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HOW TO CHANGE FROM A NEGATIVE TO A POSITIVE MINDSET

If your students (or yourself) suffer from low self-confidence, they may be stuck in some negative mindsets that are affecting the way they think about themselves. Students with special needs can get stuck in a negative mindset leading to a lot of “always” or “never” talk, creating a sense of entrapment and hopelessness. It is important to encourage students to change from a negative to a positive mindset. Here are some examples of negative mindsets that can lead to low confidence.

“I will never get it right.”

Thinking this way can keep them from trying again, or even trying something for the first time. It makes it only too easy to give up.

“Nobody understands what this is like.”

When someone lacks self-confidence, it can give them a feeling of being all alone. They can feel isolated and assume that others have their lives together while they are still floundering.

“I am totally useless.”

When someone lacks confidence, they may feel like they don’t have anything of value to contribute, whether it’s at school or home.

“I am a complete failure.”

No one fails at every single thing; but to a person with low self-confidence, it can sure seem that way. Sometimes, they can feel like everything they’ve ever tried has failed, even if this is not true.

“I could never do that.”

Do your students see someone else with a successful school life and wish they had the same? Instead of being inspired and wanting to improve their school
experience, they look at that person and get depressed, thinking they could never achieve what they have.

**How Can These Mindsets Be Overcome?**

In order to overcome these destructive mindsets that lead to low confidence, it’s necessary to reprogram thought processes. Teach the students to pay attention to negative self-talk and immediately change it to something positive. Here are several examples to change from a negative to a positive mindset.

For example, instead of “I will never get it right,” you could stop that thought in its tracks and think instead, “I have trouble with this, but if I keep trying and seek out the right help, I know I can succeed.”

Rather than, “I could never do that,” think, “I would love to do that! There’s no reason why I can’t accomplish a task if I work at it.”

**Encourage Students to Have a Growth Mindset**

Encourage students to change from a negative to a positive mindset by using a growth mindset. A growth mindset was developed by psychologist Carol Dweck who explains mindset as a self-perception or “self-theory” that people hold about themselves. For example, it is believing that you are smart or not smart, good athlete or bad athlete, good at knitting or stink at knitting. This type of mindset can have a profound effect on learning achievement and skill acquisition.

Carol Dweck explains mindset further comparing a fixed mindset to a growth mindset. According to Dweck, “In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort.” In comparison, Dweck explains that “In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.”

Overall, her research revealed that when students learned through a structured program that they could “grow their brains” and increase their intellectual abilities, they did better. In addition, having children focus on the process that
leads to learning (like hard work or trying new strategies) fosters a growth mindset and its benefits.

The way we respond to students learning effects how they learn. One of the examples Dweck provides is instead of simply responding “Good effort” when a child is trying to learn something new but struggling, try responding “The point isn’t to get it all right away, the point is to grow your understanding step by step. What can you try next?”

A growth mindset is not just about effort. Students need to apply effort of course, but they also need to discover new strategies and ask for help when needed. This helps students to face challenges head on and understand that setbacks occur on the path of learning.

Remind students it is okay to ask for help to overcome a negative mindset. But like everything else in life, you can do it if you set realistic goals and have confidence in yourself!

References:


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EXTENDED TIME FOR TESTS – WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

If you work with students with ADHD, you are most likely familiar with the accommodation of extended time for tests. Many students with ADHD and other disabilities have extended time of varying degrees for certain subjects. Recent research examined the objective effectiveness of extended examination time.

The participants included 30 students with ADHD and 30 matched typically developing peers who completed three parallel versions of a paper-and-pencil test in three time conditions: 1 hr (+0%), 1 hr 20 min (+33%), and 1 hr 30 min (+50%).

Results of the Study on Extended Time for Tests

The results of taking the test in the three time conditions revealed the following:

- students with ADHD and typical peers did not increase their performance on the tests when using extended examination time.
- strategies that are perceived as effective (e.g., marking key words) were rarely used by the students.

The researchers concluded that extended examination duration is not objectively effective in an experimental situation.


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Read more on:

**Action Plan for Implementing Modifications in the Classroom**

**Follow Up Questions about Modifications and Adaptive Equipment in the Classroom**

**Tips for Students with Complete School Work Slowly**

**How to Teach Organizational Skills to High School Students**

**10 Strategies to Help Students Focus**

**Eye Movements and ADHD**

**Handwriting, Working Memory, and ADHD**

**Auditory and Visual Attention in Children with ADHD**

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**Modifications and Interventions for School – Reporting Forms**

This book, in printed or electronic format, provides pediatric therapists with over 60, reproducible reporting forms with hundreds of suggested modifications and interventions for students. Track progress once modifications are put into action. [Find out more information.](www.YourTherapySource.com)
Research was published recently on the association of visual motor skills, executive function and achievement in children (for reading and math scores) for kindergarteners through second graders. The participants included 259 students enrolled in elementary schools in low-income communities with many sociodemographic risk factors. The research indicated the following:

➢ executive function and visuomotor integration tend to be delayed in socioeconomically disadvantaged children and can explain nearly half the achievement gap at kindergarten entry.

➢ executive function at multiple time points predicted reading and math achievement.

➢ visuomotor integration in kindergarten alone predicted later reading and math.

