



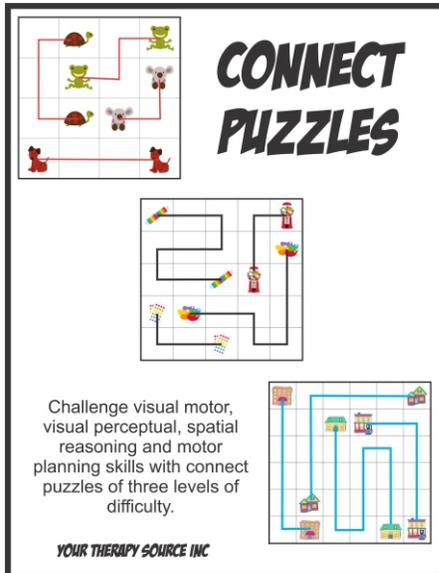
# Your Therapy Source News

**Digital magazine for pediatric  
occupational and physical therapists.**

**Issue 46 - January 2013**

**[www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com)**

# New and Popular Products



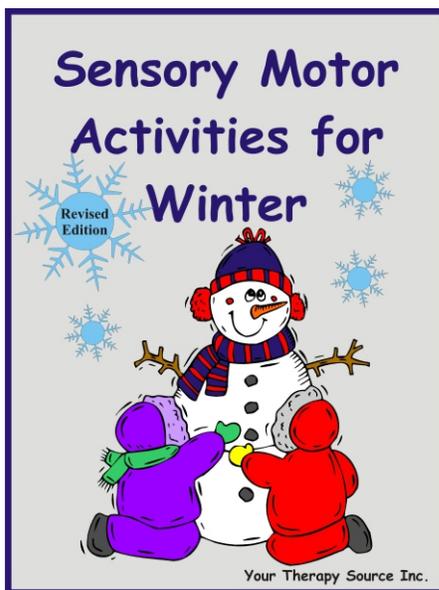
## Connect Puzzles

This is an electronic pdf document of 50 connect puzzles to challenge visual motor, visual spatial and motor planning skills.

Retail Price: \$3.99

**Sale Price until 1/30/12: \$1.99**

[www.YourTherapySource.com/connect](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/connect)



## Sensory Motor Activities for Winter

Download of an electronic book of over 25 ideas for sensory motor activities relating to Winter.

Retail Price: \$4.99

**Sale Price until 1/30/13: \$1.99**

[www.YourTherapySource.com/winteractivities](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/winteractivities)

# School Based Therapy Resolutions

Since I posted these last year and certainly did not accomplish them all I thought it was worth repeating below for 2013. As I reflect on 2012 some goals were easier to reach than others - as for myself I was able to accomplish #3, #5, #6 and #7. I definitely need to work on taking the time to observe, #2. I frequently rush to get to the "meat and potatoes" of a treatment session rather than slowing down and fine tuning my observation skills (this is a bad habit). So obviously I am not great about being patient, #4 - I tend to jam pack therapy sessions with too many activities. I really need to slow down and let children problem solve more rather than rush along to the next activity. I am getting better at this.

Below are the goals I posted last year - How about setting some basic goals yourself to accomplish in 2013. Here are a few suggestions:

