

HISTORY OF RIVER VALLEY CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Founded 1971



EARLY 1970'S

- ❖ Research explodes showing benefits of quality early care
- ❖ WV Governor and Department of Education provide state funds for early childhood demonstration center in Huntington
- ❖ Norma Gray founds the program, with help of Mary Ann Hale. Board is selected.
- ❖ Two new centers for children ages 3 and 4 open, one in Cabell County and one in Kanawha County



MID TO LATE 1970'S



- ❖ Programming established to help children with autism and other disabilities
- ❖ Teacher training programs established to enhance skills of teachers serving young children.
- ❖ Programs are formed to work with families of young children
- ❖ Interagency collaboration expands
- ❖ Variety of family trainings are provided

THE 1980'S

- ❖ Agency is up to 53 employees in 1980
- ❖ Agency helps establish new child care centers until they can become self-sustaining
- ❖ Food program begins to help home-based child care providers optimize nutrition
- ❖ Annual Early Childhood Conference is established
- ❖ Dunbar's early learning center is first in W.Va. to get national accreditation



THE 1990'S

❖ Agency formally adopts the name River Valley Child Development Services

❖ Serves 900 children and families with 100 staff

❖ School-age programs are first offered

❖ Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist program founded, sanctioned by departments of Education and Labor

❖ LINK founded to give more families access to care

❖ Enterprise Child Development Center opens



THE 2000'S

- ❖ Services expanded to all 55 counties in WV
- ❖ River Valley website is developed
- ❖ Choices and Connect Child Care Resource and Referral begin to promote availability of quality care
- ❖ Training Connections and Resources expands to provide training opportunities statewide including statewide conferences, nurse health consultants, T.E.A.C.H scholarship and WV STARS.



THE 2000'S

- ❖ WV Birth to Three funded to help infants through 3-year-olds with developmental delays
- ❖ River Valley moves to current location on 7th Ave.
- ❖ Centers establish first Pre-K programs
- ❖ Tuition Investment Program Support (TIPS) begins offering child care assistance to families



“Our awesome responsibility to ourselves, to our children, and to the future is to create ourselves in the image of goodness, because the future depends on the nobility of our imaginings.” – Barbara Grizzuit Harrison



River Valley Child Development Services has made the education and wellbeing of children and families our focus for 45 years. We will continue to keep them our focus for the next 45.