The study helps to highlight the importance of developing visual motor skills and executive function skills at a young age particularly for socioeconomically disadvantaged children.


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Looking for visual motor activities? Check out this visual motor collection of 18 titles at a discounted price!

Read more on visual motor skills and executive function in children:

- [Eye Tracking and Visual Motor Skills in Young Children](#)
- [How to Help Children Improve Executive Functioning](#)
- [Copy the Caterpillar Visual Motor Freebie](#)
- [Fine Motor Skills, Visual Function, and Reading in Children](#)
- [Find and Color Marine Life Visual Motor Freebie](#)
WILL MY CHILD WITH CEREBRAL PALSY RUN?

Many times as therapists, parents, and teachers may ask will my child with cerebral palsy run? Of course, we first get the question will they learn to walk but soon after running is the new goal. Recent research highlighted key points to help predict the ability to run in children and adolescents with cerebral palsy. Keep in mind though that are all children are unique and accomplish new skills at their own pace. Never give up on a skill that a child is highly motivated to achieve.

Methodology of the Study in Running in Children with Cerebral Palsy

The participants included 280 children and adolescents with spastic Cerebral Palsy, Gross Motor Function Classification System Level II were included to determine the prevalence of the ability to run and to identify contributing factors. An instrumented running analysis was used to define the ability to run. Once it was determined if a child could run or not run the researchers compared the participants’ clinical measures of spasticity, weakness, and postural control.

Results of the Study of Running in Children with Cerebral Palsy

Using logistic regression analysis, the researchers determined the following:

- the ability to run was significantly higher in children with unilateral (67%) compared to bilateral (55%) cerebral palsy.
- significant differences between runners and non-runners were found for spasticity, body mass index and postural control.
- there was no significant difference between runners and non-runners for muscle strength.
➢ the best predictors for being able to run were lower muscle rectus femoris spasticity, higher muscle gastrocnemius spasticity and enhanced postural control.

The researchers concluded that clinical decision making should include determining the child’s running ability. In addition, it is important to remember that spasticity and postural control affect the ability to run.


Read Will My Child with Cerebral Palsy Learn to Walk?
Read more on the Development of Motor Skills – Running
Read more on exercise interventions for children with cerebral palsy.
Read more on educating caregivers to improve mobility skills in children with cerebral palsy.
Read more on Examining Gross Motor Progress in Children with Cerebral Palsy

Teaching Motor Skills to Children with Cerebral Palsy and Similar Movement Disorders: The ELECTRONIC version of Teaching Motor Skills is a must-have reference for all therapists who work with children with cerebral palsy. FIND OUT MORE.

Therapeutic Play Activities for Children digital download includes 100 play activity pages and 12 tip sheets. FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION.
There is conflicting research on the benefits of visual treatments for developmental dyslexia. Recently, the article “What is Developmental Dyslexia?” written by John Stein discussed in detail the phonological theory of dyslexia and the pathophysiological visual and auditory mechanisms that can cause phonological problems. The researcher reports on the importance of the magnocellular system.

What is the magnocellular system?

The magnocellular system is a specialized set of large neurons found throughout the brain that provides rapid processing and timing of visual information. For example, it is not responsible for the details of a letter (i.e. color) but it is responsible to direct the eye movement and visual attention in order to identify the letter.

What does the research say about improving the performance of the magnocellular system?

If someone with dyslexia can improve the magnocellular system through visual treatments, does it then improve his/her reading? The following research supports that visual treatments for developmental dyslexia may be helpful:

**Study #1:** Magnocellular function training occurred by asking participants with dyslexia to decide the direction of motion of progressively dimmer moving gratings on a background of similar high contrast gratings. As their contrast sensitivity improved, the contrast of the gratings was reduced, so that magnocellular sensitivity progressively increased and with it the children’s reading (Lawton & Shelley-Tremblay, 2017).
Study #2: In another study, training the magnocellular pathway to detect progressively faster movements was followed by improved lexical decision and reading accuracy (Choake, 2012).

Study #3: Visual-motor training consisted of progressively more difficult coherent motion detection, visual search, visual tracking, and juggling. These exercises improved magnocellular pathway function, and this was associated with significant increases in phonological awareness (Qian & Bi 2015).

Study #4: Using action video games with no reading or phonological content helped children with dyslexia to greatly improve both their visual magnocellular function and their reading (Gori, 2016).

Study #5: Elementary students received saccadic training and improved their reading fluency significantly (Leong, 2014).

In summary, effective visual magnocellular function is essential for learning to read and the benefits of visual treatments for developmental dyslexia can be seen in many written alphabets and languages.

Looking for resources on visual treatments?

**The Visual Perceptual Packet** digital download is an evidence-based packet that organizes activity suggestions based on the development of visual perception. Created by a school-based Occupational Therapist with 10+ years of experience, this 30 page PDF digital download includes loads of written activity suggestions, as well as 20 Print and Go worksheets to save time and treatment planning. Not only will this packet provide new ideas for intervention, but will also inspire you to think about the way you address visual perceptual skill development. [FIND OUT MORE.]

Recommended additional resources:

[The Pattern Recognition Worksheet Packet](www.YourTherapySource.com)
The Oculomotor Worksheet Packet

VAMPS Assessment – Visual Activity, Motor, Postural, & Sensorimotor Assessment

READ MORE ON:

Visual Deficits in Children with Dyslexia

Link between visual-motor integration and reading.