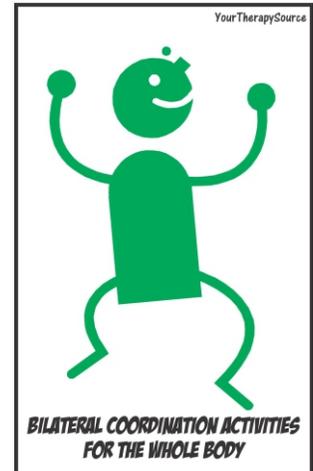
1. Realistic Home/Classroom Programs - I will make every effort to provide parents and teachers with activities that are easy to carry out in the home or classroom.
2. Take the time to observe - I will take the time to just observe. I will document observations in the classroom or home in writing or with photographs. It is very difficult to determine needs if you do not have an idea of baseline issues.
3. Make the children part of the therapy process - I will incorporate the children in each therapy session by allowing them to make choices. I will discuss goal setting with each child.
4. Be patient - I will encourage children to think critically and problem solve independently by allowing them enough time to form a motor response without interfering. Therapy sessions usually only last 30 minutes and we want to jam pack them with activities. Slow down and let the children respond - quality is better than quantity. Let me re-phrase that...independence is better than dependence (regardless of quality at times).
5. Document correctly in a timely manner - I will document therapy sessions immediately following the session so that the documentation is accurate.
6. Set a goal for each therapy session - I will set small, realistic goals for each therapy session.
7. Keep it fun, fun, fun!!!! - I will keep therapy sessions fun. Some children have to attend therapy sessions for years, keep it novel, motivating and fun.

Care to add to the list with your goals for 2013? I plan on focusing more on #2 and 4 which means I have to be more patient. Hopefully I do not repeat myself again next year!

# 10 Bilateral Coordination Activities for the Whole Body

Some children who receive pediatric occupational and physical therapy have goals related to bilateral coordination for the whole body. Here are ideas to practice bilateral coordination skills in older children:

1. Marching to music and clapping hands at the same time.
2. Cross crawls - touch your right hand to your left knee and then the left hand to your right knee. Repeat touching the opposite feet.
3. Traditional jumping jacks
4. Cross Country Jumping Jacks - place right arm and right leg forward jump and switch left arm and left leg forward. Try opposite sides - place right arm and left leg forward jump and switch left arm and right leg forward.
5. March in place sitting down while drawing circles in the air with both hands
6. Try a task using both hands or both hands and feet at the same time - ie: dribbling a ball with both hands, kicking a ball and dribbling a ball.
7. Play hopscotch - the skill of jumping feet apart and together requires coordination of both sides of the body
8. Perform motor activities to the beat of a metronome
9. Jumping activities - jumping rope, jump up and clap hands, jump up and touch your heels behind your bottom, jumping activities through a floor ladder, etc.
10. Animal walks that use both sides of the body - ie: crab walk, bear walk and crawling



# Choosing a Sport for Children with Disabilities

YourTherapySource



## **CHOOSING A SPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

As pediatric therapists, families and students may come to us for suggestions on participation in organized sports for children with disabilities. We can make recommendations based on a child's strengths. When a child is evaluated for therapy services, frequently depending upon what evaluation tool is used, you can determine areas of strength such as balance, muscle strength or eye hand coordination skills. Use this information to help formulate a basic recommendation of what might be best to try for a specific child.

Organized sports that require good eye hand coordination skills are baseball, softball, tennis, volleyball, etc.

If a child exhibits better balance skills perhaps try gymnastics, karate and diving to name a few.

For some children individualized sports may be a good fit such as swimming, biking, bowling, track and field or skiing. Individualized sports allow a child to participate in physical activity at their own pace versus the stress of being on a team sport.

## Your Therapy Source

[www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com)



## Top 10 Blog Posts from 2012

Here are the top 10 blog posts according to Google Analytics from 2012:

**10. Celebrate OT Month March 2012 -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/03/celebrate-ot-month.html>

**9. 3 Simple Group Games with a Hula Hoop -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/08/3-simple-group-games-with-hula-hoop.html>

**8. Fine Motor Skill Level and Handwriting -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/05/fine-motor-skill-level-and-handwriting.html>

**7. Pencil Grasp and Handwriting -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/07/pencil-grasp-and-handwriting.html>

**6. I Spy Movement Activities -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/02/i-spy-movement-breaks.html>

**5. Pincer Grasp on iPad -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/10/pincer-grasp-on-ipad.html>

**4. Handwriting and Keyboarding Standards -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/05/handwriting-and-keyboarding-standards.html>

**3. 10 Simple Games to Practice Drawing and Handwriting -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/03/10-simple-games-to-practice-drawing-and.html>

**2. 10 Apps that Get You Moving -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/05/10-apps-that-get-you-moving.html>

And the number 1 most read blog post from 2012 is.....

