

Pediatric Development Center



~ Newsletter ~
August
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We provide occupational therapy evaluation, treatment and consultation for children with developmental delays, autism/Asperger, cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, sensory processing disorders, attention, behavioral concerns, handwriting, and other areas of weakness. Contact us for further information:

125 Presumpscot St.
Portland, ME. (207) 699-5531

Good Resources:

www.marthastewart.com/kids

www.do2learn.com

www.abilitations.com

The beginning of a new school year is just around the corner and it's never too early to begin brushing up on the skills that will help your child be successful. This month we explore fun ways to work on handwriting and other fine motor skills.

Right Writing

"Writing is a complex task that involves much more than just holding a pencil or pen. It requires good head and shoulder stability to position the forearm and wrist correctly, adequate touch skills to feel the position of the pencil in the hand, and visual perception skills to see and form letters correctly. Many children have problems with handwriting because of difficulties in one or more of these areas.

Tips For Healthy Handwriting:

Children need lots of "heavy work" input to the arms in preparation for writing. Wheelbarrow walks, crawling through play tunnels, hanging from a bar, and riding/pushing a scooter board are all great ways to build up the neck, shoulder and hand muscles.

Pre-writing sensory activities are a must for handwriting success. Drawing with the fingers in shaving cream, finger paint or baby powder are great fun and provide

plenty of sensory input to the hands.

Remember to strengthen the hand muscles! Squeeze putty or hide simple objects such as pennies or pegs in modeling clay or putty and have the child use fingers to poke around and find the hidden items.

Tools that involve crossing the middle of one's body, using hands together in activities, activities requiring each hand to do something different, and using the legs and/or arms in activities such as jumping, hopping on one foot, skipping rope, jumping jacks or riding a bike or scooter, are activities that enhance communication between the two sides of the brain. Teachers and parents are excited when these brain boosters translate into write-on success!"

Source:

www.abilitations.com

Grasp & Hand Strength Ideas

- * Sidewalk chalk on driveways & chalkboards
- * Spray bottles
- * Hole punchers
- * Sewing or lacing
- * Pick up stick games
- * Lite Bright or peg boards
- * Opening lids

Source: Kimberlee Wing, OTR/L



Magical Beans Mosaic

"This magical bean mosaic is a wonderful activity for kids and adults to do together.

Tools and Materials:

Pencil
Canvas boards
Small paintbrush
Craft glue
Dried beans
Ruler

Magical Beans Mosaic How-To:

1. Start by drawing a pattern in pencil on your canvas board. You can create geometric designs, a still life, or even a portrait in dried beans—think of it as a color-by-numbers painting.
2. "Paint" a thin layer of glue in one area of your pattern, and sprinkle the area with colorful beans. Use a single color in each area.
3. Use a ruler to tidy up the edges of the

beans before moving on to the next area.

4. Repeat steps 1 through 3 until the board is covered. Let dry for 1 hour."

Source:

"Crafty U" by Rosie O'Donnel

Button Bracelet

"At long last, the sun is shining, the wind is warm, and newly bared arms are sprouting bracelets in summer colors.

Collect pretty buttons and string them on elasticized cords for stretchy bracelets to be worn or swapped. Shank buttons (with smooth faces) overlap jauntily, while standard buttons, strung through the holes in their centers, lie flat against the wrist. Create some to match every outfit.

Bracelet How-To:

Cut elasticized cord long enough to wrap around the wrist twice. To make a standard-button bracelet, thread elastic through from back to front and then to the back again. For four-hole buttons, thread elastic diagonally through two holes on opposite corners. For a shank-button bracelet, thread elastic through shanks, turning every other button upside down to overlap. Once you've strung on enough buttons to reach around the wrist, thread both ends of elastic through a metal crimp tube, available in beading shops, and

squeeze tightly with pliers. Trim excess elastic."

Source:

www.marthastewart.com/kids

Golf Peg Push-In



Overview:

"The student has to pick up each golf peg using their pointer and thumb. Once they pick it up, they place it in the hole on the lid. They use their pointer finger to push the peg through the hole.

Skills Taught:

Fine Motor
Pincher Grasp

Materials Needed:

Tall container (Crystal Light containers work great)
Golf pegs
Scissors (to cut a hole in the lid)

Directions:

Take an empty plastic container and cut a hole in the lid. All the kids have to do is pick up each gold peg (using their pointer finger and thumb) and place it in the hole on the lid. The student then has to use his/her pointer finger to push the peg through the hole."

Source: www.do2learn.com