angela abeddy01@gmail.com or 384-7330 or Amy amyimaxwell@att.net or 393-8808

Pensacola Parents of Multiples: Parents of twins, triplets and multiple births: PensacolaParentsofMultiples@hotmail.com or 850-384-1231

Face-book at <https://www.facebook.com/pensacolamultiples>

Preemies of Pensacola on Facebook: [Facebook.com/Groups/PreemiesOfPensacola](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/PreemiesOfPensacola)
To connect with other families from the NICU at Children's Hospital-Sacred Heart

OKALOOSA & WALTON COUNTIES

Apraxia Support: Contact Jennifer Boswell 850-398-6758 emeraldcoastlife@gmail.com

Autism Spectrum on the Emerald Coast, Inc.: Executive Director, Brad Burnette (850) 496-3062 or Brad@ASECFL.com Website: www.ASECFL.com

22Q.11 Deletion and other syndromes linked to 22Q: Contact Angela Helvey 520-444-9498 or daveangela2002@yahoo.com

Emerald Coast Exceptional Families: 850-396-1008 ECExceptionalFamilies@gmail.com or <https://www.emeraldcoastexceptionalfamilies.org/>

Epilepsy Parent Support Group: 850-433-1395 Website: www.efof.org

If you are unable to make connection with group contact,
call Irma, your Family Resource Specialist,
for assistance at 850-416-6789 or icofield@ascension.org





Early Steps serving Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties
5150 Bayou Blvd. POB Suite 1-N, Pensacola, FL 32503

Contact information:

Family Resource Specialist, Irma Cofield # 850-416-6789
icofield@ascension.org

Interim Program Manager, Lane Guess # 850-416-6711
lguess@ascension.org

Check out our
NEW WEBSITE!

Early Steps “new” website for families and providers.

<http://earlystepsatsacredheart.org/>

Resource WEBSITES:

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp>

[https://sacred-heart.org/childrenshospital/main/services/page/?](https://sacred-heart.org/childrenshospital/main/services/page/?ID=1006&_ga=2.160987773.1995327817.1519239644-850866119.1444944535)

[ID=1006&_ga=2.160987773.1995327817.1519239644-850866119.1444944535](https://sacred-heart.org/autism)

<http://www.sacred-heart.org/autism>

<http://escambia.communityos.org/cms/> Community Resources or Call 2-1-1

<http://www.elcescambia.org/ParentResources.aspx>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

<http://www.rdmag.com/news/2017/05/handheld-screen-time-linked-speech-delays-young-children>

<http://www.babysignlanguage.com/dictionary/>

<http://www.lifeprint.com> Signing website

<http://www.candokiddo.com/play>

[http://helpthemshine.com/HTS Guidelines for Special need children.pdf](http://helpthemshine.com/HTS_Guidelines_for_Special_need_children.pdf)

<https://pathways.org/milestones/>

<http://www.readingbrightstart.org/>

<http://www.state.lib.la.us/literacy-and-reading/early-literacy/nursery-rhyme-printable-mini-books>

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/people-with-disabilities/bright-expectations/>

http://www.floridahealth.gov/AlternateSites/CMS-Kids/families/early_steps/

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/>

<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/>

<http://www.dsdiagnosisnetwork.org/>

