

September Newsletter



K.I.D.S. Therapy

Strategies to Help Your Child Perform Their Best in Class

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After a summer of fun activities, it can be difficult for any child to sit still and focus in the classroom. Additionally, the new school year may bring a change in routine, familiar faces, and environment, which can have an effect on your child's performance in the classroom. In this newsletter, we will focus on sensory strategies to help your superstar students perform their best in class. We will discuss strategies and activities that can be done throughout the school day to meet the sensory needs of your child and help your superstar students succeed in school!

Heavy Work Activities for School

Heavy work activities can benefit all students during the school day. These activities provide sensory input to the body's muscles and joints (proprioceptive input), which can be very calming and organizing. They may help calm your child's body so they are able to focus better in the classroom and complete their work. Heavy work activities can be incorporated into your child's daily routine and tailored to a classroom's space.

Heavy work activities to prepare for the school day:

- Wear a heavy backpack to school
- Wake up early in the morning and go for a walk/bike ride with a parent
- Drive half way to school and then walk or ride a bike with a parent
- Drink a breakfast smoothie from a straw

Heavy work activities in the classroom- *these can be incorporated throughout the school day or your child may take a movement break in order to feel refreshed and able to continue concentrating.*

- Manually sharpening pencils
- Palm pushes
- Finger exercises with rubber bands
- Manipulating squeeze toys
- Pinching or pulling putty
- Chair push-ups at your child's desk
- Wall push-ups
- Crab walk, bear walk, wheelbarrow walk
- Carry a heavy box, crate, or backpack to the office, library, other classroom

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Inside this issue:

*Sensory strategies to help your child succeed in class

*Heavy work activities for home and school

*Tips on making your own obstacle course

*Learn "animal walks"

*Foods to calm and organize your child





Make Your Own Obstacle Course

A fun and creative way to incorporate heavy work activities for students of all ages and abilities!

An obstacle course is a great activity that can be done after school to help organize and calm your child before it's time to sit down and do homework. An obstacle course can also be used as a movement break during homework time. They can be set up in the home, yard, or park.

Tips on Planning and Preparing an Obstacle Course:

- The simplest courses usually run in a linear or circular pattern with each obstacle leading to the next. This helps with sequencing and staying on task.
- Be creative and use what you have! For example: Use couch cushions, throw pillows, and other furniture to crawl over, under, around, and through. Skip or jump in hula hoops, use plastic mixing bowls as traffic cones, use masking tape to make a "balance beam line" or "x"s to jump on, use a box as a tunnel, etc.
- Incorporate "animal walks," like bear walk, crab walk, snake walk, or duck walk.
- You can choose to incorporate an activity to "slow down" the obstacle course such as a puzzle or game (take out a Jenga piece, build a tower with blocks).
- Use your imagination! Choose a theme for the obstacle course: Animals- child collects animals throughout course to put in zoo at the end; Jungle- child has to go through "jungle obstacles" to make it out safely.
- Have your child draw out the obstacle course first
- Some children enjoy being timed or having races with friends and family.
- There's no right or wrong way to make an obstacle course. Just use your imagination! Have fun and be safe!
- ***It is important for parents to carefully monitor your children and the layout of the obstacle course for safety reasons. If your child is climbing or jumping on objects, be sure the items are stable and secure. Never leave your child alone.

Some foods can provide calming input and organize your child during the school day. Try incorporating these foods into snacks and lunch:



Crunchy Foods

- Carrots
- Pretzels
- Crackers
- Raw vegetables
- Dry cereal
- Popcorn

Chewy Foods

- Fruit roll-ups
- Raisins
- Dried fruit
- Bagels
- Jerky
- Granola bars

Other ideas:

- Suck pudding, smoothies, or applesauce through a straw

Animal Walks

Crab Walk- Position your child on their hands and feet with belly pointing toward the sky. Use hands and feet to navigate forward, backward, or sideways. For an added challenge put a stuffed animal or other toy on their stomach and don't let it fall!



Bear Walk -Position you child on their hands and feet with belly pointing toward the ground and bottom toward the sky. Begin crawling forward.

Frog Hop- Start in a squat position with hands and feet on the ground. Reach hands forward and jump forward to meet your hands.



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