

Dear _____, Date _____

Welcome to TheraPlay! This set of activities and games has been specially selected to promote _____'s motor development. These activities are intended to be fun and not to be seen as exercise or work. Ideally, they can be incorporated into your child's normal playtime and daily routine. Or, you might prefer to set aside a special time of day to try the activities together. The activities are designed to be challenging, yet provide a successful experience. Some special considerations and precautions will make TheraPlay most enjoyable and safe.

- ★ Adult guidance and participation are suggested on all activities to provide encouragement and assistance, and assure safety. Most importantly, you will want to share the moments of triumph as your child learns new skills.
- ★ Comfortable clothing is recommended for the gross motor activities. Loose-fitting sweat-pants, t-shirts or sweatshirts and proper fitting tennis shoes are a good choice.
- ★ Make sure that toys used are safe and sturdy. Watch out for sharp edges and remember that balloons and toys with small pieces are a potential choking hazard.
- ★ A safety helmet should be worn at all times when riding a bicycle and skating. For added protection, knee and elbow pads are strongly recommended when roller skating.

TheraPlay offers only a sample of appropriate activities for your child. Think of other games and toys your child may enjoy. Often the best toys have no set use, but give your child an opportunity to be imaginative and creative. Many non-breakable household objects such as empty cardboard boxes and cartons, empty plastic bottles, pots and pans, measuring cups and spoons, or pieces of foam make good toys.

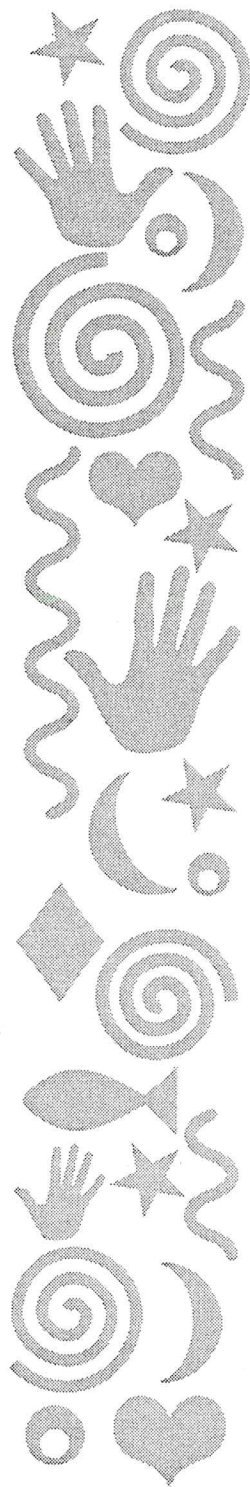
You are now ready to try some of the TheraPlay activities with your child.
Have fun!

If you have any questions regarding the TheraPlay activities, contact

_____ at _____
Sincerely,

(child's therapist)





FM-3-P&D

Fine Motor Prehension and Dexterity

Place toothpicks, pipe cleaners or uncooked spaghetti into the holes of an overturned colander.

Encourage your child to sew lacing cards or sewing cards. They can be purchased or made from cardboard with pictures pasted on and holes punched. These pictures can then be laced using yarn or shoelaces.

Let your child play with toys that wind up, for example toy radios or music boxes and wind-up walking toys. Try toys with different sized knobs. Smaller knobs may be more difficult.

Play with an Etch-a-Sketch game.

Play with toys that come apart such as Tinker Toys, Duplo, Legos and Bristle Blocks.

Encourage your child to draw simple pictures. Also try tracing over a thick line drawn on a piece of paper. Large sized crayons or washable markers will be easier to hold at first than thinner ones.

Have your child pick up pennies one by one and put them into a piggy bank slot. You can also place poker chips or buttons in a lidded container with a slot cut in the top.

Use tweezers, tongs or salad servers to pick up small toys, cotton balls or styrofoam pellets.

Beginning scissor skills (with child-safe scissors) can be introduced at this time. Have your child snip construction or heavy paper. Roll playdough or modeling clay into logs. Snip the logs into smaller pieces.

During outside water play or in the bathtub, have your child squirt water with a squirt toy or water-filled spray bottle.

© 1995 University of
Washington, CHDD OT/PT

These materials may be duplicated by an individual purchaser solely for professional use with families and clients. Further use is strictly prohibited, without the express written permission of the University of Washington.



FM-3-BC

Fine Motor Bilateral Coordination

(Use of both hands together)

Have your child practice buttoning, zipping, snapping and lacing on a Dress-Me doll or Dapper-Dan doll or with large dress-up clothes.

Play with toys that fit together such as Bristle Blocks, Tinker Toys, Legos or Mr. Potato Head.

Have your child practice twisting small containers open and closed (i.e., nesting barrels and plastic eggs).

Practice screwing together large plastic nuts and bolts.

Encourage your child to wring out a wet washcloth or sponge using both hands when bathing, washing dishes, or playing in water.

Play with an Etch-A-Sketch making diagonal lines by turning the knobs with both hands at the same time.

Play clapping or finger rhythm games such as "Itsy-Bitsy Spider" and "Wheels on the Bus." Practice the games at slow, medium and fast speeds.

Try rhythm band instruments such as cymbals, sandblocks, rhythm sticks and drumming with both hands.

Have your child hold an empty cardboard tube with one hand near each end. Place a small toy (ball, match box car) inside and make it roll the end to end without falling out.

Tear paper into narrow strips. Progress from wide strips to narrow strips for greater challenge.

Encourage your child to pop bubbles by clapping hands together or using both index fingers to pinch the bubble.

String pieces of tube-like pasta onto a drinking straw. Or use aquarium tubing or string to thread pasta, cereal or wooden beads.



