



# "CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter



## Math Tips:

Getting a new school year off to a good start can influence children's attitudes, confidence, and performance both socially and academically. The transition from summer vacation returning back to school can be difficult for both children and parents. Even children who are eager to return to class must adjust to the greater levels of activity and structure. Moments of frustration as well as pride are common for children who struggle with math, and for the adults who work with them. Through open discussion with supportive adults, children understand that everyone has strengths and weaknesses.

Since math is not strictly memorization, but also comprehension, it is important that a student understands why they perform certain steps and skills to reach the correct answer. Students often demonstrate behaviors that indicate they have fears and anxious feelings when it comes to performing tasks that require mathematical computations. This is called mathematics anxiety. Mathematics anxiety can be extreme; often caused by a negative attitude due to a previous unpleasant math experience. The good news is that a student can manage this behavior, but they must learn to manage both the stress as well as improve their mathematic skills.

If your child experiences math anxiety, diaphragmatic breathing, or "belly breathing", is a wonderful way to release mental and physical stress and tension. Taking slow, deep breaths calms the mind and induces a state of relaxation in children's bodies. A great way to immerse them in the skill is through games and household activities. Many children will willingly participate in these activities unaware that they are completing the task that usually gives them great fear and frustration. Examples of math games are cards, Yahtzee, Battleship, Dominoes, and Connect Four.

Listed below are tips for overcoming math anxiety:

1. Overcome negative self-talk.
2. Ask questions.
3. Consider math a foreign [language](#) -- it must be practiced.
4. Don't rely on memorization to study mathematics.
5. Read your math text.
6. Study math according to [your](#) learning style.
7. Get help the same day you don't understand.
8. Be relaxed and comfortable while studying math.
9. "Talk" mathematics.



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## Calendar of Events:

- Fall Classes Begin—9/8
- SAT Prep Class Begins—9/8

## 8 Key Components of Handwriting

1. **Memory**—Remembering and writing dictated letters and numbers.
2. **Orientation**—Facing letters and numbers in the correct direction.
3. **Placement**—Putting letters and numbers on the baseline.
4. **Size**—How big or small a child chooses to write.
5. **Start**—Where each letter or number begins.
6. **Sequence**—Order and stroke direction of the letter or number parts.
7. **Control**—Neatness and proportion of letters and numbers.
8. **Spacing**—Amount of space between letters in words, and between words in sentences.

## Exercise of the Month:



September is a hectic month for most people. School is back in full swing and schedules and routines have changed from those laid back days of summer. Decompression is a relaxing activity. This would be great for children to do after a long day at school. Come home and unwind with some decompression. Parents, this is great for you too after the kids are tucked away in bed. Relax your body and mind.

Start by laying on the floor or a mat on your back. Spread out your arms to your sides for a great upper body stretch. Have both knees bent and bring them up to your waist. Turn your head to face the opposite direction of your knees. Make sure your shoulder blades stay on the floor/mat. Concentrate on your breathing. Nice and smooth breaths in and out. Continue this exercise for 5 minutes. You will feel refreshed and relaxed when you are finished. Add some relaxation or yoga music for the full benefit. Enjoy!

# Body Works — From the Inside Out

## Rock-a-bye baby

In his book *Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD, provides these insightful comments on the functions of sleep:

"Sleep is the power source that keeps your mind alert and calm. Every night and at every nap, sleep recharges the brain's battery. Sleeping well increases brainpower just as weight lifting builds stronger muscles, because sleeping well increases your attention span and allows you to be physically relaxed and mentally alert at the same time. Then you are at your personal best."

People today are constantly on the go and pushing themselves beyond their limits. Sleep tends to be the first thing that can go. "There aren't enough hours in the day!" People in the days prior to electricity slept on average 10 hours a night. That would be nice. Today many individuals are averaging around 5-6 hours a night. Society has even made it almost shameful to admit that you enjoy sleep or sleep in often. People who admit to such guilty pleasures are labeled as lazy or not motivated, while the rest of us night owls are the "driven" ones! Think of the message we are sending to our young athletes and students; "do as I say, not as I do."