Fine Motor Skills, Visual Function, and Reading in Children

Orthographic Processing and Handwriting

Ready, Set, Scan digital download

CHECK OUT ALL OF OUR VISUAL RESOURCES HERE.

References:


www.YourTherapySource.com
How to Use Yoga to Reduce Anxiety in Children

The rate of anxiety in children has been increasing over the last several years. Previous research has indicated that yoga can help reduce anxiety in children. A recent study examined how to use yoga to reduce anxiety in children. The study looked at the effects of 10 minutes of daily yoga on the anxiety levels of children in kindergarten through 3rd grade. Anxiety can hinder a child’s ability to focus and learn therefore it is important to address it at an early age in young students.

Benefits of Yoga for Children

A review of the literature indicates that yoga helps children to:

- reduce anxiety.
- lower their anxiety levels at a greater rate than cardiovascular exercise.
• increase GABA (a neurotransmitter in the brain that reduces anxiety) after one month of yoga.
• cope with emotional issues.

Implementing Yoga in the Classroom to Reduce Anxiety

In the study mentioned above, the yoga program was implemented for 10-minute sessions, 5 days a week for 16 weeks. To begin with, the teachers received yoga instruction. For each session, students warmed up and cooled down. The yoga poses included the following:

• Mountain
• Tree
• Warrior I and Warrior II
• Down Dog
• Plank
• Table Top
• Half Boat
• Child’s Pose
• Lying Twist
• Chill Pose

In order to determine the benefits of yoga to reduce anxiety in children, the researchers used the Screen for Child Anxiety-Related Emotional Disorders (SCARED) either through parent report (children under 8) or self-reporting questionnaire for older children.

Yoga for Kids

Get immediate access to yoga poses for children
Results of Using Yoga to Reduce Anxiety in Children

Following statistical analysis, the 10 minutes of daily yoga practice had a significant impact on the anxiety levels of children in kindergarten through 3rd grade. For children who scored in the Significant School Anxiety range, there was no significant decrease in anxiety. It was concluded that implementing yoga in the classroom settings can help many children to decrease anxiety levels. Further research needs to be conducted with larger sample sizes.


Have you seen all of our other yoga products for kids? Check out the following titles:

Yoga Cards and Game Ideas

Yoga Moves Visual Cue Cards

Scooter and Me Bundle includes 9 Videos & 16 Self-Regulation Flash Cards Mp4 download of three videos combining stories + creative movement + Yoga + Brain Gym®

Yoga for Every Season

All of our yoga titles are listed HERE
With the start of school, it is crucial that children get back into a regular sleep routine. Here are a few suggestions on how to help children sleep. Children can focus and learn better after a good night sleep. One of the easiest ways to accomplish a regular sleep schedule is to follow a daily routine. Not only will a daily routine help your child, it helps parents to set the stage for a good night’s sleep, so both parents and children will wake up refreshed and ready to start another happy and productive day.

**The Benefits of a Daily Routine for Children**

Children benefit from structure. They learn what to do and when to do it. They learn how to do things, like brush their teeth, get dressed, solve math problems and so on. At school children have a routine by following the consistent daily school schedule. Routines help them know what to expect and enable them to feel safe and secure. Regular meal times and regular bedtimes are two of the most helpful ways to schedule your child and keep them happy and healthy.
How Much Sleep Does Your School-Aged Child Need?

Before we talk about a sleep schedule and sleep routine, it is important to know how much sleep a child needs, and why. A general rule of thumb is that if your child is attending school, they need ten to eleven hours of sleep per day, preferably all at night rather than naps. As children get older naps are hard to provide during a school day, and they can disrupt a regular night’s sleep pattern.

There are two stages of sleep: rapid eye movement (REM) and non-rapid eye movement (NREM). Both are important, but REM is considered to be the most healthful and rejuvenating, allowing people to not feel sleep deprived and to therefore put in a good performance every day.

Children enjoy about 30% REM sleep in a 90-minute cycle throughout the night. But if they do not sleep long enough, or deeply enough, they can start to become sleep deprived.

Signaling It Is Time for Sleep

A predictable daily routine will help signal it is time for sleep. Dinner, homework, and reading time all show it is time to wind down at the end of the day and relax.

The trouble is that when we get busy, these routines can start to suffer, with rushed meals grabbed on the go, too much homework, and the addictiveness of “just 5 more minutes” on a game that turns into another 30 minutes or more.

A bedtime routine should include:

- getting into pajamas
- brushing teeth
- reading
- any other preferred, quiet activities i.e. gentle massage, bath time, lavender scents, lotion, etc.

The above suggestions can help a child to wind down and get ready for sleep time.

**There should be no media in the room.** Reserve the bedroom for sleep. Cut down on clutter so they are not distracted. Make sure the bedding is comfortable and
the room at the right temperature. If the long days of summer prevent your child from falling asleep at their regular time, try dark or blackout curtains.

**Keep Up the Routine Every Day**

It is okay to relax it a bit once in a while, but in general, try to stick to the same routine every day, even on weekends and vacation. This will cause less confusion to your child’s “body clock” and make bedtime less of a battle.

Would you like a handout version of this blog post on How to Help Children Sleep? Sign up to receive the Your Therapy Source email newsletter and you will be redirected to the download.

