

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-6-P&D

### *Fine Motor Prehension and Dexterity*

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Play card games (Old Maid, Fish, Uno, etc.) with your child. Let your child practice dealing out the cards too.

Supervise play with hammer and nails, screws and screwdriver.

Assemble nuts and bolts. Begin with large ones and progress to smaller ones.

Build with erector set toys.

Play with a squirt toy.

Sort a variety of buttons by color or size into empty egg cartons or muffin pans.

Help your child try Origami (Japanese paper folding). Try very simple designs until your child is ready to tackle more difficult ones.

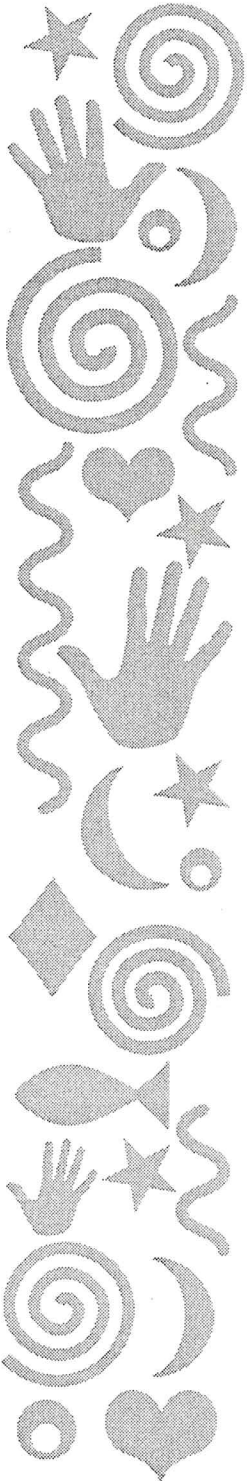
Have your child work buckles, snaps and hooks. Old belts and clothing work well for this.

Try knot tying and macrame.

Have your child weave with a small loom and scraps of yarn.

Many leather lacing projects are available at craft stores and require skilled use of hands.

Pour colored sand or rice through a funnel into clear containers for an art project.



## FM-5-S

### *Fine Motor Strength*

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Have your child play with a squirt toy to hit a target or wash off bubbles in the bathtub.

Let your child squeeze sponges in water.

Fill an empty dish soap bottle with water and encourage your child to squeeze with one hand to produce a squirt of water.

Make holes in paper by squeezing a paper punch.

Have your child remove twist top lids on jars and bottles.

Spread, roll and pinch clay into different shapes.

Crumple paper and toss to a target. A magazine picture taped on the wall or an empty box make good targets.



## GM-6-S

### *Gross Motor Strength*

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Cartwheels require muscle strength of arms, legs and trunk. Have your child try several in succession.

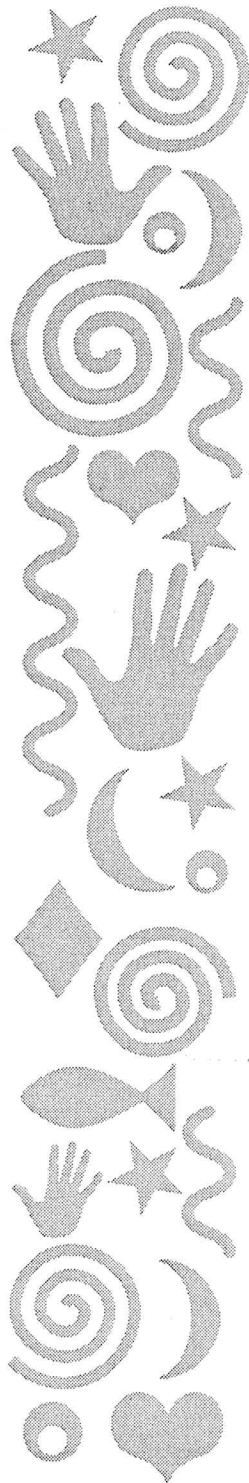
Help your child wheelbarrow walk forward and backwards around obstacles in a room.

Encourage your child to try push-ups in the standard manner or a modified fashion on hands and knees. Bend arms to bring chest towards the ground. Start slowly with only a few and gradually build up as your child's strength increases. A chart to record progress may be motivating for your child.

Bent knee sit-ups are excellent for increasing abdominal strength. Have your child bend knees while lying on back and sit up only far enough to touch hands to knees.

Provide your child with lots of opportunities for climbing the jungle gym at the playground and pulling up on the bars. Also try rope climbing and swinging on rings.

Tug-of-war is a fun activity the whole family can play.



## GM-6-B

### *Gross Motor Balance*

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With supervision, have your child bounce on a trampoline while clapping hands in front or overhead or in time to music.

Large inflated innertubes make a nice resilient surface to balance on. Have your child walk sideways on top of the innertube. Also try forward and backwards walking.

