



## "CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter



#### The Journey to Write: A Roadmap for Successful Writing

On the road from scribbling to writing, children face many challenges, but also great adventures and rewards. For a successful journey to writing mastery, they need both handwriting skills and motivation.

#### Skills

If you want to develop good writers, you must first develop good handwriters. Regardless of grade level, children need developmentally appropriate instruction and activities. They need to feel confident and good about writing, or they will steer away from it.

To gain confidence in writing, they need exposure to and practice of fine motor skills.

Children need good grip, posture, manual dexterity and strength for all their writing. These foundation skills pave the way for letter formation, fluency, and automaticity.

When children are comfortable with letter formation, they are better able to focus on the conventions of writing including spacing, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar. When these skills are automatic, children won't struggle with handwriting. They will instead find joy and ease in expressing themselves, creating stories, organizing their thoughts, and sharing information.

#### Motivation

Along with foundation skills, motivation is the engine that drives children on their lifelong writing odyssey. Encourage children to discover topics that energize them. Let them write about topics that they think are funny, exciting, silly, or inspiring. Also, think about what inspires both girls and boys.

Consider these motivators:

Movement: Have children act out their stories or elements described in their writing.

Curiosity: Children are curious and want to know things, so discuss what they are writing about and encourage them to research and find answers to their questions.

Engagement: Children need to be engaged and interested in the world in which they live. Have them write about their pets, their families, their travels, and other meaningful topics.

This article from <u>www.hwtears.com</u>

# CORE

Where performance meets potential.

1224 B Alice Drive Sumter, SC 29150 Phone: 803-469-CORE (2673) E-mail: core@tuomey.com www.coreinstitutesc.com

> Volume 3, Issue 8 August 1, 2010

#### Calendar of Events

New Classes begin August 23, 2010

We will be closed Monday, September 6 in observance of Labor Day



#### MATH ACTIVITIES

This fun game helps kids learn to estimate a basic unit of **time**—a minute—without help from a clock. Encourage your child to count how many jumping jacks, one foot hops, and hand claps he can do in one minute to help him see just how much activity he can pack into a minute!

Help your child understand mass/weight. Gather items from around the house, make predictions about their weight, then use a scale to find the actual measurements. Or, choose two items, make predictions about which is heaviest and then take actual measurements.

Practice data collection and graphing skills by having your child record how many sit-ups, jumping jacks, push-ups, etc... they can do in one minute. Have them record their results in a bar graph. Get the whole family involved and record everyone's results!

### Body Works — From the Inside Out

Just Sit Back and Die?

Ok, this article from Todd Neale is a bit shocking, and yes, as far as studies go, perhaps not the tightest data. However, it is more data supporting that living a healthy mobile life will reduce your risk of death and sickness.

<u>Sitting around too much</u> in one's spare time appears to increase the risk of dying, regardless of <u>physical activity</u>, researchers found. Among more than 120,000 adults, those who sat more than six hours a day in their leisure time were significantly more likely to <u>die</u> in a 14-year period than those who sat less than three hours, according to Alpa Patel of the American Cancer Society in Atlanta, and colleagues online in the American Journal of Epidemiology.

The findings were independent of physical activity levels, <u>body mass index</u>, smoking and several other factors contributing to mortality risk.

According to the researchers, sedentary time may be related to mortality risk because sitting may be associated with other unhealthy behaviors, like excessive eating. In addition, sitting too much could have adverse metabolic effects.

Numerous studies have identified a relationship between high levels of physical activity and reduced risks of death and a multitude of health problems. Few studies, however, have examined the association between time spent sitting and mortality.

Patel and her colleagues evaluated data from the ACS's Cancer Prevention Study II Nutrition Cohort. At baseline, the participants completed a questionnaire detailing -- among other things -- the amount of time they spent sitting and exercising in their leisure time. The current analysis included 53,440 men and 69,776 women who were healthy at the beginning of the study. During the 14-year follow-up, there were 11,307 deaths in men and 7,923 in women.

Even though the link between sitting and risk of death was greatest for those participants who sat at least six hours a day, there was a significant association among both men and women who sat three to five hours as well.

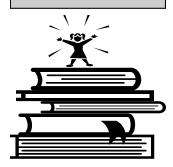
Patel and her colleagues acknowledged that the study was limited by the lack of data on occupational physical activity and time spent sitting. In addition, the analysis relied on self-reported data, which could be subject to bias. And finally, the researchers could not differentiate between types of sitting (while driving, watching TV, reading); energy expenditure and behavior might vary with the type of sitting.