**Read More on the Benefits of Routines and Sleep for Children**

**Daily Routine Visual Schedules** digital download includes 70+ picture icons for Morning Routines, School Routines, Afternoon Routines and Evening Routines. The pictures are suitable for all ages.

**Interoceptive sensory strategies to induce sleep**

**10 Tips to Teach Children Self Help Skills**

**Sleep, Bedtime Routines, Anxiety and Autism**

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10 Tips to Help Children with Toileting

Important Information Children Should Know

Teach Life Skills to Learn Responsibility and Independence

Get more sensory strategies to help restless minds sleep in Autism Sleeps™. This is a thorough resource of sleep sensory strategies and suggestions for preparing the “sleep environment”. Sample bedtime and wake-up routines are provided as templates, especially to guide parents of children with sleep difficulties. Also includes checklists to identify which of the six sensory area(s) are impacted by poor sleep. A menu of sensory strategies in each of those affected areas is available for use in preparing a person to sleep, stay asleep and transition to wake up. Additionally, a diary and graph are available for logging the impact of the strategies implemented to determine those that are most effective in helping restless minds sleep. FIND OUT MORE.
With back to school time in full swing, you all know that the routine of the school year can be difficult. As school-based therapists, teachers and parents by the end of each day, you can feel exhausted, worn out and defeated. Self-care is so important for everyone but if you work with children the stresses of each day can build if you do not take the time to take care of yourself. Here are tips and strategies to stay healthy and energized at work. Obviously, these will not work to prevent the stomach bug, head lice, ringworm, strep throat, or any other infectious disease that children like to pass along to adults. But hopefully, the strategies will help to prevent mental exhaustion and fatigue.

How to Prevent Mental Exhaustion

Suffering from mental exhaustion is not a fun experience. It can sneak up on you (and rather quickly during scheduling time at the start of the school year, IEP time mid-school year, etc). You may think you’re doing wonderfully well and then one day you realize you’re not. Therefore, let’s go through some steps to overcome mental exhaustion but also learn how to prevent it in the first place. After all, prevention is the best medicine of all.

Track How You Spend Your Time

If you don’t know how much you’re really doing, it can be easy to just keep going 24/7 and never take a break. Take some time to track what you’re doing daily for about a week. You can use your smartphone to track your activities or you can go old school and carry around a small notebook to record your activities in.
Drop Activities That Don’t Produce Real Results

When you look at the activities you did while tracking, note the things that aren’t really producing results, or that are busy work, or that are completely unnecessary. For example, do you go to a lot of meetings? Do you have to? Do you spend a lot of time trying to help co-workers, friends, or someone else without results? Let go of anything that you can either just stop doing or outsource. Or if you must keep doing it, find a way to put limits on it. Read on how to be more productive here.

Put Everything in Your Calendar

One reason people get overscheduled doing too much and become mentally exhausted is that they think they’re magic. They think they can do 48 hours of work in 24 hours. But, if you started putting everything on your calendar properly, you would see that you just can’t. First, schedule the must-dos. Then add in family time, date night, friend time, and “me” time to your day. Don’t add anything to your schedule that will reduce these important things. Check out the Therapy Planner for calendars to get started right away.

Get a Good Night’s Sleep

Don’t forget how important sleep is. We spend so much time working on getting our children to sleep that we forget about ourselves. Most adults should seek to get between six and nine hours a night. It largely depends on your genetics how much sleep feels right for you. Work with what you know you need. If you’re having trouble sleeping at night, address that issue so that you fall asleep fast and your sleeping time is productive. To help get used to this process, go to bed and wake up at the same time every day for at least 30 days. You can start with the

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least time and work your way up to find out which amount of time works best for you to make you feel rested each day.

**Exercise Every Day**

Schedule in exercise time each day. It doesn’t have to be strenuous exercise. It can be as simple as a brisk walk. You also don’t need to schedule in an entire hour. Look at your schedule so that you can determine if you have 10 minutes to walk six times a day, or three 20-minute walks a day. You can also separate that out into different types of exercise. The important thing is to get up out of a chair and move as much as you can.

**Eat Right**

Enough cannot be stated about eating the right type of food for your body. What you eat often depends on what you need. Ask your doctor to test your blood levels for vitamins and then eat the things you need to avoid deficiencies. Try eating smaller meals throughout the day which will give you a break, boost your energy, and help you stay more focused. Read more below on eating right.

**Stay Hydrated**

It can be very easy to get dehydrated. Most adults should drink between eight and ten 8-ounce glasses of water each day to stay hydrated. If you exercise strenuously you’ll need more. Tea, coffee, soda, and sugary drinks (even fake sugar) are all dehydrating and don’t do the same thing as clean, filtered water will. Take the challenge and commit to drinking enough water for 30 days, and you’ll see a huge difference.

**Take Regular Breaks**

When you are doing mental tasks, it’s hard to want to take a break sometimes because there are times when the time is just flying by as you work, and you just don’t notice. But, it’s imperative that you take regular breaks. Just like we encourage our students to take brain breaks we need to do the same. Try self-calming strategies during your break time.
Rest Your Eyes

If you spend long periods of time in front of a computer writing up reports or planning lessons, remember to take a break from the monitor a minimum of every 20 minutes by looking away to lessen the strain.

