



# **Your Therapy Source News**

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

**Issue 54 - September 2013**

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

# New and Popular Products



## Growing Play Card Sets

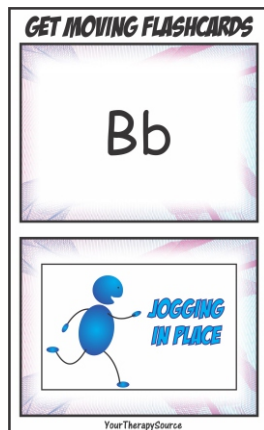
By: Your Therapy Source

Summary: 8 card sets that encourage fine motor skills, gross motor skills, visual perceptual skills, creativity, motivation and fun!

Retail price: \$5.99 per card set

Shipping: \$1.00 (USA only)

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



## Get Moving Flashcards

By: Your Therapy Source

Summary: Powerpoint presentation and PDF of flashcards with physical activity breaks

Retail price: \$4.99

Sale Price: \$2.99 until 9/30/13

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



## The ABC's of Movement®

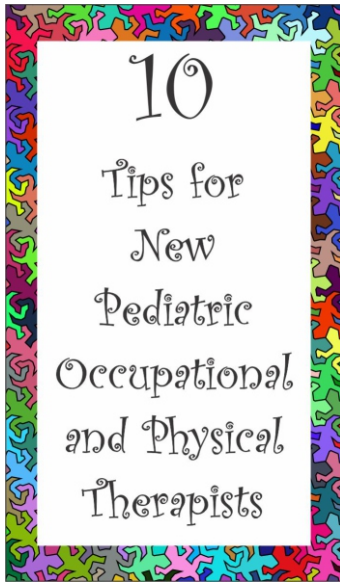
By: Your Therapy Source

Summary: The ABC's of Movement® is a pdf document of educational flash cards that combine movement with literacy development.

Retail price: \$9.99

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

# 10 Tips for New Pediatric Therapists



Not that anyone asked but here are my 10 tips (not in any specific order) for any newbies entering the pediatric therapy world:

**1. Make sure you love kids!** - It is super important that you love hanging out with children. You are going to be acting like a kid, joking around with kids and playing games all day. Make sure you like that kind of work. To me, it is the best kind of work there is!!!!

**2. Stay current on the top toys, trending items and video games.** - Make conversation with the kids. Sure there are plenty of things to talk about with kids but to form a playful bond with them you might need to know who Pokemon, Tinkerbell or Luigi are. And if you don't, just ask. Kids will love to go into details about any toy or game they enjoy.

**3. Go for it!** - The only way that you will become a great pediatric therapist is through practice. Just like you will expect the children to practice a motor skill over and over again, therapy skills evolve through practice. For example you will need to assess muscle tone and facilitate movements over and over again before you feel comfortable with your clinical decision making skills.

**4. Be informed about each child.** - You will need to be in contact with many people that surround a child: parents, teachers, friends, school nurse, etc. It can be hard at times in a school district to get a complete picture (medically and educationally) when therapists bop in and out of classrooms. Do your best to gather all the information you can about a child's medical, social and emotional history.

**5. Ask for help.** - If you are not sure what you are doing from a therapy perspective with a child ask another therapist. First of all we were all in your shoes once. Second of all, occupational and physical therapists are constantly questioning and asking each other for help. Whether we have 1 year experience or 20+ years of experience, we encounter children or situations that puzzle us.

**6. If you have no one to ask for help, establish a professional learning network.** - There are many opportunities via the internet to connect with other pediatric therapists.

**7. Read, read and read some more.** - Stay informed and up to date on the latest evidence based research. Join the pediatric section of the APTA or AOTA. Sign up to receive our newsletter and the monthly digital magazine for pediatric occupational and physical therapists.

**8. Take pediatric continuing education courses.** - When I first started out, I signed up for so many pediatric therapy courses. It was wonderful. Since I was young and fresh out of school, I did not have many other obligations so I could devote plenty of time to learning new skills. Now that I have a family and run a business it can be difficult to make time for continuing education but I always do.

**9. Become informed or stay up to date on technology.** - The amount of assistance that children can receive from technology or how they access technology is constantly changing. Stay up to date the best that you can. Follow blogs or different therapists on Twitter to stay informed.

**10. Always shoot for the stars!** - Children will surprise you at what they can achieve. You may learn in school that you need certain range of motion to complete a skill, and then you will meet a child with significant contractures who can do that skill independently. Be realistic in your goal setting, but if a child wants to accomplish a certain skill do the best you can to help him/her.