Encourage your child to pick up a bean bag with one foot and kick it into a circle taped on the floor. Alternate feet.

Encourage bicycle riding. Have your child ride around obstacles such as cardboard boxes or plastic cones placed on the ground. Vary the spacing and pattern of the obstacles. Make sure the riding area is away from cars and your child wears a protective helmet.

Try roller blading. Remember a safety helmet and protective knee, wrist, and elbow pads.

Place short strips of colored tape across the floor (select two colors). Place a strip of one color on your child's right foot and the other colored tape on the left foot. Have your child hop onto each tape mark with the matching color (i.e., red foot hops on red tape marks and yellow foot hops on yellow marks).

Hop tag is a variation on regular tag in which each player hops on one foot instead of running.



## FM-6-F

### *Fine Motor Strength*

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Let your child play with a squirt toy to hit a target or wash off bubbles in the bathtub.

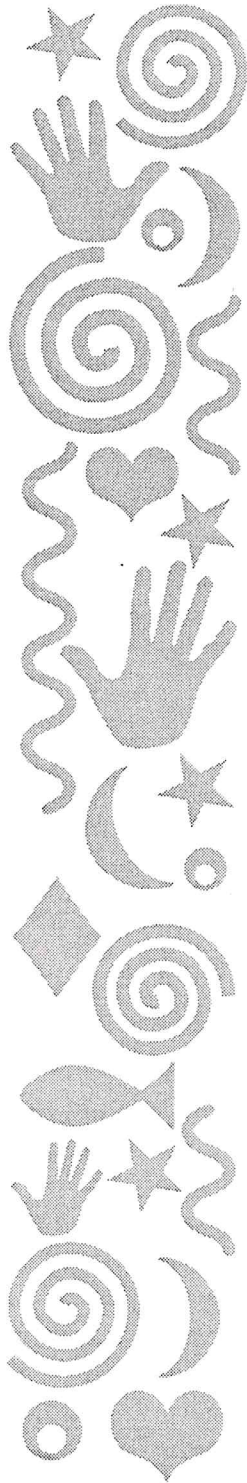
Make holes in paper by squeezing a paper punch. Try drawing a simple shape and have your child punch along the lines.

Operate a paper stapler by squeezing with only one hand. Alternate hands.

Try knot tying.

Supervise your child turning screws with a screwdriver, hammering nails and placing nuts and bolts in a container using pliers.

Let your child experiment with a typewriter or keyboard.



## FM-6-EHC

### *Fine Motor Eye - Hand Coordination*

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Work in maze books. Begin with wide lines and progress to narrow, more difficult ones.

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. Variation: Person who is "it" moves his flashlight in a particular pattern or design and other flashlights try to stay on the light and move in unison.

Shoot a squirt toy at a target. A moving target is especially challenging.

Play video and computer games.

Try keyboarding on a computer, typewriter, or musical keyboard.

Practice sewing buttons with yarn and a large needle.

Have your child try cutting various materials such as construction paper, waxed paper, foil, or sandpaper. Or cut magazine pictures to make a poster.

Weave using a small loom and yarn.



## FM-6-BC

### *Fine Motor Bilateral Coordination*

(Use of both hands together)

Roll out cookie dough with a rolling pin.

Build with Legos.

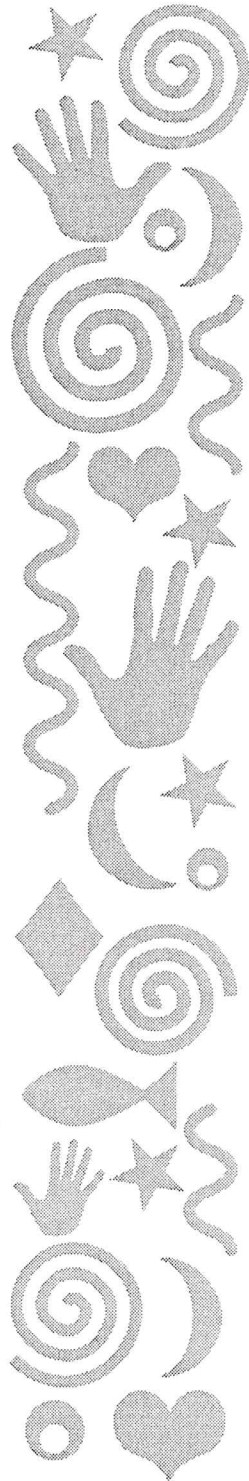
Teach your child how to make snowflakes by folding a piece of paper several times and then cutting out small snips before unfolding.

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

Have your child make a clay pot by rolling clay ropes and coiling them into a pot.

Roll old newspapers into logs.

Play musical instruments which require two hands to operate (drum, cymbals, xylophone, flute, horns, etc.).



## GM-6-BC

### *Gross Motor Bilateral Coordination*

*(Use of both sides of the body together)*

Encourage swimming.