Understand That It’s OK to Do Nothing

A lot of smart, busy people tend to be uncomfortable with downtime. They feel as if they’re slackers. But, even if you have a mentally exhausting job as compared to a physically exhausting one (or mentally and physically exhausting job ie anyone who works with children), everyone needs downtime. Make sure that downtime doesn’t equate with screen time. When you do get a break and if you are feeling exhausted, make sure you spend that time resting, doing nothing, eating right, drinking water, and just getting yourself back. Then start fresh when you go back to work or school.

Activities That Raise Your Physical and Mental Energy Levels

There are many activities that you can do to help raise your energy level, whether you need more mental energy or physical energy. Your mental and physical energy are so intertwined that when you do something to help one you’re automatically helping the other. Here are some effective activities to try.

Develop a Daily Meditation Practice

Meditation is an important way to help reduce mental stress so that you can focus better. Not only that; you’ll also learn to be more mindful of everything you do, which will help you avoid exhaustion in the first place, most of the time. Practice deep breathing techniques.
Move Your Body Every Single Day

Moving is something that is so important that even if you have a physical job, you should still find a way to get in more moving in an intentional way. Even if it’s just a few brisk ten-minute walks, it’s a way to clear your mind and get your blood flowing. Anytime you feel a slump coming on, take a fast walk if possible before or after the school day ends.

Keep a Gratitude Journal

Another way to stay energetic, both mentally and physically, is to be a positive person. Not everyone is positive naturally, but you can start to trick your mind into being that way by keeping a gratitude journal. Each night before bed, write down three things you’re grateful for. That will make it the last thing you think of each night. You can make this even more effective if you use a journal that is also a coloring book. Coloring will soothe your mind and relax you. Try coloring these inspirational phrases to not only instill gratitude but relax at the same time.

Find Your Energy Music

Everyone has positive, uplifting music that they really enjoy and that makes them feel upbeat. However, some of it can also make you unproductive, so it’s important to try out different types of music for different activities. If you think a song you sing to might not be the right one for work, it may very well be just the ticket for your ride home in the car.

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Play a Game or Find a Hobby

Games, puzzles, and hobbies are great ways to have some downtime but are also good for your mind and body. Do at least one type of puzzle each day to help keep your brain thinking and to get your mind off other things that are pressuring you and sucking your energy. Teachers, pediatric therapists, and parents may play lots of games during the day but sometimes it’s fun to play a game with another adult too, such as trivia or card games.

Do Yoga

One of the best exercises for both mind and body is yoga. There are all types of yoga that you can learn to do at home or at a studio.

Drink Water and Eat Crunchy Snacks

Sometimes, it’s impossible to take time out to do anything mentioned. If that’s the case, a fast way to improve your energy is to drink water so that you’re hydrated and eat a small serving of crunchy snack to help raise your energy level.

It might seem like these activities will take away from the time you need to spend on things you need to do. But the truth is, the more productive you are, the easier everything will be.

Productivity doesn’t mean that you need to take more time doing something. It means that you need to focus closely on what’s at hand, and not what’s to come.
By taking breaks with these activities, you can help yourself become far more productive and reduce mental and physical exhaustion exponentially.

Revitalizing Foods to Boost Your Energy All Day

One of the best ways to treat any type of exhaustion, besides hydration, is by eating the right type of food so that you can keep your energy balanced all day long. One thing to understand about food is that it’s all just different nutrients. When you think of food as nutrients, you realize very fast that some things we put into our mouths aren’t really food. It’s more like a toy, a distraction, or a leisure activity – an unhealthy one at that.

For example, coffee and donuts are not nutrients. Therefore, they are a horrible choice for anyone who is suffering from or trying to prevent mental and physical exhaustion. So, understanding that, let’s look at some revitalizing foods that you can easily incorporate into your life to help you boost your energy all day.

Remember that if you are on a special diet, you can just substitute the ideas so that they fit your way of eating. The important factor is to consider nutrients that give energy.

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Brown Rice

If you normally eat white rice, switch out all your rice to brown rice, or even different colors of wild rice. Rice that has a color and is not processed will be richer in manganese, which is a mineral that helps your body process energy from both carbs and fats better.

Sweet Potatoes

This is an excellent lunch idea because sweet potatoes are packed with vitamins and minerals. Loaded with vitamin A and C, if you eat a sweet potato for lunch you’ll be much less likely to suffer from the midday slump. They are super-easy to cook in the microwave or bake ahead. You can eat them hot or cold too.

Bananas

A banana is almost the perfect food. It has plenty of sugar and fiber to slow the digestion of the sugar. You can eat them alone, or you can spread with seed butter like hemp or sunflower seeds to add a protein kick to make it last even longer.

Apples

This is another naturally fast food. If you buy organic apples you can just wash them off and start eating them as they are. Due to the high fiber in apples, the sugar processes slowly – making them a perfect snack to help you study harder or get over the midday slump at work. If you normally start feeling sleepy around 3 pm, try grabbing a small apple around 2:30 and you may find that you don’t get tired at all.