Children who do not get enough sleep fall into a type of downward spiral that can have adverse effects on performance. A child who did not sleep well, or enough during the night comes to school tired. They want to be part of the action and so their natural response to fatigue is to "fight it." This results in the body giving off hormones like adrenaline, which then cause them to become hyper alert. The poor child is now wide-awake but exhausted. Fussiness, irritability and crankiness soon follow. All hopes of attentiveness and learning are out the window. This is why overtired children often appear wide-awake, wired, and hyperactive. Now you have a situation where the child is so pumped up that they cannot easily fall asleep. Thus the downward spiral. From the athletes point of view it becomes hard to learn new skills, harder to perform them and practice them correctly, and then a drastic increase in potential for injury as the mind stays cloudy and the body is slow to respond. Schools will ask parents to have children get proper sleep before standardized tests for a good reason, but isn't that very reason good enough for sleep all year long? In his book *Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child*, Weissbluth states: "Sleep problems not only disrupt a child's nights -- they disrupt his days, too, by making him less mentally alert, more inattentive, unable to concentrate, and easily distracted. They also make him more physically impulsive, hyperactive, or lazy."

Making the amount of sleep a priority in life can make a huge difference in the performance you and your children are capable of on a daily basis. It will take the sacrifice of conveniences such as late night shows and overtime, but in the end it can be exactly what you need for success.



If you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.

Rabbi Harold Kushner

## Reading and Spelling Tips

**The Sound Shopping Trip** (For younger students) Have your child choose a magazine or catalog (toy catalogs are always fun!) and go on a make-believe shopping trip. Ask your child what they are going to buy and then ask what sound it starts with. Take turns shopping for something and then naming the first sound of the word that describes it.

**Letter to Relatives** Ask a family member to write a letter to your child. (The letter can tell a story, funny event or something about your child) When your child receives the letter, have them read it and write a return letter telling a story, funny event, or something about the family member that the child knows. Continue writing letters to all of your relatives for a fun way to encourage reading and writing!!

**My Turn, Your Turn** Choose an exciting title with your child, for a story you can write together. Have your child write the first sentence and you write the second line. Continue taking turns writing sentences until the story is complete. When the story is finished, invite the family to a story-reading session!

**Alien Word Builder** What you will need: three small containers and letters (use letters that your child knows the sounds for) written on small pieces of paper (make several copies of each letter). Put the three containers in front of you and your child. Place vowels in the middle container and consonants in the first and last containers. Have your child pick a letter out of each container and put them together to create silly "alien" words!

**Message Hunt** Put short, simple messages on the refrigerator door for your child to read, such as "look under the table." Send your child on a "Message Hunt" all over the house to find a special prize or treat!

## Brain Based Learning

# Principles of Brain-Based Learning - Part 1

By: Eric Jensen

### **Malleable memories:**

Memories are often not encoded at all, encoded poorly, changed or not retrieved. The result is that students rarely remember what we think they should. Memories are strengthened by frequency, intensity and practice under varying conditions and contexts.

### **Non-conscious experience runs automatic behaviors:**

The complexity of the human body requires that we automate many behaviors. The more we automate, the less we are aware of them. Most of our behaviors have come from either "undisputed downloads" from our environment or repeated behaviors that have become automatic. This suggests potential problems and opportunities in learning.

### **Reward and addiction dependency:**

Humans have a natural craving for positive feelings, including novelty, fun, reward and personal relationships. There is a natural instinct to limit pain even if it means compromising our integrity. For complex learning to occur, students need to defer gratification and develop the capability to go without an immediate reward.

### **Attention Limitations:**

Most people cannot pay attention very long, except during flow states, because they cannot hold much information in their short-term memory. It is difficult for people to maintain focus for extended periods of time. Emotions, meaning making, ultradian rhythms and glucose uptake all affect attention span. Some brain mechanisms facilitate attention by processing the desired areas and others facilitate attention by inhibiting unwanted inputs. Adapting the content to match the learner provides better attention and motivation to learn.