**1. Brain Breaks Freebie -**

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/04/new-freebie-brain-breaks-game.html>

# Physical Activity Research

## **Physical Activity and ADHD Symptoms**

Recent research was published in the *Journal of Attention Disorders* on a pilot study that looked at 17 children, grades K-3, who exhibited four or more hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms on the Disruptive Behavior Disorders Rating Scale. Each child participated in 26 minutes of continuous moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily over eight school weeks. The effects of response inhibition was the most consistent. After the program, parents, teachers, and program staff reported that most participants (64% to 71%) exhibited overall improvement.

Reference: Alan L. Smith, Betsy Hoza, Kate Linnea, Julia D. McQuade, Meghan Tomb, Aaron J. Vaughn, Erin K. Shoulberg, and Holly Hook. Pilot Physical Activity Intervention Reduces Severity of ADHD Symptoms in Young Children *Journal of Attention Disorders* January 2013 17: 70-82, first published on August 25, 2011  
doi:10.1177/1087054711417395

## **Fit Kids and Higher Test Scores**

Yet again, more research to support that children who are fit perform better in school. The *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness* has published research on 312, 6th through 8th grade students, from Michigan. The researchers gathered data on the students body fat, muscular strength, flexibility and endurance. These fitness scores were then compared to their grades and standardized tests. The results indicated that the children who were the most fit had the highest test scores and grades regardless of gender or whether they had gone through puberty.

Reference: Michigan State University. Fit Kids Finish First in the Classroom. Retrieved from the web on 12/7/12 at <http://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2012/fit-kids-finish-first-in-the-classroom/>

Need ideas to squeeze physical activity in throughout the school day? Check out the following - [Classroom Activity Posters](#), [Mini Movement Breaks](#), [Roll Some Fun](#), [Dancing with the Owls](#) and [Educational Sensory Motor Activities](#). You can find these titles here <http://yourtherapysource.com/sensorymotordownloads.html>

# Copying Versus Tracing in Children with Autism and ADHD



A poster presentation at the 2012 Society for Neuroscience annual meeting researchers reported on a small study using a digital tablet to record precise handwriting metrics of 12 boys with autism, 8 with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and 12 controls. The tablet measured pen pressure, strokes, speed and precise letter formation while the children copied an eight-word phrase that uses every letter in the alphabet. Three experiments were conducted - copying letters from the phrase written, tracing the letters in the phrase as carefully as possible and tracing the letters as quickly as possible.

The results showed the following differences in handwriting kinematics:

- children with autism and those with ADHD were faster but less accurate than controls at each task
- children with autism performed poorly on the copying and tracing task
- children in the ADHD group struggled with copying but traced as well as controls.
- in all three experiments the children with autism who were worst at reproducing the letters scored lowest on working memory sub-scores of an intelligence quotient test
- the ADHD group and the control group did not show an association between letter reproduction and working memory

The researchers concluded that it is not only motor performance but higher cognitive centers as well that contributes to handwriting difficulties in children with autism.

Reference: Hughes, V. Handwriting study points to motor, memory problems in autism. Retrieved on 12/28/12 from Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative at <http://sfari.org/news-and-opinion/conference-news/2012/society-for-neuroscience-2012/handwriting-study-points-to-motor-memory-problems-in-autism>.

Check out Your Therapy Source for handwriting activities - <http://yourtherapysource.com/handwriting.html>

# Game Review - Shrimp Cocktail



I received several complimentary games including, Shrimp Cocktail, from BlueOrange games to test out. We have been having loads of fun with it.

Basically, you want to identify what matches on three cards - either color, size, number or hat style. Once you find a match for all three you grab the starfish and announce your match that you discovered. It takes a few rounds of practice to get a feel for the game. Once you have played a few times though it is very easy to follow and super fun to play for children ages 7 to adult. The age range is definitely accurate - younger than 7 may have a hard time finding the matches quick enough to beat others.