Oranges

You know that an orange is high in vitamin C, and of course, the hit of sugar will help perk you up too. But the smell of the citrus as you take out the time to peel the fruit will also wake you up and give you both a mental and physical boost of energy that can’t be beaten. Always eat your oranges rather than juice them for best results.
Spinach

Everyone knows that spinach is a superfood, but due to its high iron content that is easily digestible by the human body, adding just one cup of spinach to other dishes or smoothies that you eat throughout the day can make a huge difference in your energy levels. Try adding citrus and a small amount of fruit-based fat like coconut oil or olive oil to your spinach can help your body process the vitamins.

Eggs

For some people who need more iron and B vitamins but don’t want to eat anything that is sugary even if it’s a fruit, a boiled egg is the answer. The worries about too much cholesterol isn’t a problem for most people and falling asleep or getting overwhelmed due to studying or work can be avoided by adding a boiled egg to your snack options.

Water, Water, and More Water

While water isn’t a food, it needs to be mentioned. If you’re not drinking eight to ten 8-ounce glasses of water each day, look to that as your first reason for exhaustion. Most people are walking around dehydrated and don’t even know it. Remember that water is life and the first choice for beverages should always be water.

Adding these foods to your day can make all the difference in the world to your energy levels. When you feel better, you will automatically feel more energetic.

In addition to adding these foods to your daily diet, eliminate all processed food. Some people also see good results from eliminating dairy from their diets as it can be a cause of congestion, skin issues, and stomach issues for many adults.

Review of How to Stay Healthy and Energized at Work

Prevent mental exhaustion.

Keep up your physical and mental energy levels.

Eat right.

You can learn how to make small tweaks to your work habits to improve your energy level, mood, and your productivity. You need to focus on learning to do certain tasks during the hours when you are most productive, focusing your

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attention in short bursts of time and scheduling vital downtime on your calendar so you have an opportunity to enhance creativity, boost energy, and get a greatly improved return on investment for your time.

Ready to get started? Take the time to learn the ins and outs of becoming more productive with the Productivity and Time Management Planner so you can take your professional and personal life further than you’ve previously dared to dream possible.

Therapists, teachers, students, and parents can potentially reach their goals faster by using the Productivity and Time Management Planner because it teaches how to improve the quantity and quality of work you complete each day.
Recent research was published by the *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy* on increasing classroom participation of students with delays. Previous research has indicated that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities have been found to participate less in school-based activities. The purpose of the current study was to compare the effectiveness of combined in-services and collaborative consultations to improve classroom participation for students with delays (intellectual and developmental disabilities).

**How the Study was Conducted**

The study included pretesting, the intervention, and post-testing. A multidisciplinary team was formed for the collaborative consultation model that included one occupational therapist and 17 teachers as well as 35 students. The in-service program included 20 teachers and 34 students. Students were 8 to 20 years old. Both groups started out with the teachers receiving a 3 hour in-service training by the Occupational Therapist. The collaborative consultation model also included 20 weeks of meetings between the Occupational Therapist and each teacher to establish action plans together to enhance participation of the students and to execute these activities with data collection.

Throughout the joint meetings, the Occupational Therapist demonstrated appropriate student responses, provided encouragement and written materials to support the teacher’s efforts.

The goal of the program was to improve three classroom participation components: communicating, choosing, and initiating.
Results of the Study on Increasing Classroom Participation of Students with Delays

Data analysis indicated the following:

- the collaborative consultation model was found to significantly improve students’ participation in all areas.
- the participation of the students in the in-service group only decreased.

The researchers concluded that a multidisciplinary intervention program for students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities that combines in-service and collaborative consultation may help to improve classroom participation.


Interested in Providing More Collaborative Services?

Claire Heffron and Lauren Drobnjak, practicing pediatric occupational and physical therapists, present this 4-hour prerecorded Pushing Into the Classroom: Practical Strategies for Pediatric Therapists webinar for school-based therapists.

The Coleman Curriculum for School-Based Occupational Therapy by Thomas Coleman, OTR is a curriculum for occupational therapy in the schools from Kindergarten through Third Grade. Skills are discussed, examined and explained for everyone to understand.

Read more on Collaboration

- 5 Tips for Successful Collaboration
- Strategies to Support Gross Motor Skills in the Classroom
- Collaborative Model to Improve Fine Motor Skills in the Classroom

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Pediatric Physical Therapy published research on the relationship between gross motor and social skills in boys with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Previous research has indicated that gross motor deficits were related to ASD symptom severity in toddlers and adolescents although there has not been a clear relationship between these areas across 4- to 12.5-year-olds. The participants in this study included 21 boys with ASD ages 4 to 5 years old.

How the Study was Completed

Each participant was evaluated with the following assessments:

- The Childhood Autism Rating Scales, Second Edition (CARS-2) was used to confirm the diagnosis of ASD.
- The Peabody Developmental Motor Scales-Second Edition was used to assess gross motor skills.
- Miller Function and Participation Scales were also used to assess gross motor skills.
The Social Skills Improvement System Rating Scales was used to assess social function. All of the motor tests were completed by the same Physical Therapist.

**Results of the Study on Gross Motor and Social Skills in Boys with Autism**

Following data analysis, the results indicated the following:

- moderately high correlations were found between overall gross motor and social skills in boys with autism.
- moderately high correlations were found between the core stability motor subtest and overall social skills.
- specific motor impairments in stability, motor accuracy, and object manipulation scores were predictive of social function.

The researchers concluded that motor skills and social function are related in young boys with autism. Since stability and object manipulation skills predicted the most variance in overall social function, the researchers recommended additional studies to examine the potential social benefits from interventions to improve stability and object manipulation.