The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.

Sydney J. Harris



# Exercise of the Month Plyometrics

Children of all ages love to jump around for fun. Why not try plyometrics? Plyometrics is a type of exercise designed to produce fast powerful movements. Most forms of plyometrics are used for sports training purposes to increase strength and power. Plyometrics improves the functions of the nervous system. When your child jumps off the furniture or the steps, it often raises concern for safety when in fact the child is actually building a good foundation for their nervous system. That doesn't mean safety does not come first because it does! Always make sure exercises are done in a safe manner. Here is a fun and safe way to do plyometrics with your children: Squat Jumps. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, bend at the trunk slightly forward with your back straight. Bend the arms at the elbows, lower the body where the thighs are parallel to the ground and immediately explode upward and raise arms up above the head. Only jump up at a minimum height and then squat back down. Make sure you land on both feet. Rest for a few seconds and start again. Call out a cheer as you explode upward for some added fun. See who can jump the most and always land on both feet simultaneously. This exercise can be lots of fun for the whole family.

Page 2 "CORE"tastic Kids

#### Building Your Child's Literacy Skills

#### Beginning Readers (Grades K-2)

#### Here are a few things that you can do to help build your child's literacy skills:

- Let your child gradually share some of the reading aloud. You read a sentence, paragraph, or page, then it's your child's turn. Take over if your beginner seems tired or discouraged to ensure that reading is always fun, not just hard work.
- If your child can't sound out a word, suggest skipping it, reading the rest of the sentence, and deciding what word would make sense.
- Leave notes on the refrigerator or in a lunch bag for your child to discover and read.
- Take your new reader to the library to sign up for his or her own library card.

#### Try introducing the following types of books to your child:

- Read-aloud books with plots to follow and challenging vocabulary
- Easy-to-read books your child can read alone
- Books in a variety of genres, including nonfiction and poetry

#### Developing Readers (Grades 2-3)

#### Here are a few things that you can do to help build your child's literacy skills:

- When your children read aloud, help them catch and correct their own mistakes by asking guiding questions. For example, you might ask, "Does that word really make sense here? What letter does it start with? What do you think the word could be?"
- Talk about the books you read together and about the books your children are reading on their own.
- Don't stop reading aloud! Developing readers can read simple chapter books alone, but they still need you to help read the kinds of books that will challenge their thinking and build their vocabulary.
- Suggest that your child read to a younger brother, sister, or neighbor. It will be good practice, a chance to show off skills, and an inspiration for the younger listener.

#### Try introducing the following types of books to your child:

- Novels for "middle readers" that you can read aloud together
- Information books for young readers
- Books in a variety of genres, including biographies, humorous stories, and poetry

#### Attention and Focus

One of the symptoms exhibited by children who suffer from ADD/ADHD is being disorganized and having difficulty moving from one task to the next. By helping your child establish a good time management program, you can help assure that he will do better in school and in later life.

Many children who suffer from ADD/ADHD seem to function better if they follow a daily routine. You should establish a time for specific activities such as mealtimes, homework, and bedtime and keep the same schedule every day. When scheduling a specific time for your child to go to bed, you should be aware that lack of sleep can make attention disorders worse. You should make sure that your child goes to bed early enough to enable him to get the recommended amount of sleep for children in his age group.

Making good use of the hours and minutes of the day requires planning, prioritizing. These skills don't come easily to children with attention and focus problems. How can you help your child do a better job of estimating how long it takes to complete a task or to get somewhere? How can you get them to pay attention to deadlines?

Here are some helpful strategies.

#### Practice time estimation

Make a game out of predicting, timing, and checking their estimates of the time needed for various activities. How long does it take to walk from the bus area to the classroom? Can they estimate how long it takes to complete an assignment?

#### Use an analog clock.

Digital clocks are easier to read, but an old-fashioned clock with hands gives students a better sense of how swiftly time passes.

#### Set a timer to motivate targeted behaviors.

To help with transitions, for example, set a time limit to finish a task, and set an alarm to signal when time is up. Visual timers are also help-ful: www.timetimer.com.

#### Make sure students begin tasks promptly.

Children with ADHD often use delaying tactics—like sharpening a pencil or going to the restroom—to put off doing tasks they find boring. Stand next to your child to get them started. If punctuality is a problem, include it as a goal for your daily schedule and include rewards for accomplishments.

Page 3 "CORE"tastic Kids