Here are the positives about this game:

- challenges visual discrimination skills
- works on visual form constancy skills
- encourages self control (don't grab the starfish unless you see a match)
- practices reaction time
- quick to play (takes about 10-15 minutes)
- using the starfish cuts down on arguing who saw the match first

Here are the negatives:

- can be challenging for the younger set to find a match quickly

Stay tuned for more game reviews from BlueOrange games.

# Hot Topics

## **Concussion Guidelines for Children**

Mild traumatic brain injury is serious in children. There are recommendations to follow after a child experiences a mild concussion. CanChild has some informative flyers to download to offer printable guidelines regarding returning to physical activity or school following concussion. These flyers walk you through the specific steps or stages following the injury so that the child slowly returns to physical activity and school. You can get the information at the website - [http://canchild.ca/en/ourresearch/mild\\_traumatic\\_brain\\_injury\\_concussion\\_education.asp](http://canchild.ca/en/ourresearch/mild_traumatic_brain_injury_concussion_education.asp)

## **Muscle Weakness and Down Syndrome**

A recent research study using a mouse model was published in the *American Journal of Physiology - Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology* comparing the soleus muscle in mice with Down syndrome and mice without Down syndrome.

The results indicated that there was not a significant difference between the two groups of mice with regards to the force production of the muscle, muscle fatigue and muscle fibers. There was not a clear indication of mitochondrial limitation between the two groups either.

There was a significant difference in muscle recovery between the two groups. There was also numerous altered pathways in Down syndrome muscle including the breakdown of proteins, metabolism of glucose and fat, and neuromuscular transmission.

The researchers concluded that the muscle itself is not responsible for muscle weakness in mice with Down syndrome and the perhaps the motor systems in the brain or the neuromuscular junction play a role in muscle weakness in Down syndrome.

Reference: Krupa, D. New Study Offers Insights Into Role of Muscle Weakness in Down Syndrome. Retrieved on 12/28/12 from the American Physiological Society at <http://www.the-aps.org/mm/hp/Audiences/Public-Press/For-the-Press/releases/12/44.html>

## **Sitting Upright Helps Babies to Learn**

*Developmental Psychology* has published research entitled "Posture Support Improves Object Individuation in Infants". The research indicated that babies' ability to sit up unsupported has a profound effect on their ability to learn about objects. The study was performed in stages but the end result showed that helping a baby to sit up in a secure position allowed the baby to use patterns to differentiate objects which previously they were unable to do if not sitting up securely.

Reference: Medical Xpress. Study shows sitting up helps babies learn. Retrieved from the web at <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-12-babies.html> on 12/5/2012

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# On The Web...

**LEGO** is now accepting grant applications for this quarter until January 15, 2013.

The average \$500 - \$5000 grant supports:

"qualified tax-exempt organizations (as determined under section 501© (3) of the Internal Revenue code) including educational organizations as defined in USC 26 § 170 (C) with specific, identifiable needs primarily in these areas of support:

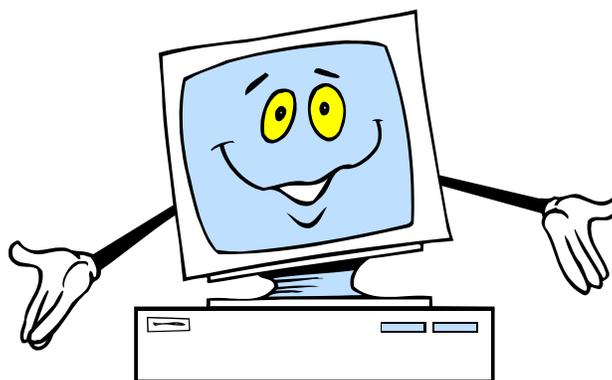
Early childhood education and development that is directly related to creativity

Technology and communication projects that advance learning opportunities."

