



"CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter



Math Tips:

Vision & Math

Visual processing problems commonly affect math learning and achievement. Some common visually-based problems in math learning include:

"Careless" Mistakes

Careless mistakes may result from missing visual details, skipping words while reading word problems, or accidentally missing numbers or problems. Children with unrecognized visual problems often also have sloppy writing so that numbers may not line up in the correct columns and errors in calculation result.

Number & Symbol Reversals

Confusion with similar numbers and symbols - number reversals of '2' and '5', mistakes with > and <, and other math operations.

Struggles with Multi-stepped Math

Children with visual memory problems often struggle a great deal with multi-stepped math problems. It's because they may quickly forget spatial order (working from right to left? or left to right?) and make mistakes of sequence and place value.

Visual memory weakness also makes it harder to automatically remember the spatial flow of steps in problem solving. Long division can be very difficult for students. Geometry can also be very challenging.

Problems with Graphs, Diagrams

Children with visual perceptual problems may really struggle with graphs and diagrams. Depending on the sort of problem a child has, errors of omission, part-to-whole or whole organization may lead to learning errors. If visual memory is poor, graphs and diagrams may need to be translated into words or the language of numbers and mathematical relationships.

Activities to Develop Visual Memory Skills:

Recall object features – let the student look at an object and talk about its features. Then take the object away and ask them to recall some of its features.

Recall picture details – let the student look at a picture. Then, take the picture away and talk about the details.

What's missing? – show the pupils two similar pictures and ask them identify what is missing from one of the pictures.

Number bingo – using addition, subtraction, multiplication fact family cards

Visual memory equation games – using the look, cover, remember, write, strategy with simple fact family cards



Where performance meets potential.

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Calendar of Events:

New Office Hours

Monday—Thursday
8:00am—6:30pm

Holiday Break

December 24-25, 2009

December 31—Jan 1, 2010

During Holiday Break,
we will not have Group Classes.



Exercise of the Month:

Christmas Tree Pose: This is a great yoga exercise. The "Tree" pose strengthens thighs, calves, ankles and spine. This pose improves sense of balance and motor coordination while enhancing your breathe activation. Stand on your right leg and place the sole of the left foot against the inner right thigh. Press the left heel into your leg with toes pointing toward the floor. Make sure to keep your hips straight for balance. Hold your arms above your head and point your fingers straight up to the ceiling to form the top of the tree. Close your eyes and practice deep breathing techniques for relaxation. Change legs to strengthen both sides and to perfect your balancing skills.

Body Works — From the Inside Out



The joy of brightening
other's lives, bearing
each other's burdens,
easing other's loads
and supplanting empty
hearts and lives with
generous gifts be-
comes for us the
magic of Christmas.

W.C. Jones

In all of the years I have been working with kids, I have learned so many wonderful things. As the holidays approach, one such lesson comes to mind. Without fail, most kids go through a sort of metamorphosis around the holidays. Something in them is triggered and they can become moody, tired, extra sensitive, grouchy, forgetful and generally different from the child you know day to day. (Or perhaps this sounds a lot like the child you know day to day; watch out, they just may get worse!) Now, this doesn't happen to all children, just most I have been around in the last 20 years. You may ask, what causes this and how can it be stopped? Or, you may be saying that this sounds like what happens to me during the holidays! Think about everything that is going on during the holiday season from Halloween to New Years: immense excitement, the weather change, the time change, more late nights, extended family, travel, gifts, school vacation, parent stress, report cards, teacher conferences, holiday parties, routine changes, day care, and many more possible triggers that can pile up to make us feel a change. Many of these triggers are specific to kids, but many carry an overlap from adult to child. It is important all year, but especially during this time of year, to pay attention to the needs of you children and yourself and to expect some changes. The more you expect them to act differently, the less frustrated or upset it may make you. This, in itself, can help to establish more balance with your child. Also look at some of the areas of life with your child that cause the most confrontation and heart ache (i.e. homework). Not all, but most kids, experience some sort of academic plateau or slide during this time. Encouraging them rather than lashing out words that so easily come to mind, such as lazy or unmotivated, can make a huge difference. Be a resource to them and listen to them when they say they're tired, or hungry, or just sorry. Remember 3 pluses and a wish. Think of 3 good things about the situation, and then find 1 thing that can get better. Small obtainable goals will do wonders for everyone. Holidays can be wonderful, but be perceptive to your little ones and their limits.