Reference:


Do you need help teaching children to catch, throw and kick? [Teaching Catching, Throwing and Kicking Skills](https://www.yourtherapysource.com): Help children learn how to catch, throw and kick with this packet full of information of age progression of skills, visual picture cards, tips, letter to parents and more! [FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION](https://www.yourtherapysource.com).
The Core Strengthening Handbook: This download includes 50+ activities including:

- Quick and Easy Core Strengthening Activities for Kids
- Core Strengthening Exercises With Equipment
- Core Strengthening Play Ideas

FIND OUT MORE.

Read more on:

Gross Motor Skill Delays, Behavior and Quality of Life for Children with Autism
Gross Motor Skills, Postural Stability, and Autism
Gross Motor Skills In Children with Autism
Motor Performance and Social Problems in Children with ADHD
ASD: Communication Deficits and Motor Skills

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School-based occupational and physical therapists frequently recommend and educate PreK teachers on the benefits of motor skill activities throughout the day. An important question to answer is how often should preK students have movement groups? A systemic research review was conducted on exploring the relationship between fundamental motor skill interventions and physical activity levels in children.

Previous research has indicated that low proficiency in fundamental movement skills is associated with low physical activity for school-age children. This can have detrimental effects on a child’s health, weight, and ability to learn in the classroom. This recent study examined whether the same relationship exists in 3 to 5-year-old pre-schoolers.

**Results of the Research Review on PreK Students and Movement Groups**

Eighteen articles were included following the systemic search for controlled trials with a fundamental motor skills/physical activity intervention with objective

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measures on physical activity and fundamental motor skills. Other variables were examined including teacher-led versus teacher educated, sessions per week and age group.

The researchers determined the following on PreK students and movement groups:

- significant improvements were seen in fundamental motor skills with teacher-led interventions of three or more sessions per week.
- there was a strong negative correlation between moderate-vigorous physical activity and sedentary behavior meaning.

The researchers concluded that training pre-schoolers at least three times a week in fundamental motor skills can improve proficiency, increase the intensity of physical activity, and reduce sedentary behavior, in turn, possibly reducing childhood obesity and its associated health risks.


Looking for movement activities for preschoolers? Check out Movement Songs. This digital download packet encourages body awareness, gross motor skills, motor planning, bilateral coordination, and rhythm. It includes 12 ready to print active songs for children to follow along with their own body actions. The songs are sung to the tune of traditional songs such as Row, Row, Row your Boat and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.

**The ABC’s of Active Learning** – Exploring educational concepts through movement and multiple senses give children opportunities to learn in ways they understand. The alphabet activities from A to Z are a collection of activities that can be used with children of all abilities.

View more sensory motor activities here.

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Would you like to write up OT evaluations in half the time?

Do you dread writing up evaluations? Do you struggle to squeeze in the time to get the eval done before the student’s upcoming IEP meeting? Would you like to write up OT evaluations in half the time? The daily schedule of a school-based therapist is super busy. Most therapists, land up writing up reports late at night at home. Could you imagine if you could get it all done during your normal working hours? It would be amazing, right? (this post contains affiliate links which means we earn a small referral fee if you sign up).

Jason Gonzales is an Occupational Therapist with years of pediatric experience. He has created an online software called Double Time Docs that allows you to write up OT evaluations in a fraction of the time.

Key features of Double Time Docs

- Reports done in a fraction of the time.
- A therapist can be more productive by focusing on planning, treatment, and consultations.

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• Reports are written to the standards of the district.
• Consistency between therapists new/old and district/contract
• Teaching tool for new grads
• Data collection
• One template for initials/triennials/observations
• Reduces common errors such as wrong name, pronouns, etc.
• Write a fully functional OT report by answering questions and providing comments in about 30 minutes. This means that the therapist, district, or company does not have to change their IEPs software.

Q & A with the CEO of Double Time Docs

The CEO of Double Time Docs, Jason Gonzales OTR, was nice enough to take some time to answer a few questions his company.

Q: Tell us a little bit about yourself – job experience, years on the job, etc.

My name is Jason Gonzales. I currently live in New Jersey with my wife, two kids and our chihuahua. I graduated from the Ohio State university in 2001. I have been a school-based OT for the past 16 years and worked in over 12 school districts in NY, HI, CA, MA, and NJ. I’ve also worked in mental health, SNF and early intervention.

Q: What made you come up with this idea?

When I graduated from the Ohio state university, my first real job was in New York City in a public school. I had no idea what I was doing. The principal had no idea what I did and I didn’t have any mentors. The PT helped me out and I pretty much learned on the job. In NYC I didn’t have to do any evaluations. I moved to Hawaii and worked on Maui. I was taught how to do a standardized assessment
but wasn’t really taught how to write a report. So I went through a bunch of kids’ files and pieced together my own template. The next year I became the supervisor of 7 OTs and they were in the same boat as I was the previous year, not knowing what to write and what to include in their reports. As I moved around and worked with other therapists my reports got better and I believed that I had a pretty good template. But it was still taking me 2 hours to write a report. I started doing what most therapists do and cut and pasted to save time, but then there would be pronoun errors or I would accidentally forget to change a name. This was a common situation for all the therapists I worked with. As our profession got more popular and the referrals started to pile up, writing evaluations became one of the biggest complaints during our OT meetings. No one had time to write the evaluations. I knew there had to be an easier way. If I ask the same questions every time I evaluate a student why can’t I automate it?