More information at the LEGO website - <http://www.legochildrensfund.org/Guidelines.html>

## **Pediatric OT Videos by Students**

I came across this collection of pediatric occupational therapy videos created by OT students. I have watched a few of them and the information may be helpful to some pediatric OTs and their families. I found the video on Hygiene for Cerebral Palsy informative. It is interesting to see the OT students projects as well. Take a look at Vimeo video. I have shared the Hygiene video here - <http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/12/pediatric-ot-videos-by-students.html>.



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## Zentangle Activity Idea



Have you ever heard of Zentangles? It is a fun doodle drawing that encourages visual motor skills, creativity and relaxation. Simply start out by drawing a rectangle on a small piece of paper (ie half of an index card). Draw a few squiggle lines inside the rectangle. Now doodle different patterns in each box. There is no right or wrong for this activity. If you google zentangle, you can find many different examples of different doodles and pictures. One of the great things about zentangles is that you can make them very small therefore it does not take too long to finish the picture.

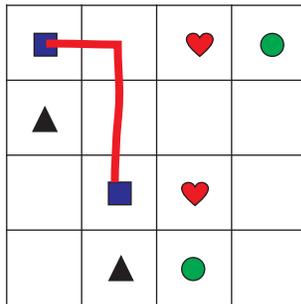
Read another blog post on the benefits of doodling here - <http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2011/08/doodling-and-science.html>.

Check out Doodle Diaries for doodling prompts - <http://yourtherapysource.com/doodlediaries.html>.

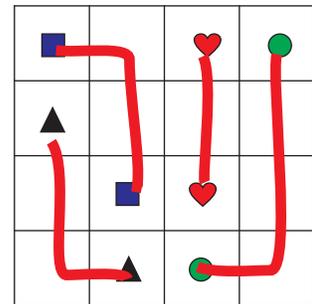
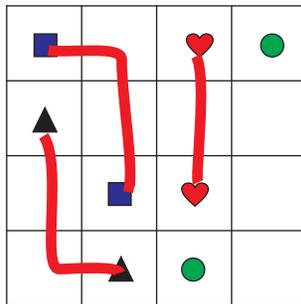
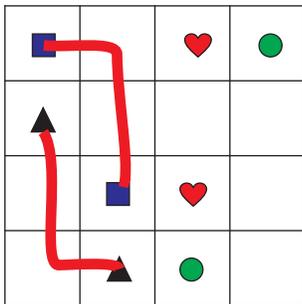
# How to Do a Connect Puzzle:

Object: Draw lines between matching objects. You must draw a line through every box. You can not cross lines.

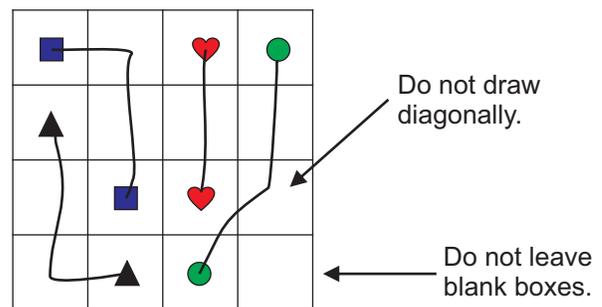
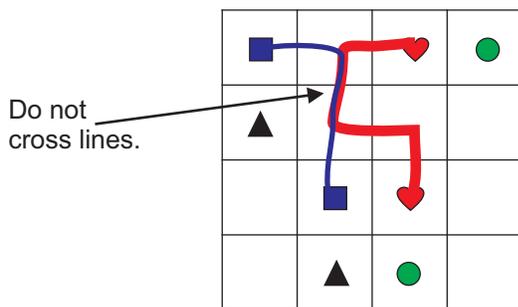
Step 1: Draw a horizontal or vertical line connecting two matching objects.

