

**July – August 2025**



# ***PIECING IT TOGETHER***

The Official Newsletter of WVPTI, Inc.

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## ***Our Values***

- ✓ Quality Leadership
- ✓ Education & Knowledge
- ✓ Caring-Emotional Support
- ✓ Advocacy
- ✓ Collaborative Partnerships

*“Summer’s lease hath all too short a date.” ~William Shakespear*



From the Director's Desk

*Brenda Lamkin, Executive Director, WVPTI*

As the golden days of summer begin to gently fade, I hope you've had time to soak up sunshine, build cherished memories, and enjoy the slower pace of the season. Whether your family spent time exploring the outdoors, reconnecting with loved ones, or simply embracing quieter moments at home, I hope this summer brought you joy.

Now, as we turn the page and prepare for a new school year, WVPTI is ready to walk alongside you with a renewed sense of purpose and community. This edition of our newsletter offers a little bit of everything to help your family make a strong and supported transition into fall.

We're especially excited to introduce our new Early Childhood Program, a special initiative for parents and caregivers of young children who have recently received a diagnosis. This program is designed to offer compassionate guidance, empowering information, and real-life tools for navigating those early steps with clarity and confidence.

Additionally, we are thrilled to continue "Guiding the Journey," our *Transition to Adulthood Training Program for Parents*, now entering its third year. The overwhelming response and growing number of families engaging in this training reflect just how important it is to feel prepared and connected during this pivotal time in a young person's life.

As always, we'll also be offering a variety of training sessions this season—designed for families of children and youth of all ages and stages, including those preparing to transition to adulthood. Whether you're new to advocacy or a seasoned parent leader, there's something here for you.

So, as you enjoy the last lingering days of summer, I invite you to take a moment to breathe in gratitude for the memories made and look ahead with hope for what's next.

## ***Mission Statement***

West Virginia Parent Training and Information, Inc. is committed to empowering and supporting parents and caregivers of children, youth, and young adults with disabilities from birth through the age of 26. Our mission is to enhance ALL family engagement by fostering knowledge, advocacy, leadership, and active participation in their children's educational journey. We also provide essential guidance and resources to support youth as they transition to adulthood from high school to post-secondary education, employment, and independent living, equipping them with the tools and support necessary to achieve successful and fulfilling futures.

### **GUIDING THE JOURNEY**

*A Transition Training Program  
For Parents*



We are excited to announce that Guiding the Journey: A Transition Training Program for Parents, facilitated by WV Parent Training and Information, will launch its third year in August 2025. This year, we will invite parents and caregivers of children and youth with disabilities, ages eight through twenty-one, to participate.

The transition from school to adulthood presents unique challenges for young people with disabilities, and navigating this process can often feel overwhelming. Parents and caregivers may struggle to determine where to start or which priorities to focus on. Through comprehensive training sessions, including Lifecourse Tools, our goal is to support parents and caregivers in navigating this critical after-school transition.

We are pleased to announce that two LifeCourse Ambassadors will play an integral role in assisting parents and caregivers throughout the Transition Training Program. Their expertise and firsthand experience will provide valuable insight and guidance as parents navigate this critical time.

## Applications Open for West Virginia's 2025 School Clothing Allowance Program

The West Virginia Department of Human Services (DoHS), Bureau for Family Assistance (BFA) will begin accepting school clothing allowance applications on July 7, 2025, for eligible children enrolled in West Virginia schools. All families must apply to be considered for eligibility. Each eligible child will receive a \$200 benefit that may be used toward the purchase of appropriate school clothing or piece goods for families who sew clothing for their children.

### How to apply

Families of children who are enrolled in West Virginia schools may be eligible for school clothing allowance benefits depending upon household income. The monthly income for a family of four may not exceed \$3,380. Verification of income for July must be submitted with the application.

