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CPD LEGACY STORY: BRADLEY AND BRADY WILLET

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This CPD Legacy Story is written by Brenda Willets, the mother of Bradley and Brady who participated in the Up to 3 Early Intervention program.

My name is Brenda Willets, and our family benefited greatly from the Up-to-3 Program located at USU. My twins were born three months early due to Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome. They were very sick babies. While in the NICU in Ogden, I started asking questions about Early Intervention services available in Cache Valley. I had a sister with Down Syndrome receive services when she was very young, so I knew there was something out there. The social worker at McKay Dee Hospital told me who to contact. Weeks before we left the hospital I had made the call. I wanted Early Intervention services as soon as possible. I then called to let them know when the twins were coming home. We had EI services in the home within the first week of the babies coming home.

During a time when I was very overwhelmed, it was wonderful to have such great services. We had a great service coordinator who made sure that we were receiving all of the services necessary. She also came in and gave me ideas and suggestions of things to do to help the babies, and how to involve my other children.

We received Occupational and Physical Therapy which was very helpful. They came in once a week, and the things they did with my children were invaluable. They carefully taught me how to work with my children, they not only showed me what to do, but they told me how this would help.

We also received help from a vision consultant through Utah Schools for the Deaf & and Blind (USDB). It is great that USDB and Up-To-3 work so well together. The collaboration was wonderful! I also appreciated how our vision person would sometimes come with the OT and the PT. They would come up with ideas together on what would help my twins the best.

We had speech off and on. When we were in the program, they were trying to find a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), so receiving speech services was more difficult, but I understand the situation that Up-To-3 had at that time. We did receive help from the hearing side of USDB, and this was helpful, as they worked with us on speech and communication. Our service coordinator also gave input, ideas, and suggestions on things to do and try.

One of the things that I love about Up-To-3, is that they showed me how to incorporate the valuable skills they were teaching me into daily routines. This made the ‘therapy’ seem ‘do-able’. They also showed me how to make the ‘therapy’ seem more like play - it actually was ‘play’.

I also appreciate the times the Early Interventionists listened to and spoke with me about how I was doing, and questions that I might have. If I had questions, they would bring in resources, or give me ideas of where to go to find the answers.

Up-To-3 was also very helpful to us during the transition process. I was not excited to send my boys to preschool, but they helped me by giving me the information needed for me to feel comfortable with the situation. They gave very great advice.

With my babies being more fragile, it was so nice to have people coming into our home, rather than me having to take the twins to all of their appointments somewhere else. The Early Interventionists were very considerate of the fact that they were coming into our home. They showed respect, and made me feel comfortable, even if I was behind on my daily housekeeping.
Early Intervention was the key to my boys’ success. The services were invaluable. I hope that Early Intervention will always be available to families in need. I have referred others to Up-To-3, and will continue doing so. Thank you for having such great services right here in our own backyard!