

Summertime Carry Over

Send this packet home to parents at the end of the year to promote carry over of therapy strategies and skills. The packet also provides tips and websites to check out for more information.

7/1/15

Summer Fun Games: Language and Memory

The more children communicate with others and interact with their environment, the better their language and memory skills will become. Look for opportunities to engage your child in communication by talking about what you see around you.

- Attend community events, take your child to the grocery store, etc. and look for opportunities to incorporate language learning: (i.e. Brainstorming a grocery shopping list by category to practice category naming (e.g., We're going to shop for the cookout, what do we need for drinks? What do we need that is a fruit?))
- Create a memory matching game, such as this sea animals printable <http://learncreatelove.com/sea-animals-printable-memory-game/>
- Take a walk and describe what you see around you
- Read, read, read!

7/8/15

Summer Fun Games: Sensory Play

Continue your child's sensory diet over the summer--Great summer activities that provide sensory input are limitless, but include:

- Water play, such as sprinklers, children's pools, water tables, etc..
- Play catch with water balloons.
- Use a water gun or similar water toy to "write" or "draw."
- Build sand sculptures.
- Take a hike.
- Camp out in your own backyard.
- Ride a bicycle, tricycle, scooter, rollerskate, skateboard, ride a horse, swim with a dolphin.
- Use items such as sand, sea shells, and small plastic sea creatures to create ocean themed sensory bins and bottles. An example of a summer sensory bottle can be found at <http://houseofburke.blogspot.com/2013/07/beach-in-bottle-summer-sensory-bottle.html?m=1>
- Recipe for Soapy Sea Foam <http://www.two-daloo.com/soapy-sea-foam-sensory-play/>
- Blow bubbles (add some scented castile soap to the bubble solution for extra sensory interest)

7/15/15

Summer Fun games: Fine & Visual Motor

There are many ways to help strengthen and develop your child's fine and visual motor skills over the summer.

- Practice writing with sidewalk chalk.
- Play with playdough or kinetic sand.
- Write and draw in sand, dirt, or mud with a stick or finger.
- Ocean themed mazes <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/54308/ocean-printable-mazes>
- Make a homemade "I Spy" game by hiding small objects in rice in a plastic bottle: <http://www.meetthedubiens.com/2010/11/i-spy-bottles.html?crlt.pid=camp.DVnVBrlhcBXL>
- Ocean animal clothespin game template <http://therapyfunzone.net/blog/ocean-animal-clothespin-game/>

7/22/15

Travel Games

Keep children learning and having fun during summer travel with games and activities:

- I Spy or Road Trip Bingo
- Sticker and coloring books, dot-to-dots, mazes, word searches, etc.
- Play with finger puppets
- Look through a kaleidoscope or prism
- Encourage dressing skills with a zipper, snaps, and Velcro sewn onto fabric
- String cheerios on dental floss for a good fine motor activity and then a snack!
- No-mess craft supplies such as Crayola color wonder markers or paints, stamps/stamp pad, etc.
- Ipad with educational apps
- Read and look at books

Other ideas:

<http://www.makeandtakes.com/12-simple-activities-for-traveling-with-kids>

<http://fun.familyeducation.com/travel/family-travel/33401.html>

7/29/15

Travel Tips for Children with Special Needs

Traveling, with its associated changes in routine and familiar surrounds, can be difficult for anyone, but especially for children with special needs. Here are a few tips to help make your travels go more smoothly:

- Create a social story to help prepare children for what to expect on the trip
- Some airports, including Philadelphia, offer "rehearsal" airline travel programs for children with autism and other special needs: <http://www.phl.org/passengerinfo/Accessibility/Pages/AirportAutism.aspx>
- Bring comforting and familiar items
- Create a portable sensory toolkit to bring with you.

- Allow older children to assist in the trip planning; research your destination and hotel, etc. ahead of time so they can read about it and look at pictures.

Other resources for traveling with children who have special needs:

<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2012/07/20/a-comprehensive-guide-to-special-needs-travel/>

<http://cshcn.org/planning-record-keeping/air-travel-preparation>

8/5/15

iPad apps for fine motor and visual motor skills

There are many apps available that can help children to develop the fine motor and visual motor skills necessary for handwriting and other functional school tasks. The following are just a few examples:

Dexteria and Dexteria Jr., LetterReflex , POV-Spatial Reasoning Skills, Dexteria Dots: Several apps from the same company that teach a variety of fine and visual motor skills

<http://dexteria.net/>

Touch and Write: Upper case and lower case letter formation using a variety of visual mediums. Number formation and high frequency words included in activities.