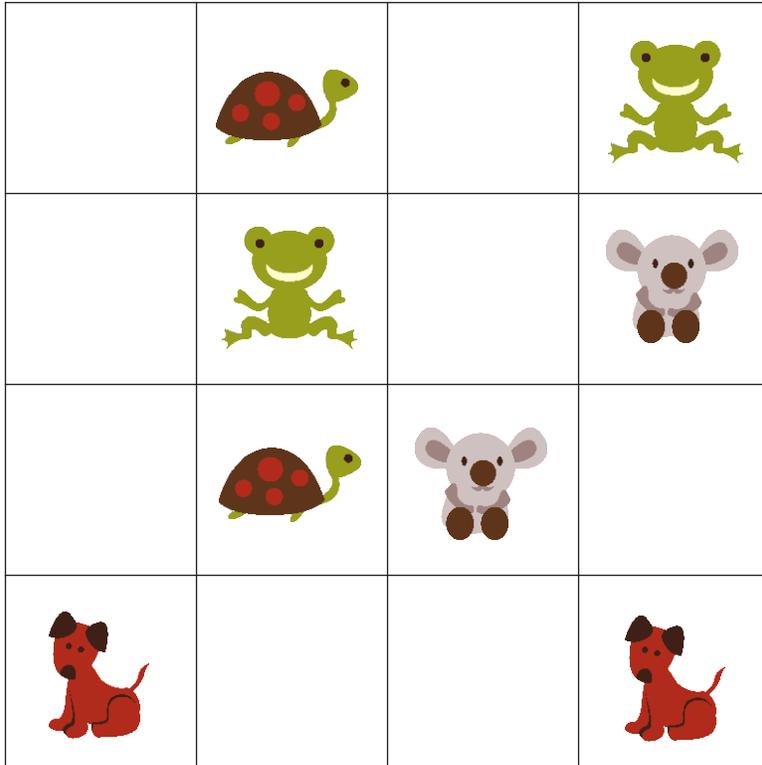


Step 2: Continue drawing matching lines through each of the boxes until all items are matched up.

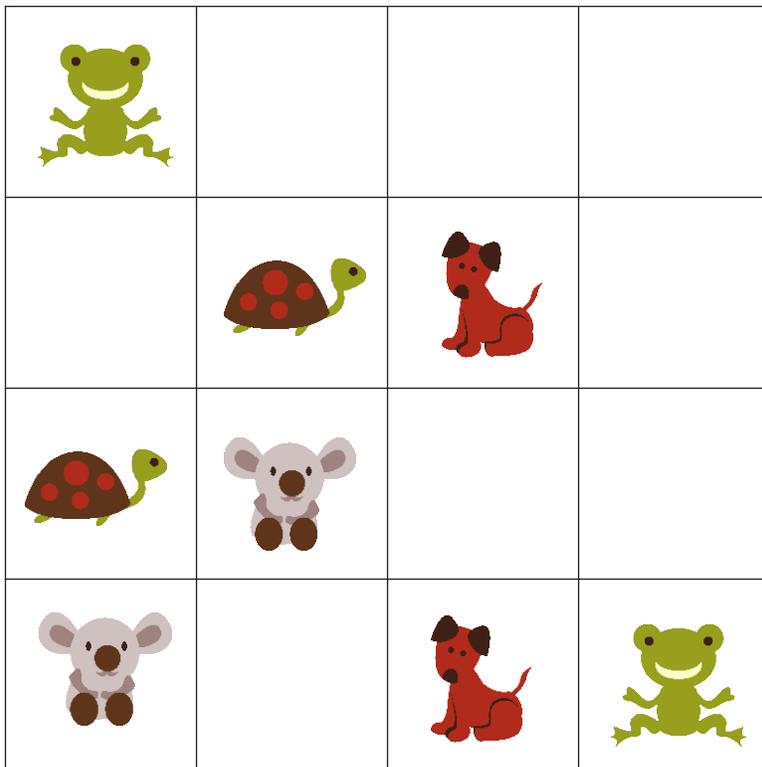


Remember you can not cross lines or leave out boxes.





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