

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@shhpens.org



Nico's Early Steps Journey from his Mom, Cherie...

In July 2016 at two years old Nico experienced a grand mal seizure at home, a second one in the emergency room, and a third one after he was admitted to the hospital. All three seizures were in a nine hour period. So many thoughts ran through my mind; it was one of the scariest experiences that my husband and I have had. The hospital performed several tests and it was determined that Nico had epilepsy with an unknown cause. He was discharged on seizure medicine twice a day and our new normal began. In August, Nico was two years and 3 months old and was only able to say five words; however he was able to understand everything. The neurologist examined him and came to the conclusion that the seizures had affected his expressive language. I contacted Early Steps in late August and we began the process of getting Nico evaluated. Unfortunately, a few weeks into the process Nico's brother, Logan, was diagnosed with leukemia adding much stress to our family. I was so overwhelmed and worried immensely about Nico's speech delay and Logan's health. Thankfully, Christine our Service Coordinator was incredibly supportive and Nico was quickly evaluated and determined eligible. Kim Nelson the Infant Toddler Developmental Specialist saw Nico weekly and made such an incredible

impact on his life. He adored her. Brandi Hook is an amazing Speech Therapist and Nico looked forward to her weekly visits to "play." It was so amazing to see results so quickly. He made such huge strides in just a few months. When Nico turned 3 in May, we had to say our farewells to Kim, Brandi and Kim, as Nico was graduating Early Steps. It was a bittersweet moment. Nico went from speaking 5 words in September to speaking 2-3 word sentences in May. Although he has graduated Early Steps our journey is ongoing. Nico will be entering into the pre-k program at Gulf Breeze Elementary in the fall to continue improving his speech. We are excited to see what next year brings. Nico is so bright and is such a sweet little boy. He is loved immensely by me, his dad, and three siblings. He leaves an impression on everyone that he meets and is always smiling. He is destined for great things.

"Thank you Early Steps for the support, love, and help. You have made a difference in our lives."



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.

Potty Training Workshop

Let's Begin! It may take Time!

Signs of Readiness

Overcoming Difficulties

Training Chart

Instructions for Success!

Presenter: Lakesha Lewis, MPH
Developmental/Support Specialist

Friday, July 14th
10:00-11:00am
Pearl Nelson Center
916 E. Fairfield Dr.
Pensacola



Playdates at the Imagination Station

July 18th & 25th 1:00-3:00pm

August & September Dates & Time to be announced later!

351 Cedar St. Pensacola

Located at the Blue Wahoo Stadium-Maritime Park.
We have reserved the center for Early Steps families only!

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!



Picky Eaters -vs- Problem Feeders

Many children who have sensory challenges are very cautious about trying new foods. We, as the grown ups in their lives, often find ourselves saying "just try it"...or "try this food taste, or this food texture." Often very cautious children reject the food by turning away, pushing it away, gagging, crying or even vomiting. It becomes unpleasant for the child and the grown up!

Come learn more about picky eaters, problem feeders, and helpful strategies to implement within your daily routines. Kari Cashio OTR/L will provide you with information to apply in order for you to know what interventions would be most effective for you and your family to have positive experiences with mealtime interactions.

Friday, August 4th, 10:00-11:00AM
Pearl Nelson Center
916 E. Fairfield Dr. Pensacola



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, Sept. 8th
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

Come join our Kindermusik Play Group where your child will engage in music-and-movement activities that promote language and social-emotional skills, early math and literacy, physical coordination, and creativity. This group is led in a family-centered way to promote at home learning as well.

Sarah Lalic, Licensed Kindermusik Educator
& Occupational Therapist

**You must RSVP only room
for 10 children & parents.**

The Pace Studio

4634 Lori Lane, Pace, FL

July 17th, Aug. 21st, Sept. 18th

Starts promptly 11:00-11:45



Playdates at the Fun Plex

Join in for a fun play time for your child. Also this is a great time to connect with other parents.

There are all kinds of areas to play, run and jump.

July 12th, August 9th , September 13th

10:30–11:30am

3123 Gulf Breeze Pkwy. Gulf Breeze,

FL 32563



Okaloosa & Walton

Playdates at the Beach Elite Gym

Join in for a fun in-door playtime. There are bouncing areas so your child can jump, run and play.

This is also a great time to meet other parents.

Hosted by Irma, FRS

July 24th

August 14th

September 11th

10:30 – 11:30am

306 Duval St.

Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32547

First Year Pre-K Success Story

Join in to hear about Alex's successes...this is a story that you will not want to miss!

Hear ways to make your child's future successful:

- Goals & achievements
 - Riding the bus
- Social interaction with classmates
- Building confidence & independence
- New found freedom for Mom without guilt....

Presented by Jean, Alex's Mom

Thursday, August 17th

6:00 - 7:30PM

Children's Center

343 Holmes Blvd. NW, FWB

Stay tuned Crestview area: I am working to get Early Steps events scheduled.

Below is a website with other summer activities:

[/united-way.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2017-CSFGuidebook-FINAL.pdf](http://united-way.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2017-CSFGuidebook-FINAL.pdf)

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

Down Syndrome Society of NW Florida: Amy 850-292-4796 amyesmith33@yahoo.com,
Penny 850-276-9990 pputman9@gmail.com or Melissa 850-390-5786

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Down-Syndrome-Society-of-West-Florida>

Emerald Coast Hands and Voices: Parents of children that are deaf or hard of hearing
Kay Wise wisewoman_kc@live.com

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

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

Pensacola Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and other Relatives: Call 850-432-1475
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 amylmaxwell@att.net or 393-8808

Pensacola Parents of Multiples: Parents of twins, triplets and multiple births:
PensacolaParentsofMultiples@hotmail.com or 850-449-4208

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

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@shhpens.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@shhpens.org

Program Manager, Debbie Goldberg # 850-416-6476

deborah.goldberg@shhpens.org

RESOURCE WEBSITES:

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

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

<http://fndusa.org/> Family Network on Disabilities

<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

<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.GreaterPensacolaParents.com>

<http://www.5210nwfl.com> Let's Go Northwest Florida- resources

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

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

<http://www.elcsantarosa.com/ccrrform.htm> - Childcare Services for Santa Rosa County

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

<http://www.zerotothree.org/military>

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

<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/play/tips-and-tools-play.html>

<http://www.fdlrswestgate.org> - Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resource System

<http://www.211nwfl.org> Community Resources or Call 2-1-1

<http://www.pamf.org/children/common/development/>

<http://www.pamfblog.org/2012/05/tips-for-successful-potty-training/>

<http://www.pamfblog.org/2013/11/toddler-tantrums/>

<http://www.pamfblog.org/2015/04/early-child-development/>

<http://www.pamfblog.org/2014/12/child-speech-development/>

<http://www.playingwithwords365.com/how-to-help-your-child-talk-the-ebook/>

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

