

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.

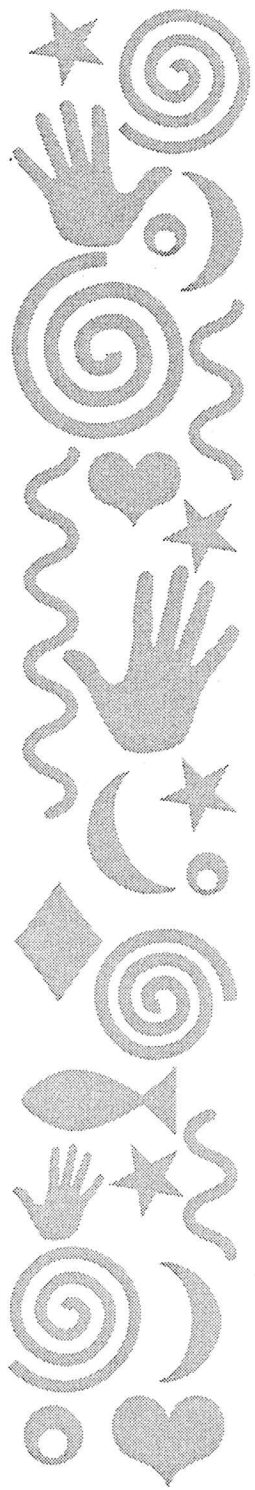
You are now ready to try some of the TheraPlay activities with your child.
Have fun!

If you have any questions regarding the TheraPlay activities, contact

Sincerely,

(child's therapist)





FM-5-BC

Fine Motor Bilateral Coordination (Use of both hands together)

Play toy musical instruments which require two hands to hold and operate (drum, blow type horn with buttons).

Assist your child in using a rotary egg beater to mix eggs, pudding or soap suds.

Knead and roll clay with both hands or use a large dowel or rolling pin.

Have your child fold paper into small pieces, using both hands to crease the paper.

Let your child finger paint using both hands to make designs.

Supervise your child sanding wood using both hands on a sanding block.



FM-5-P&D

Fine Motor Prehension and Dexterity

Try bead stringing with small beads.

Sort coins, buttons, screws or paper clips into empty egg cartons or muffin cups. The smaller the objects, the greater the challenge.

Play with clay or Silly Putty.

Have your child fold paper into small sections using a squeezing motion of the fingers to smooth the creases.

Encourage your child to work buttons, zippers, buckles, snaps and hooks on clothing or dressing dolls.

Practice putting on and taking off oversized gloves.

Beginning shoe tying can also be introduced at this age.

Hand and finger puppets allow your child to use entire hand movements or isolate individual finger muscles.

Your child can crumple paper tightly into balls and toss them into a wastebasket or at a wall target. Keeping score is extra motivating.

Let your child decorate cookies or stuffed celery with raisins, nuts, marshmallows or coconut. Also, try spreading with a knife such as butter on bread, soft cream cheese on a bagel or jam on crackers.

Squirt toy play is fun out-of-doors or in the bathtub. Your child can try to squirt bubbles and pop them or try to aim at a target.



GM-5-BC

Gross Motor - Bilateral Coordination

(Use of both sides of the body together)

Encourage your child to ride a bicycle down slight inclines and around obstacles. Wear a protective helmet.

Have your child jump into and out of hula hoops or rope circles on the ground using both feet. Vary the spacing of the circles for added challenge.

Have your child make angels-in-the-snow. This can be done outside on a snowy day, in the sand or on a smooth floor. Arms and legs should move out to the side and then back together. Practice arms separately and legs separately, then combine both together.

Make clapping patterns that your child can imitate. An example would be 2 fast claps followed by 3 slow claps.

Swimming is an excellent bilateral activity. Local YMCAs and community centers have supervised programs available for young children.

Play whiffle ball catch with your child using a scoop made from a cut off bleach bottle.

Have your child try jumping jacks. The standard sideways method is good as well as a forward variation bringing opposite arms and legs forward and backward.

Have your child jump on a trampoline with supervision. Two foot jump and clap is particularly good for developing bilateral coordination.

Encourage your child to try the kangaroo hop. Hold an object between the knees while jumping forward with both feet together. Also, try jumping backwards and sideways.

Try toy soldier walk. While walking keep arms and legs as straight as possible. As each foot moves forward, your child points to the left foot with the left hand and to the right foot with the right hand.

Have your child march and clap to music. Choose slow, medium and fast songs. For variety, your child may enjoy beating a drum to the beat as well.

Make an obstacle course with cones or boxes for your child to skip through. Increase the speed for greater challenge.