### **The Brain seeks and creates understanding:**

The human brain is a meaning-maker and meaning seeker. The more important the meaning, the greater the attention one must pay in order to influence the content of the meaning.

Teaching with these Brain Based Principles in Mind can lead to greater academic success. Brain Based Teaching strategies are one of the foundations the Horizons on the Hill magnet program. Check out the Coretastic Kids October newsletter for Part 2 of these principles.



# 2009 Fall 1 Schedule of Classes

STRONGER! SMARTER! BETTER!



We are offering a variety of fun weekly classes for your children.

Beginning Sept 8 Through October 23, 2009



1224 Alice Drive, Suite B, Sumter  
(In the old Winn Dixie Shopping Village)

Come let your children "hang out" with us in our Jungle Gym! We have a rock climbing wall, Wii Fit, swings, ropes, balance beams, trampolines, and lots of brain "aerobic" challenges! **Each class costs only \$15!**

|               | MONDAY  | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  |
|---------------|---|---|--|---|
| 9:00 - 9:30   | 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup><br>Handwriting /Print                              | PK -K<br>Handwriting /Print   | 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup><br>Handwriting /Print                               | PK -K<br>Handwriting /Print   |
| 9:30 - 10:00  | 3rd-5th<br>Handwriting/<br>Cursive  |    | 3rd-5th<br>Handwriting/<br>Cursive   |   |
| 9:00 - 10:00  | PK - 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Jungle                                | Advanced Math   | PK - 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Jungle                                 | Advanced Math   |
| 9:00 - 10:00  |    | PK - 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Jungle                                |    | PK - 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Jungle                                  |
| 10:00 - 11:00 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                     |
| 10:00 - 11:00 |   | 3rd-5th<br>Reading Comprehension  |  | 3rd-5th<br>Reading Comprehension  |
| 11:00 - 12:00 | 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                     | 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup><br>Sports Development<br>Vortex                      |
| 11:00 - 12:00 |   | 2nd-3rd<br>Multiplication<br>Boot Camp  |  | 2nd-3rd<br>Multiplication<br>Boot Camp  |
| 1:00 - 2:00   | 5-6 years<br>Learn to Read  | 5-6 years<br>Math   | 5-6 years<br>Learn to Read   | 5-6 years<br>Math   |
| 2:00 - 3:00   | 3-5 years<br>Sports Development<br>Jungle Gym                                       |  | 3-5 years<br>Sports Development<br>Jungle Gym  |   |
| 3:00 - 4:00   |  |   |  |  |
| 3:00 - 4:00   |   |   |  |   |
| 3:30 - 4:30   |   | 8-10 years<br>Sports Development<br>Vortex  |  | 8-10 years<br>Sports Development<br>Vortex  |
| 3:30 - 4:30   |  | 4-7 years<br>Sports Development<br>Jungle Gym                                       |  | 4-7 years<br>Sports Development<br>Jungle Gym   |
| 4:00 - 4:30   | 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade<br>Handwriting/ Print                        | 3rd-5th<br>Handwriting/Cursive  | 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade<br>Handwriting/ Print                         | 3rd-5th<br>Handwriting/Cursive  |
| 4:30 - 5:30   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> and up<br>Reading Boot Camp   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> and up<br>Math Boot Camp  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> and up<br>Reading Boot Camp  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> and up<br>Math Boot Camp  |
| 4:30 - 5:30   |   | 3rd-5th<br>Advanced Math  |  | 3rd-5th<br>Advanced Math  |
| 5:30 - 6:30   | SAT Prep  |   | SAT Prep   |   |
| 5:30 - 6:30   | 4-7 years<br>Sports Development<br>Jungle Gym                                       | PK-1<br>Learn to Read<br>and write  | 8-10 years<br>Sports Development<br>Vortex   | PK-1<br>Learn to Read<br>and write  |

www.coreinstitutesc.com

08/24/2009

There is something for everyone. Just call ahead and let us know what class you'll be attending. It's that easy! (803) 469-CORE (2673)