Q: What do you think is the best feature of Double Time Docs?

There are so many beneficial features of Double Time Docs. One of my favorite is the fact that a therapists can write 90 percent of their report while testing the student or consulting with the parent and teacher which can ultimately save a lot of time. Instead of taking notes I just open the software and answer the questions right there and the program writes the report. I do believe it’s a great teaching tool for both new grads or OTs new to the school setting. There are many more important things to worry about when starting a new job than scrambling to figure out how to write an eval.

Q: What is available for therapists who work at different schools? Is there a discount for large therapy departments or private practices?

On our website we have a variety of plans for individuals and we offer Team Pricing for companies and school districts. We know that the average OT does about 28 evaluations a year but some do a lot more and some do fewer. We have plans that should meet everyone’s needs. The Team option allows groups to get volume discounts. We will also be adding a PT and SLP template soon. We also
offer an affiliate/referral program so OTs, PTs, SLPs, teachers and bloggers can earn a commission for referring their friends and colleagues to us.

Q: Where can we find out more?

Please check out our website at https://www.doubletimedocs.com.

So, if you are an Occupational Therapist, why not give Double Time Docs a try. I highly recommend using the FREE 7-Day Trial, with no credit card required, so you have nothing to lose by giving it a shot. After the FREE trial, they are offering 20% OFF for a limited time. Use the coupon code FALL18.

They have 8 different monthly and yearly plans, so there is a plan to fit any caseload. The prices are very reasonable for the value and the time that it will save you.

Give it a try and see how much time you save. We would love to hear from you if you try Double Time Docs out!

One more thing, if you are a Physical Therapist, don’t worry your Double Time Docs online software will be available in a few weeks. Stay tuned!

Need more OT resources? Check out the Busy Therapist Bundle!

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Can you catch the correct butterflies?

Can you catch the correct butterflies? Download this freebie from the Catching Butterflies complete packet. Connect the dots to form the mystery letter. Once you recognize the letter, catch (circle with your pencil) all of the matching butterfly letters.

This printable Catching Butterflies freebie encourages:

- visual motor skills
- visual discrimination skills
- number recognition
- letter recognition

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE CATCHING BUTTERFLIES SAMPLE PAGE

This freebie is from the complete Catching Butterflies packet that is available here.

Catching Butterflies visual motor packet is an instant digital download of 26 activity black and white activity pages to practice visual motor, visual discrimination, and letter recognition skills. Complete the dot to dot to reveal the letter. Circle all of the matching butterfly letters. FIND OUT MORE.
Do you work with students who struggle with letter identification or letter reversals? Have you run out of fun ideas to practice the skills necessary to determine the differences between similar letters like B and D? This free maze will help strengthen cognitive skills for reading and writing by working on recognizing the correct letter.

This freebie is from the complete Reversing Reversals digital download created by learning specialist and educational therapist, Dr. Erica Warren. Download the maze below to help the dog follow the letter ‘d’ through the maze to get to his dinner.

DOWNLOAD YOUR REVERSING REVERSAL FREE SAMPLE MAZE.

Get more information on the complete Reversing Reversals digital download here.

The Reversing Reversals digital download includes the following fun activities:

- Tracking activities for vowel and consonant discrimination and common reversals.
- Challenging coloring activities for common reversals.
- Mazes that strengthen letter and number discrimination.
- Activities for left/right and cardinal direction recognition.
- Game suggestions.
- Strategies for success.
FINE MOTOR AND LOGIC SKILLS FREEBIE

If you are looking for a one page printable to challenge fine motor and logic skills check out this freebie from the Simple Cut and Glue Sudoku download. You can download the freebie at the bottom of the post.

How to Complete the Simple Cut and Glue Sudoku Activity

Print out the fine motor and logic skills freebie in color or grayscale. The child can cut out the square pictures at the bottom of the page. The object is to place the objects in the empty squares so that each row, column and diagonal line contains the same object only once. Once the child has determined what object goes where, paste each square picture in the correct location.

Find out More

You can download the complete Simple Cut and Glue Sudoku for Children here. It includes 40 full-color puzzles to practice fine motor and visual perceptual activities. This digital download encourages children to have fun while they build key developmental skills. The puzzles advance in difficulty from easy (4 by 4 boxes) to hard (6 by 6 boxes).

Download your FREE Fine Motor and Logic Skills activity here.

You may also like these resources: Sudoku for Kids, Kirigami for Kids, Brain Workouts Volume 1 and Color, Cut, and Glue.
5 FREE PRINTABLES THAT INCORPORATE MOVEMENT AND LEARNING

Research indicates that children benefit from when teachers incorporate movement and learning. Here at Your Therapy Source, we focus on creating ready to go activities to encourage physical activity, balance, coordination, fine motor skills, locomotor skills AND cognitive skills.

Freebies that Incorporate Movement and Learning

Here are 5 FREE printables that include physical activity with learning academic material:

- Superhero Action Verbs
- Roll, Move and Cover
- Math Flashcards
- Multi-sensory Letter Aa Activity
- Sight Word Mix It Up Game

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