GM-5-B

Gross Motor Balance

Supervise your child bouncing on a trampoline.

Encourage your child to balance a bean bag on one foot and hold it in the air several inches off of the floor. Count as long as your child can hold it up.

Practice walking with a bean bag on the head and try not to drop it.

Try jumping into and out of low cardboard boxes placed singly or side by side on the floor.

Have your child jump between rungs of a ladder placed flat on the ground, using both feet.

Encourage your child to ride a bicycle without training wheels beginning on flat surfaces first. Wear a protective helmet for safety.

Try the kangaroo hop. Hold an object between the knees while jumping forward with both feet together.

While standing, have your child place one foot on a low chair seat (not to exceed 8") and one foot on the floor. Pick up objects from the floor on one side of the chair and place them in a container on the other side of the chair, then switch sides. Blocks, small cars, or any kind of small toy works. Provide supervision.

Play "make a statue" with your child. Place arms and legs in different positions and encourage your child to "freeze" in that pose. Try one foot standing positions to really challenge balance.

Have a skipping race between two targets.

GM-5-S

Gross Motor Strength

Encourage your child to climb on playground equipment. Alternating arms to cross suspended rings or ropes are particularly good for upper body strength.

Play the sit-up game. Have your child lay on the floor holding a bean bag, sit up and toss it into a bucket. Repeat several times.

Help your child begin to learn push-ups by starting in a hands and knees position and lowering nose to the floor by bending arms.

Help your child turn somersaults. Start with one and work up to several in succession.

Do the wheelbarrow walk around obstacles in a room or up stairs. Practice going forward and backwards.

Have your child crabwalk across the floor. Your child sits on the floor with knees bent, stomach pointing towards ceiling and uses arms and legs together to propel forward and backward. Be sure to keep hips off the ground.

While standing, encourage your child to bend knees, then jump up 10 times in a row like a rocket blasting off.

Have your child practice walking like a duck in a squatting position.



GM-5-F

Gross Motor Flexibility

While standing, have your child bend forward, touch the floor and return to the upright position. Try to keep legs as straight as possible.

Encourage your child to walk while holding onto ankles and keeping legs straight.

Have your child make small and large circles in the air with arms held straight out to the side.

Demonstrate how to do windmills. In a standing position, with hands on hips, have your child reach down to touch the right foot with the left hand. Alternate sides each time.

In sitting with legs straight in front, have your child bend toes up then point forward. Repeat several times, slowly. Then try alternating one foot up and one forward for several cycles.

Have your child row the boat. Your child sits facing the partner with legs straight like a "v" and overlapping the partner's legs. Hands are held together in front. One person lays back pulling the other forward, then reverse. They can sing "Row, Row, Row, the Boat."

FM-5-EHC

Fine Motor Eye - Hand Coordination

Have your child practice in maze books or dot-to-dot books. Progress to more complex activity books as your child is able.

Play with manipulative toys such as Legos, Tinker Toys or Mr. Potato Head.

Encourage your child to use an Etch-a-Sketch. Have your child try to make vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines.

Cut out shapes made from drawing around simple cookie cutters.

Supervise your child sewing large buttons with yarn and a large needle.

Find some different sized containers with lids and have your child screw or place the lids on the correct containers.

Use rubber stamps and washable ink to stamp designs on paper or cover dots placed on paper.

Play flashlight tag together. All players have flashlights. Darken the room. The person who is "it" moves the light of his flashlight over a designated area (along the wall, between two chairs, across the floor). The other players try to "tag" his beam of light with their flashlight beams.

Shoot a squirt toy at a target. This is fun with a peer or sibling playing along too.

Play computer games and video games.



GM-5-EHC

Gross Motor Eye-Hand Coordination

Try bowling with empty plastic pop bottles and a ball. For greater challenge, increase the spacing of the targets.

Let your child jump on a trampoline with supervision and toss bean bags at a target.

Play croquet outdoors with the whole family.

Throw a ball in the air and catch it. Start with a medium sized ball and progress to a tennis ball as your child becomes more skilled.

Throw a ball against the wall and catch it on the return. Your child might also try clapping once before catching the ball.

Kick a ball to knock down a tower of cardboard boxes. Move farther away from the target for greater challenge.

Hit a balloon around the room, rebounding it off the wall. Aim high and low on the wall.

Throw a beanbag or small whiffle ball and see if your child can catch it with a small bucket or plastic container.

Wastebasket basketball can be played inside with a cardboard box or wastebasket and a nerf ball. Change the height of the wastebasket for variety and challenge.

Practice batting using a whiffle ball and plastic bat.