

Neurodevelopmental Centers In Washington State

Birth to Three Developmental Center, Federal Way

Boyer Children's Clinic, Seattle

Children's Developmental Center, Richland

Children's Therapy Center, Kent

ChildStrive, Everett

Holly Ridge Center, Infant Toddler Program, Bremerton

Innovative Services NW, Vancouver

Kindering Center, Bellevue

Mary Bridge Children's Therapy Services, Tacoma

Mary Bridge Children's Therapy Unit at Good Samaritan Hospital, Puyallup

PeaceHealth Medical Group, PeaceHealth Children's Therapy, Bellingham

Progress Center, Longview

Providence Everett Medical Center, Providence Children's Center, Everett

Skagit Preschool and Resource Center, Mount Vernon

Skagit Valley Hospital, Children's Therapy Center, Mount Vernon

Spokane Guilds' School & Neuromuscular Center, Spokane

Valley Medical Center, Children's Therapy Department, Renton

Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital, Children's Village, Yakima

**For questions, please contact:
CSHCN.support@doh.wa.gov**

Neurodevelopmental Centers

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Neurodevelopmental Centers (NDCs) are private, non-profit organizations that provide evaluation, diagnosis, coordinated treatment planning, and specialized therapy to children from birth to 21. Over 23,000 children with a variety of diagnoses such as down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, attention deficit disorder, and overall developmental delay were served by NDCs this year.

Specialized services aid children through development allowing them to progress at a comfortable pace. In doing so, NDC work reduces the financial strain of other state healthcare services.

As a result of successful early intervention, 32% of toddlers exiting NDC programs did not require special education at age 3 (ESIT Fast Facts 2015-16).

The Children with Special Health Care Needs Program (CSHCN) provides a base-level of state funding to ensure NDCs and the community have the needed capacity to provide specialized care for those in-need. CSHCN funding does not pay for actual services but rather, helps to support NDC infrastructure to boost their ability to provide assistance within their community. CSHCN funding is only a portion of NDCs total operating budget.

Success stories like the following are why NDCs remain necessary for children and families in Washington State.

"Peace Be With You!"

"My child, Gaelen, has received physical therapy and occupational therapy treatment at PeaceHealth Medical Group Children's Therapy in Bellingham for one year. After attending therapy sessions, my child is now capable of climbing stairs, adjusting to all types of change more smoothly, and is better able to play with his older brothers! He truly enjoys playing with the therapists and trying new things (huge deal) every week. This clinic is wonderful. The service is amazing and you can see they are passionate about ensuring the kids have what they need to succeed."

Gaelen has made huge gains over the course of the year. To see him catching up to children his age after his heart-transplant is invaluable for him and for our family.

Thank-you,
Danae Johnson, Whatcom County

Myra Garcia Ramirez—Running toward 3! Innovative Services NW, Vancouver

Born premature at 26 weeks gestation, Myra Garcia Ramirez was significantly delayed in many developmental areas. Her parents, Esmeralda and Magdeleno, enrolled her in an Early Intervention program at Innovative Services NW when she was just 10 months old. At that time Myra couldn't roll and had difficulty swallowing, eating, and sleeping through the night without coughing excessively. Esmeralda would sleep alongside her daughter to provide care when needed.

Two and a half years later, the NDC team celebrated with Myra's family her transition to the program for children ages 3-5, where the only necessary focus would be Myra's speech.

Through the Early Intervention program, Esmeralda received suggestions and learned techniques that helped better develop Myra's ability to crawl, walk, eat, communicate, and progress independently as a healthy toddler. Myra had been unable to feed herself and didn't like foods, which led to weight loss and consideration of a feeding tube. With luck and consistency with their early childhood educator, Aurora, the family learned ways to make a difference in Myra's life without unnecessary, and costly, medical attention.

Over the last few years, Myra has received physical, occupational, and speech therapy and will continue receiving services from an early childhood educator until she turns three later this summer.

With tears in her eyes, Esmeralda smiled and said, *"Once she started walking, she was so excited to follow her siblings and stomp around outside with her family. The therapists have helped our spirited and adven-*



Benjamin Mary Bridge, Tacoma

When Benjamin was 2 months old, he contracted pneumococcal meningitis. After leaving the hospital, Benjamin was slow to recover. He suffered many after effects, some of which became apparent immediately and some of which materialized over the months and years to follow.

When Benjamin was 10 months old he was sent to Mary Bridge for a swallow study due to the fact that he was unable to eat food without choking and often experienced chest colds. It was during this swallow study that we learned Benjamin was silently aspirating. At age 2 he began swallowing therapy. Benjamin is now 6 and the work that therapists, Jennifer and Janet, have done with him has been life-changing for Ben and our family. Weekly coaching sessions taught Benjamin a safer way to drink and become more aware of his ability to swallow. Therapists also provided parent education and support, better developing our skills to care for our child. The new skills that Janet has taught Benjamin through weekly therapy sessions have improved Benjamin's awareness of his swallowing abilities, enough to allow us to decrease the thickness of his liquids. We've moved Benjamin from liquids thicker than honey to those less than nectar thick. Benjamin is even able to drink thin liquids in a few very controlled settings, something that we never thought we would see happen.

Before starting at the Speech and Hearing Clinic, Benjamin was headed for a feeding tube. I believe that this would have been a life-long struggle. Due to the dedicated work of both Jennifer and Janet at the clinic, Benjamin has completely avoided having to go that route. He is now able to manage liquids and food, and fully understands how to keep himself safe. Not that he always follows those rules, after all he is 6, but he understands them. Janet has taught him life-long skills that will allow him to participate in the simple act of eating and sharing meals with others. This is something that our family will forever be grateful to her for doing.

Our neurologist tells us that Benjamin is doing fabulous; much better than he would have expected. I believe that this progress would never have been possible without the amazing talent and dedication of the therapists we have met at Mary Bridge Children's Therapy.



Megan: Hope at SPARC Mt Vernon

Hope: That's what the SPARC program gave our family when we first found out about all the benefits that children with special needs would receive.

My little Megan was 3 years old when we started with SPARC. At that time, she was unable to talk or express herself, had a balance and coordination problem which caused her to fall often, and didn't have the ability to follow simple directions like putting on her own shoes.

I remember sitting down with the SPARC staff member for the first time in January of 2014, and they asked me what my goals were for Megan at that time. I broke down in tears and said, "I wish she could tell me that she loves me, or 'I love you mommy' and express her needs more clearly to me...so I can do more for her."

Now, after two years of the program, with all the effort, love, and dedication of the special education teachers, speech and physical therapists, and teacher's assistants, my daughter can now express herself and her needs more clearly, follow simple directions (most of the time), sing, and the special bonus: she tells me that "SHE LOVES ME"... several times a day, every day, which is music to my ears!

Megan looks forward to preschool every morning. She looks forward to seeing her teachers and bus drivers, and words cannot express how grateful we feel for the program. SPARC has changed our lives and is improving the foundation of our daughter's future academically and otherwise. Megan has been encouraged to be more confident, even in her own limitations, so I have no doubt that the program is a life-changer for other children with special needs and their families as well.

Thank you, SPARC, and the wonderful staff!

~Wendy Jahns, Mt Vernon