Reading and Spelling Tips

Tips for Fueling Your Child's Brain Power

- Show your child love and affection: A caring environment triggers better memory recall, thinking and problem solving skills, as well as, positive behavioral outcomes.
- Feed your child breakfast everyday
- Ensure your child receives 9 to 10 hours of sleep each night
- Schedule regular health checkups for your child
- Take an active role in your child's education

Reading and Writing Activities

- **Letter to Santa:** Help your child write a wish list or letter to Santa!
- **Phonics "I Spy":** Give clues to different items, such as "I spy something whose name begins with *ch*." Make it more challenging by asking for final consonants, vowel sounds, or blends!
- **Gingerbread Journal:** Help your child build a gingerbread house. When the house is finished, have your child write the steps they used to make the gingerbread house. Make sure to include a drawing of your completed house!
- **Merry Christmas Word Hunt:** See how many words your child can make using the letters in "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Holidays."

Brain Based Learning

Did you Know?

10 Fun Brain Facts:

1. The human brain is only 2% of our body's weight, but uses 20% of our body's energy!
2. Measures of brain activity show that during the second half of a child's first year, the prefrontal cortex, the seat of forethought and logic, forms synapses at such a rate that it consumes twice as much energy as an adult brain. That furious pace continues for the child's first decade of life.
3. It's no accident that telephone numbers in the United States are seven digits long. Our working memory, a very short-term form of memory which stores ideas just long enough for us to understand them, can hold on average a maximum of seven digits. This allows you to look up a phone number and remember it just long enough to dial.
4. Approximately 20% of the blood flowing from the heart is pumped to the brain. The brain needs constant blood flow in order to keep up with the heavy metabolic demands of the neurons. Brain imaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) rely on this relationship between neural activity and blood flow to produce images of deduced brain activity.
5. Although the brain accounts for only 2% of the whole body's mass, it uses 20% of all the oxygen we breathe. A continuous supply of oxygen is necessary for survival. A loss of oxygen for 10 minutes can result in significant neural damage.
6. During the first month of life, the number of connections or synapses, dramatically increases from 50 trillion to 1 quadrillion. If an infant's body grew at a comparable rate, his weight would increase from 8.5 pounds at birth to 170 pounds at one month old.
7. The human cerebellum, or "little brain", weighs about 150 grams. Located at the lower back of the brain, the cerebellum is key to maintaining posture, walking, and performing coordinated movements. It is also thought to play a role in olfaction or smell.
8. There are one hundred billion neurons in the brain. A stack of one hundred billion pieces of paper would be about 5000 miles high, the distance from San Francisco to London.
9. Olfactory receptor cells, the neurons in our nose that allow us to smell, are neurons that can regenerate throughout life. Although these cells are continually being born and dying, they maintain the same connections as their ancestors. The result is that once we learn a smell, it always smells the same to us -- despite the fact that there are always new neurons smelling it!
10. There is no sense of pain within the brain itself. This fact allows neurosurgeons to probe areas of the brain while the patient is awake. Feedback from the patient during these probes is useful for identifying important regions, such as those for speech, that are spared if possible.

For more fun facts check out: www.brainconnection.positscience.com

Handwriting Tips:

Activities to Develop Handwriting Skills

Body Stability

Wheelbarrow walking, crab walking, and wall push-ups

Toys: Monkey bars on playground, rock climbing wall

Fine Motor Skills

Play connect the dots. Make sure the strokes connect from left to right and top to bottom.

Felt or magnetic boards to place shapes on to make pictures.

Paint at an easel.

Ocular Motor Control

Find hidden pictures in books.

Maze activities.

Color by number and mosaics.

Eye Hand Coordination

Play throw and catch with a ball.

Use a stomp-n-catch.

Practice hitting bowling pins with a ball.

Motor Planning Activities

Play "Simon Says".

Set up an obstacle course and have child run through.

Play the copy game where a child imitates a sequence of movements by an adult.



- Math Foundations Class
- Attention and Focus Class—HOPE / HYPE
 - Multiplication Boot Camp
 - Parent Leadership Conference

Cranberry Nut Mix

Ingredients

2 cups sunflower seeds, raw

1 cup pine nuts

1 cup pumpkin seeds, raw

1 cup cranberries, dried and sweetened

1 cup raisins

1. Measure all of the ingredients into a mixing bowl and stir with a wooden spoon until well combined.
2. Transfer some to a festive bowl to serve as an appetizer. Makes 6 cups.