



Pediatric  
Development  
Center

Newsletter  
January 2008

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. 361 US Route One, Falmouth (207) 781-4830

#### Parent Support:

We are providing parent courses on Sensory Processing Disorder in January, Behavior in February and developing a Sensory Diet in March. Limit 15 people for each course. Call the office for details and to sign up.

#### Changes in Insurance

Please let the office know of any changes in your insurance that occurs in the new year.

#### Good Book:

Parenting a Child with Sensory Processing Disorder: A family guide to Understanding and Supporting Your Sensory-Sensitive Child  
By Christopher Auer and Susan Blumberg

#### Keeping Toys Clean

During the cold and flu season it is important if children are mouthing toys to keep the toys clean and the children healthy. Wipe with a soapy cloth at the end of the day; hand sanitizer during the day; Germ Doctor to sanitize toys, from Amazon.com



#### To Chew or Not to Chew?

When a toddler continues to chew objects or put them in their mouth, it usually indicates a need for self calming. Chewing is organizing to the nervous system, and a need to continue chewing may indicate anxiety, stress or boredom.

- 1) observe the situation when the child does the chewing/mouthing behavior (tired, trying to fall asleep, school, doing homework, new situations, transitions, etc.) Does it happen more at school or home?
- 2) talk to the teacher if it happens more at school. Get specifics
- 3) structure transitions and changes so that they are predictable
- 4) provide more appropriate alternatives, such as gum, chew toys, candy, carrots sticks, pretzels, bagels, or what the child finds appealing

- 5) observe positive changes and provide praise

#### Pine Cone Bird Feeder



#### Materials Needed:

- Pine Cone
- Peanut Butter
- Margarine
- Yarn or Wire
- Bird Seed



#### Instructions:

Tie or twist the yarn or wire onto the pine cone for the hanger. Mix 1 part peanut butter to one part margarine. Spread the peanut butter and margarine mixture onto the pine cone. Pour some bird seed onto a plate or shallow dish and roll the pine cone in it. Place the seed-covered pine cones in the freezer for about an hour or until it is set. Hang it outside!

**Tummy Time Floor Play**  
Infants have good flexibility in their necks at birth, and it is important to maintain this flexibility as well as to develop strength and stability. From the time they are born they need to spend time on their stomachs each day to maintain this. Their head is able to turn to the side when on their stomach at birth, but if tummy time doesn't start until later, they lose this flexibility and will have trouble turning their head to the side. While supervised they should lay on their stomach during

waking moments , and they will begin to raise their head to look at you, their reflection in a mirror or at toys.

### **Floor Play for Big Kids**

Children love to turn ordinary things into a playground.

- 1) maze of tunnels, hills and bumps, using blankets, rolled up towels, sheets, chairs, tables, boxes, and cushions
- 2) crawl over, under, through, around the obstacles
- 3) roll over bumps or roll up in a blanket and then quickly pull the end to unroll them.
- 4) start this as soon as 8 months and a child is crawling



Touchy Feely  
Place household or nature items in a bag. Have the child place their hand into the bag and find something to feel. For young children have them match it to

several items they can see, or for older children have them identify it.

### **Snow Games**

#### **FamilyFun.com**

#### **JUMP SNOW HURDLES**

Lightly pack a bunch of basketball-size snowballs and then use them to build a course of hurdles to jump over in a round of follow the leader.

#### **ROPE TOW**

Team up for a slip-sliding variation of tug-of-war. Tamp down a wide, shallow trench in the snow to serve as the midline. Then, take up positions at the ends of a long, thick rope and let the tugging and towing begin. Whichever team pulls the entire opposing group over to its side of the trench wins.

#### **FLAG IN A SNOW STACK**

Tie a white cloth to the end of a short stick or around the bowl of a wooden spoon. Then, give each child a chance to hide it by staking it anywhere within a predetermined set of boundaries. Keep track of how long it takes for the rest of the group to find it. Whoever hid the flag that takes the longest time to spot wins the game.

#### **STRIKE OUT**

For this pitching contest, first mound up snow to create three bases and a pitcher's mound. They should each be about 2 feet high and 20 feet apart. Next, build a tin can pyramid on each base. The challenge is to knock down the stacks in order from first to third base by throwing snowballs from the pitcher's mound. The child who succeeds with the fewest pitches wins.

#### **HAT TRICK**

Once you've built a plump, frosty snowman to stand sentry in your front yard, make a game of topping him off in style. Take turns trying to

land a hat on his head by throwing it Frisbee style from 10 or so feet away.

#### **GET ON A ROLL**

Pair up for a contest in which the object is to finish with the biggest snowball. The contest ends when the teams can no longer roll their entries or when you run out of snow.

#### **POWDER-PUFF FOOTBALL**

All you need are two teams of three or more people to play, along with a spray bottle filled with a mix of water and food coloring to mark the playing field (a large rectangle with a centerline should suffice). The teams line up at opposite ends of the field (the North and South poles) for a kickoff. Once someone on the receiving team catches the ball, he tries to move it back across the defense's goal line by running with it or passing it to a teammate. Play stops if the person with the ball is tagged by an opponent or slides out of bounds. The teams then face off again on that spot. After four tries, or a touchdown, the ball goes to the other team. The game ends when either team gets cold.

For more winter fun, try out these seven [Ice Games](#).



### **Therapeutic Listening**

Therapeutic Listening® is an evidence-backed protocol that combines a sound-based intervention with sensory integrative activities to create a comprehensive program that is effective for diverse populations with sensory challenges. Therapeutic Listening can impact sensory modulation, attention, behavior, postural

organization, and speech and language difficulties. Trained therapists learn to use modulated CDs to set up programs for clients in homes, schools, and clinics. *Listening is a function of the entire brain; when we listen, we listen with the whole body.* **NEW**

**RESEARCH!** In the March/April 2007 issue of *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Leah Hall (MS, OTR/L) and Jane Case-Smith (EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA) explored the effect of Therapeutic Listening® on children with sensory processing disorders and visual-motor delays.

[www.vitallinks.net](http://www.vitallinks.net)