Play hopscotch indoors or outdoors.

Practice riding a bicycle around obstacles. Wear a helmet for safety.

Have your child bounce a ball with both hands while walking through cones or cardboard box markers. Start off going straight through the path then progress to weaving in and out of the markers.

Let your child bunny hop and dribble a ball with both hands. Your child may need to practice with arms then legs singly before attempting both together.

Hop on two feet through cones.

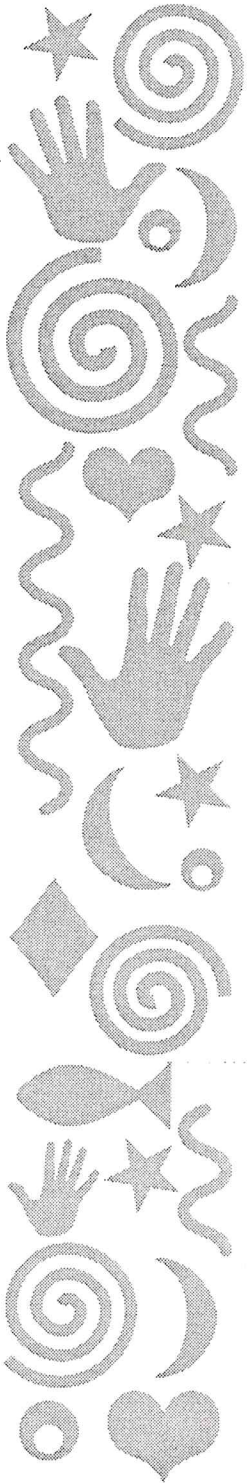
Encourage your child to do jumping jacks. The standard sideways version as well as a forward version can be tried.

Cartwheels require coordinated effort of all extremities in order to be successful. Have your child do several in succession.

Let your child jump on a trampoline with supervision. Try clapping hands to the rhythm for a variety.

Row in a boat (with adult supervision and a life jacket). Or, for practice, have your child try "rowing" with arms while seated on the floor.

Have your child try jump rope steps using both feet together.



## GM-6-EHC

### *Gross Motor Eye - Hand Coordination*

While supervised on a trampoline, have your child jump and toss a bean bag at a target. For a greater challenge toss a bean bag, clap hands and catch the bean bag while jumping. This may be fun to try to the beat of music as well.

Try badminton, croquet and golf with a whiffle ball.

Have your child try to throw a ball in the air and clap before catching it. Increase the number of claps as your child gets more skilled.

Throw a ball against a wall and jump up before catching it on the return.

Your child may like to try to dribble a basketball between cones (or cardboard box markers) before shooting at a hoop or target. Try this with alternating hands.

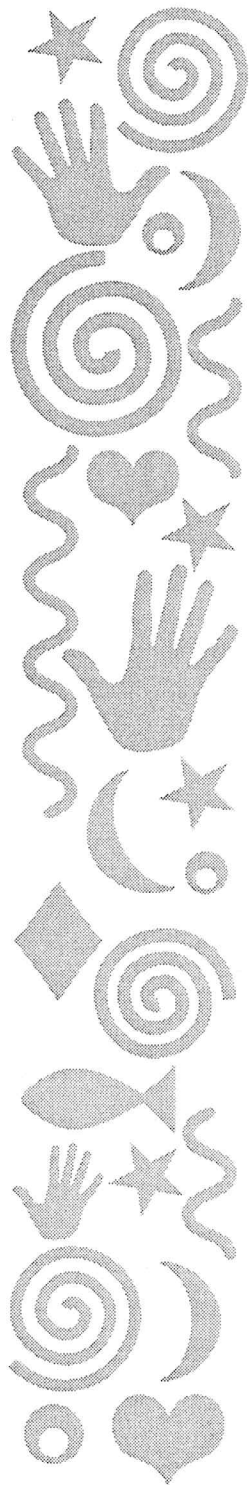
Bounce and catch a tennis ball.

Hit a suspended nerf or whiffle ball with a dowel, cardboard tube or bat (try sectioning off the bat with several colors and try to aim at a particular color with the bat tipped horizontally or vertically).

Try bowling using empty plastic bottles or milk cartons. A small rubber ball, tennis ball or nerf ball works well to knock the target down. Move father from the target as your child becomes more skilled.

Hit a balloon and keep tapping it to keep it in the air as long as possible.

Play frisbee toss and catch.



## GM-6-F

### *Gross Motor Flexibility*

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While standing, have your child bend forward with legs shoulder width apart. Have your child touch the floor, then reach back between legs and touch the floor again. Do several repetitions while trying to keep heels flat on the floor and legs straight.

Have your child walk while holding onto ankles with legs as straight as possible.

Show your child how to do windmills. In a standing position with legs shoulder width apart, and hands on hips, have your child reach down and touch the right foot with the left hand, then alternate to the other side.