# Cerebral Palsy Research



## Active Video Gaming and Children with Cerebral Palsy

*Physical Therapy* has published research on exercise intensity levels in children with cerebral palsy while using active video games. Ten children with spastic cerebral palsy were age matched with their peers and participated for 40 minutes in 4 active video games - jogging, bicycling, snowboarding and skiing. Heart rates were recorded as well as lower extremity motion analysis during the last part of jogging and bicycling. The following results were recorded:

- no difference between the groups for any variables
- jogging game produced larger range of motion in the lower extremities compared to the bicycling game
- more than 50% of the playing time for the jogging game and more than 30% of the playing time for the bicycling game were spent at an intensity greater than 40% of heart rate reserve.

The researchers concluded that children with cerebral palsy were able to obtain exercise-related benefits similar to those obtained by children without CP while playing with an active video game console.

Reference: Maxime Robert et al. Exercise Intensity Levels in Children With Cerebral Palsy While Playing With an Active Video Game Console. *PHYS THER* August 2013 93:1084-1091; published ahead of print April 11, 2013, doi:10.2522/ptj.20120204

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*Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology* published a systematic review of activities of daily living measures for children and adolescents with cerebral palsy. The following results were found:

- 26 measures were identified and eight met inclusion criteria
- The Pediatric Evaluation of Disability Inventory (PEDI) had the strongest psychometric properties but was limited by its age range (6 months to 7 years 6 months)
- The Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (AMPS) was the most comprehensive evaluation of underlying motor and cognitive abilities yet further psychometric testing is required for children with CP.

The researchers concluded:

- the PEDI should be used to measure ADL capability in elementary school aged children
- the AMPS is the best measure to evaluate ADL performance or capacity and is suitable for all age.



## Measures of ADLs for Children with Cerebral Palsy

Reference: Sarah James, Jenny Ziviani and Roslyn Boyd. A systematic review of activities of daily living measures for children and adolescents with cerebral palsy. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*. Article first published online: 12 AUG 2013 | DOI: 10.1111/dmcn.12226.



# 8 Getting to Know You Activity Ideas



Some of you have already started the school year and some of you will begin over the next few weeks. Get to know your new students with these ideas:

**1. Write a letter to your students telling them about yourself.** Perhaps let them know your favorite food, color, movie and more. Tell them about a summer vacation you took. Tell them your favorite things to do outdoors and your favorite type of exercise. Explain to them some of the things that you use or will do during therapy sessions. Request that the student write you back answering some questions that you have asked. Some examples would be: What did you do over the summer? What are your goals for therapy? What is your favorite way to exercise? If the school year has already started just start off the therapy session with a quick interview of each other.

**2. Happy and Healthy Hands.** Have each student trace around one hand on a piece of the same color paper. On the hand, write different things that make the student happy and healthy. Hang the hands on the wall. Have the children go around the room. Do wall push ups on different sets of hands.

Can you guess whose hands matches whose print?

**3. Getting to Know You Charades.** Have the student's act out their favorite things in different categories. For example, some categories could be favorite sport, favorite book and favorite outdoor activity.

**4. Motor Match Up.** Create a matching set of cards with various movements such as crawling, dancing, jumping, walking and marching (or download Locomotor Games - <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/locomotor.html> or Action Alphabet - <http://yourtherapysource.com/actionalphabet.html>). Pass out one card to each student. The students must move around the room and find the other student moving the same way that they are. Once the pair is matched up they introduce themselves.

**5. Silly Name Game.** Stand in a circle. Pick one student to go first. This student says his/her name and adds a movement (i.e. shakes head yes). The next student says the first student's name and shakes head yes, then introduces himself adding a movement (i.e. claps hands). The third student says student #1's name and shakes head yes, then says student #2's name and claps hands. Student three then says his own name and adds a movement. Keep going around the circle. Check out 25 Instant Sensory Motor Group Activities - <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/instant.html> for more group games that require no equipment.

**6. Name Exercises.** Make the children's name into an exercise. Go to <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/freenameexercise.html> for all the details.

**7. Favorite Exercises.** Work together to make a poster with all the children's favorite exercises or warm up activities. Find out how here <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/freeposter.html>

**8. Social Red Rover.** Play a game of red rover trying different greetings. Find out how to play here <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/redrover.html>

Need more back to school activities? Check out Sensory Motor Activities for Fall - <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/fallactivities.html> and Print and Create Fine Motor Project Back to School - <http://www.yourtherapysource.com/fmbacktoschool.html> .