Little Finder and Doodle Find Lite: hidden pictures

Sam Phibian: Visual motor and matching apps for preschool and elementary aged children; visual tracking skills practice

Alien Buddies: Variety of visual motor and visual perceptual activities for preschool children

Car 2 AppMATes: Follow roads with this Car app; Physical cars that work with the app are available for users to drive on the iPad

Bugs and Buttons: Preschool/kgn activities of counting, matching, tracing, dot to dot, sorting, sequencing. 18 activities, some progressive.

Finger Fun: requiring finger isolation and bilateral use to touch a sequence of dots.

Shelby's Quest: Three activities with 3 levels to develop visual motor, visual matching and visual motor integration skills. Data collection available.

Alphabet Tracing: Features train and other animated prompts to show direction of letter formation

Wet- Dry - Try HWT: Lower case letter formation using virtual chalkboard instruction of Handwriting without Tears.

8/12/15

iPad Apps for Speech and Language

ConversationBuilder and ConversationBuilderTeen: conversation simulator designed to help children learn how to have multi-exchange conversations with their peers, in a variety of social settings



Story Builder for iPad: targets picture description, word order, sentence formation, vocabulary, making predictions, cause/effect, pronouns, verb tense, and sequencing. It is designed to help children improve in paragraph formation, integration of ideas, and making higher level abstractions by inference.

Language Builder targets picture description, sentence formation, word order, verb tense, vocabulary, pronouns. It is designed to help children improve sentence ideation, sentence formation, and receptive and expressive language.

Question Builder is designed to help elementary aged children learn to answer abstract questions and create responses based on inference. Extensive use of audio clips promotes improved auditory processing for special needs children with autism spectrum disorders or sensory processing disorders.

Sentence Builder is designed to help elementary aged children learn how to build grammatically correct sentences. Attention is paid to the connector words that make up over 80% of the English language.

Articulate Scenes allows children to practice their sounds with a variety of engaging and fun activities based on the cinema.

Social Quest improves pragmatic language comprehension and expression in a variety of social situations for older elementary, middle school, and high school-aged populations.

Articulate It! is designed to help SLPs work towards improving the speech of children with speech delays. It contains over 1 thousand images in all sounds of the English language. Voice recording and data collection included.

iName it was designed by and for speech-language pathologists to assist individuals with word finding difficulty secondary to aphasia. Additionally, it can benefit individuals with apraxia that are assisted by visual and sentence completion cues.

Language Empires is designed for elementary age students and targets 8 goals: Answering how, why, and which questions, inferencing, vocabulary, predicting, figurative language, and sequencing.

8/19/15

Eating good breakfast

Eating a good breakfast in the morning is especially important for children. Research has shown that starting the day with good nutrition can affect everything from memory to creativity in the classroom. Additional benefits include increased focus and attention and a healthy body weight. Choosing healthy foods, such as whole grain cereals and fresh fruit, over things such as sugary cereals and breakfast pastries is equally important in helping children to function at their best throughout the school day.

The following website provides some good tips for parents on how to incorporate good morning nutrition into a family's busy schedule:

<https://healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Breakfast-for-Learning.aspx>

8/26/15

Bus Safety, Sensory/On the Bus

Car and bus rides can be very difficult for children with sensory needs. The movement and noises may be confusing to a child's sensory system, causing nausea, overstimulation, or hyperactivity.

Some tips to help make transportation easier include:

- Before getting on the bus, have the child do calming or focusing activities, heavy work or deep pressure, depending on his or her needs and preferences.
- Use sensory tools, such as hand fidgets, chewing gum or chewy or crunchy snacks, noise-blocking headphones or calming music, etc.
- Use social stories to help prepare children for the beginning of the school year.

For more back to school and bus safety tips for children with special needs, try these websites:

<http://nobullying.com/school-bus-safety-for-kids/>

<http://www.sensorysmartparent.com/pt/carsbus.html>

http://hss.edu/onthemove/back-to-school-strategies-for-children-with-sensory-processing-issues/#.VS8iYvnF_mY