### Income Limits for the School Clothing Allowance Program for 2025:

Income Limits for the School Clothing Allowance Program for 2025:

No. of Persons in Household	Income Limit	No. of Persons in Household	Income Limit
1	\$1,632	6	\$4,456
2	\$2,215	7	\$5,129
3	\$2,798	8	\$5,712
4	\$3,380	9	\$6,295
5	\$3,963	10	\$6,878
• \$583 for additional persons			

Families may apply online at [www.wvPATH.wv.gov](http://www.wvPATH.wv.gov) or request a paper application be mailed to them by contacting their [local DoHS office](#) or by calling 1-877-716-1212. **Applications must be received by July 31, 2025.**

(West Virginia Department of Human Services (DoHS))

## ***Important OCR Regional Office Update***

Just a heads up, many of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Regional Offices have recently closed or been consolidated. This may affect where civil rights complaints are now handled for your state. For those of us in West Virginia who previously worked with the Philadelphia Office, that's no longer the case. To find out which OCR office now serves your area, visit this helpful site and enter your state:

[https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr?field\\_state\\_value=693](https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr?field_state_value=693)

The OCR office for **West Virginia** is located at:

Atlanta Office  
Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
61 Forsyth St. S.W., Suite 19T10  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8927

Telephone: 404-974-9406  
FAX: 404-974-9406; TDD: 800-877-8339  
Email: [OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov)

## ***WV Parent Training and Information – Out and About!***

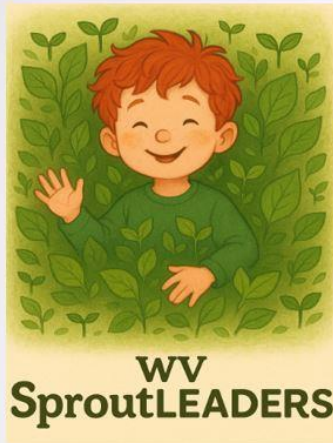
West Virginia Parent Training and Information proudly presented Guiding the Journey: A *Transition Training Program for Parents* at the recent West Virginia Secondary Transition Conference.

We thank Tonya Rutkowski, Secondary Transition/SSIP Coordinator, WVDE – OSEP for her outstanding efforts in organizing this event.



## ***New Early Childhood Training for Families After a Diagnosis***

***Starting October of 2025***



### ***Beginning the Journey***

#### **SproutLEADERS**

*Growing Leadership and Advocacy from  
the roots up!*



We are proud to introduce WVPTI's newest early childhood initiative. This program is an empowering 5 session training series created especially for parents and caregivers of a child with a disability following an initial diagnosis.

This critical moment in a family's journey can feel overwhelming, with information coming from every direction. At WVPTI, we understand that parents and caregivers need time, space, and easy-to-understand resources to process the changes taking place in their lives. That's why this program is designed to meet families right where they are and with compassion, clarity, and practical support.

As a parent who's walked this path, I remember how quickly life changed. I was suddenly immersed in a whirlwind of meetings, doctor's appointments, lab tests, speech sessions and the list went on. I hit the ground running, just like the Road Runner, chasing every bit of information I could find to help my son. It wasn't until years later that



I could finally pause, breathe, and realize we were going to be okay. Support, knowledge, and compassion made all the difference.

That moment of clarity began with one phone call to WV Parent Training and Information. If you or someone you know is at the beginning of this journey, we're here to be that first call and every call.

Here are the topics of the 5 sessions that will be provided.

1. Understanding Developmental Milestones
2. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
3. Transitioning to Special Education Part B
4. Individualized Education Program (IEP) and
5. Leadership and Advocacy.

WVPTI is here to walk the path with you.

~ Brenda Lamkin, M.Ed., WVPTI, Inc. Executive Director  
Infant Family Specialist, Endorsed Reflective Supervisor, IMH-E®

## Get in Touch With Us

### Address

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### WVPTI Primary Contact

**Brenda Lamkin**  
Executive Director

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### Office Hours

**Monday – Friday**  
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

*Please note that staff are frequently off-site for meetings or workshops. Please call before visiting to ensure there is someone available to meet with you.*

*If you are unable to call us during office hours, please leave a message. We will be happy to return your call the following day.*