# Visual Perceptual Research

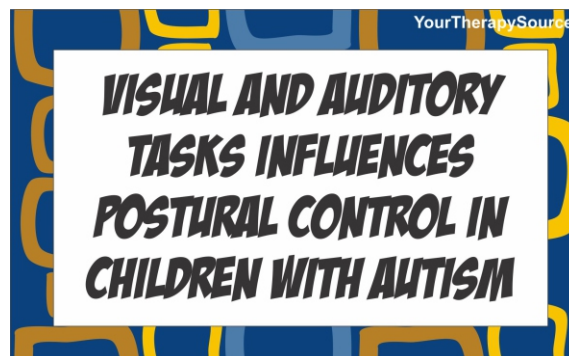


## Visual Processing in Low Birth Weight and/or Extremely Preterm

*Pediatrics* published research on the visual processing of 228 adolescents with a history of extreme low birth weight (less than 1000g) and/or extremely preterm (less than 28 weeks gestation). Compared to a control group the extreme low birth weight and/or extreme preterm adolescents exhibited the following:

- significantly worse visual acuity with habitual correction in both the left and right eyes
- poorer stereopsis and convergence
- more problems with visual perception after habitual correction.

Reference: Carly S. Molloy et al. Visual Processing in Adolescents Born Extremely Low Birth Weight and/or Extremely Preterm. *Pediatrics* peds.2013-0040; published ahead of print August 5, 2013, doi:10.1542/peds.2013-0040



*Gait and Posture* published research on the postural control of children with autism under two different task conditions. Nineteen children with autism (ages 10-15) were compared to 28 typically developing peers. Using a force platform to assess postural control, each subject completed a visual searching task and an auditory digital span task. The following results were seen:

- children with autism spectrum disorder indicated higher postural sway scores in visual task versus auditory task although typically developing children scores remained unchanged.
- children with autism spectrum disorder also showed significantly higher sway scores than typically developing children in all parameters.

The researchers concluded that in addition to primary differences in postural control of children with autism, visual and auditory tasks may also influence postural control.

Reference: Amir Hossein Memari, Parisa Ghanouni, Monir Shayestehfar, Vahid Ziaee, et al. Effects of visual search vs. auditory tasks on postural control in children with autism spectrum disorder. *Gait and Posture*. In press on 8/6/13 DOI: 10.1016/j.gaitpost.2013.07.012

# DIY Fine Motor and Visual Perceptual Toy



Here is a simple fine motor and visual perceptual toy to create. Using a small juice bottle, place velcro dots all around the bottle. Use fun foam shapes with velcro dots and place them on the bottle. Glue matching fun foam shapes to a piece of cardboard.



Have the child pull off each velcro fun foam shape.



Place it on top of the matching shape on the board. Here they are all matched up.

















You could just remove the fun foam shapes and place them inside the bottle.

All done!



# Self Assessment of Skills

Skill	Easy	Help
Keeping desk or locker organized		
Keeping track of daily assignments		
Handwriting notes in a timely manner		
Neatly writing notes		
Writing out math problems or numbers		
Opening locker		
Changing classes		

www.YourTherapySource.com

Here is a free self assessment of skills form for students or clients. You can type any skill into the form and the children can circle whether they think the skill is easy or they need help with the skill. It will give you a general idea of the child's perspective of his/her skills. Perhaps it will help you and the child identify areas of strengths and weakness. Try having the child fill out the form at the start of the school year and then at the end of the school year. Did his/her perceptions change?

Go to YourTherapySource - <http://yourtherapysource.com/freeselfassessment.html> to get the download.



# Hedgehog Play Dough Game



Play this hedgehog play dough game to encourage fine motor skills, visual motor skills and visual memory skills.

Get all the details at

<http://yourtherapysource.com/freehedgehog.html>

# Hot Topics

## Handwriting and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

The *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* published research on functional handwriting performance in school aged children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). Handwriting skills were evaluated in 20 children with FASD. The following results were recorded:

- participants performed below average on the Process Assessment of the Learner, 2nd Edition (PAL-II) measures of handwriting legibility and speed
- participants performed below average on the Visuomotor Precision subtest of NEPSY, (a developmental neuropsychological assessment) visual-motor precision tasks
- PAL-II measures of sensorimotor skills were broadly within the average range

The researchers concluded that children with FASD present with functional handwriting challenges and may have diminished visual-motor skills with increased difficulty as task complexity increases.