FM-3-EHC

Fine Motor Eye-Hand Coordination

Using child-safe scissors, have your child cut along 1" wide lines (straight and curved) drawn on a piece of paper. Place a marshmallow, gumdrop or piece of popcorn at the far edge of the paper and have your child cut to it (the treat can be eaten when reached).

Have your child cut along a line of holes made by a hole punch. Punches are now available in hearts, animal forms, and other shapes.

Draw and color with markers, crayons, pencils, and paints.

Use colored bingo markers to create or copy colorful dot designs.

Play with lacing cards or sewing cards. These cards can be purchased or made from cardboard with pictures pasted on, and then holes punched. Lace with yarn or shoelaces.

Place pipe cleaners or toothpicks into the holes of an overturned colander.

Golf tees and a strip of styrofoam make an inexpensive pegboard set. Have your child place the tees in the styrofoam to copy a design or create a new design.

Play a balloon game. Count how many times your child can hit the balloon into the air or to another person before the balloon touches the floor.

Play a finger tracing game with your child, using the pointer finger to trace shapes and simple pictures in a coloring book.

Have your child string large macaroni tubes or "wagon wheels" on a shoelace or piece of yarn. Also try threading pieces of cut up straws.

Have your child "drive" a toy car along a tape road on the floor. Make the roads straight, zigzag and curved.

Dribble glue in a design or squiggly pattern and carefully place or drop glitter, paper scraps, beans, colored rice, etc. to make a colorful picture.

Pop bubbles in the air by poking them with a finger.

Try house painting. Have your child "paint" strokes on the sidewalk, patio or house using a large brush and a can of water. Encourage your child to make consecutive vertical strokes to cover a given area.

Try drawing on the sidewalk with sidewalk chalk (purchased at most toy stores). The chalk easily washes off with water.

Create pictures with a Magna Doodle toy.



GM-3-F

Gross Motor Flexibility

Have your child get on hands and knees, push bottom up in the air keeping elbows and knees straight, and walk on hands and feet like a bear.

Play a leap frog game. Start with your child squatting with feet flat and jump up tall.

Clasp knees with hands while lying on back and rock back and forth and side to side.

Try some exercises together. Demonstrate toe-touches, side-bends, and body twists. Add music to increase the fun.

© 1995 University of
Washington, CHDD OT/PT

These materials may be duplicated by an individual purchaser solely for professional use with families and clients. Further use is strictly prohibited, without the express written permission of the University of Washington.



GM-3-BC

Gross Motor Bilateral Coordination

(Use of both sides of the body together)

Encourage your child to play "basketball" games by throwing a large ball with two hands into a box or wastepaper basket. Vary the height of the "basket."

Bounce on a hoppity-hop ball around an obstacle course. You can make an obstacle course using empty cardboard boxes.

Try hitting a balloon with a cardboard tube held with two hands. Place hands vertically and horizontally on the tube.

Use streamers of ribbon attached to empty cardboard tubes. Have your child wave arms together in the air to music or imitate "signals" you make. Try this while sitting or standing.

Have your child push a child-sized wheelbarrow or push cart filled with toys around an obstacle course in the house or outside.

Ride a tricycle around an obstacle course.

Play "Simon Says" and "Hokey Pokey" with your child, encouraging movements that use both hands or both feet together.

Encourage your child to imitate different animal movements: 1) clasp hands to form an elephant's trunk, bend at the waist and walk, 2) squat and waddle like a duck, 3) walk on hands and feet with stomach up towards the ceiling like a crab, 4) place hands and feet on the floor and walk forward moving right hand and right foot together and then left foot and left hand together like a bear.

Have your child participate in a small group supervised swimming program.



GM-3-S

Gross Motor Strength

Have your child lie on the floor face up and then jump up quickly to pretend to be a rocket blasting off.

With supervision, encourage your child to climb and hang from low playground equipment. (Note: your child will have a stronger grasp when fingers are on top and thumb below).

Practice somersaults on a soft carpeted area or exercise mat. Encourage a chin tuck by having your child look down at belly button.

In nice weather, have your child roll down a small grassy hill like a log. Then creep on hands and knees or knee walk back up the hill.

Practice climbing up an inclined surface outdoors.

Do the wheelbarrow walk. Have your child walk on hands while you hold at knees or thighs for support. Try to increase the distance your child walks.

Play "seal" by lying on tummy, pushing up on straight arms and moving forward with legs dragging behind.

© 1995 University of
Washington, CHDD OT/PT

These materials may be duplicated by an individual purchaser solely for professional use with families and clients. Further use is strictly prohibited, without the express written permission of the University of Washington.



GM-3-EHC

Gross Motor Eye-Hand Coordination

Play "basketball" games with your child. Using two hands, throw a large ball into a box or a wastepaper basket. Start with the box at fairly close range. Try this game with large balls, small balls and bean bags.

Suspend a whiffle ball on a string in front of your child. Have your child hit the ball with both hands. A plastic bat, cardboard tube, or rolled up newspaper could also be used. Progress to hitting a nerf ball, whiffle ball, or beach ball with a large bat. The larger the ball, the easier it will be to hit.

Have your child practice catching and throwing balls of different sizes. For example, throw a tennis ball overhand or throw a nerf ball underhand. Also practice with bean bags.

Play ring toss together. Remember to begin at short distances from the target and gradually move farther back as your child becomes more skilled.

Try bowling using a nerf or rubber ball to knock down empty milk cartons or plastic pop bottles.

© 1995 University of
Washington, CHDD OT/PT

These materials may be duplicated by an individual purchaser solely for professional use with families and clients. Further use is strictly prohibited, without the express written permission of the University of Washington.