Reference: Cherie J. Duval-White, et al. Functional Handwriting Performance in School-Age Children With Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders *Am J Occup Ther* September 2013 67:534-542; doi:10.5014/ajot.2013.008243

## Children Need 60-80 Minutes of Physical Activity Per Day

*BMC Medicine* published research on exercise in younger children (less than 10 years old) and the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. The researchers found that there was gender differences therefore it was recommended that:

- boys under 6 years old need 70 minutes of exercise per day
- older boys need at least 80 minutes per day
- girls of all ages needed around 60 minutes of exercise per day.

Need ideas for physical activity for children? Check out 50 Sensory Motor Activities for Kids! Sneak in physical activity during small breaks or transitions with Mini Movement Breaks.

Reference: Jiménez-Pavón D, Konstabel K et al. Physical activity and clustered cardiovascular disease risk factors in young children: a cross-sectional study (The IDEFICS study). *BMC Medicine* 2013; 11: 172. DOI: 10.1186/1741-7015-11-172.



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# Interactive Yoga Story

## The King, The Three Warriors and the Troll

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*(an Interactive Yoga Story)*

By Jeanette Runnings

Of



Jeanette Runnings, an occupational therapist, was nice enough to share her free, interactive yoga story entitled The King, the Three Warriors and the Troll. It can be downloaded from her website, [www.Yoga-Yingo.com](http://www.Yoga-Yingo.com) or directly here <https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/68740922/StorybookThe%20King%20The%20Three%20Warriors%20and%20The%20Troll2.pdf>  
Thank you very much for this fun yoga story!

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# Box Balance Game



## ***BOX BALANCE GAME***

### **Box Balance Game:**

encourage balance skills, motor planning, body awareness, eye foot coordination and right/left discrimination using some old boxes - watch the video

<http://yourtherapysource.com/videoboxbalance.html>

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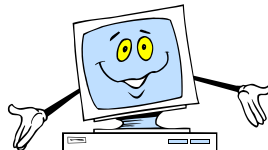


# Balance Balloon Activity



Encourage balance and eye foot coordination skills with this activity.

Find out more at  
<http://yourtherapysource.com/freebalanceballoon>



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# Life Skill of the Month

## Life Skills of the Month

**12 life skills to focus on throughout the year**

**Your Therapy Source Inc**



**Life Skill of the Month**  
**Meal Preparation**


**Life Skill of the Month – Meal Preparation**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Each month the school year, we are encouraging children to practice a different life skill at home. For this month, the life skill is light meal preparation. It is important that children are independent in their chores such as preparing light meals or snacks for themselves. Please encourage your child to practice light meal preparation for the entire month. There are some helpful tips to assist in making it easier for children to learn how to prepare meals and light meals.

1. Start out by making your hands. Show your child where and help you when you prepare meals or snacks. Teach them to wash their hands before and after preparing the meal. Wash their hands and fingernails, using soap, scrubbing them, etc.
2. Encourage your child to practice one meal or snack. Long healthy meals make snacks your child's meal and at the end of the day. Try getting the meals ready the night before when you are not so tired for the morning.
3. When ready, have your child make their own simple breakfast or lunch meal. For example, prepare cereal and milk, toast or waffles or a waffle maker. The end of the ingredients of necessity. For example, your child can use a cereal pitcher to make it easier for a child to pour.
4. Continue practicing light meal preparation adding more difficult skills as appropriate. Start with simple, easy to make, and then move on to more complex tasks such as making, spreading, measuring, preparing to bake or roast, etc.
5. If your child brings back to school, encourage them to be independent in their own, healthier and making meals each day. If the child can or make the child's lunch meal or snack possible to complete the job or for the child to be independent.
6. Encourage your child to be neat, planning and grocery shopping so that before meals all the steps to prepare meals are made and the meal is done.
7. If your child is a grade seven, with your permission or encouragement, suggest about suggestions to help prepare your child's first dinner.

*Thank you for teaching your child light meal preparation.*



Here is a new packet to download that includes 12 posters and 12 hand outs on life skills.

The twelve life skills are: Oral Hygiene, Cleaning Your Room, Laundry, Personal Hygiene, Meal Preparation, Outdoor Chores, Shoe Tying, Kitchen Clean Up, Telephone Use, Table Setting, Dressing, and Shopping.

Hang up the poster in the class or therapy room and review the steps of that life skill. There is a corresponding hand out to send home with tips and suggestions to help children learn that life skill for carry over at home. Many schools have character traits of the month, how about life skill of the month? ALL children will benefit from this activity. You can get a free sample on meal preparation at

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

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