



PARENTING POTENTIALS NEWSLETTER

We continue to serve our families both in person and virtually, maintaining necessary COVID protocols and hygiene. Please reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns or would like to schedule an upcoming appointment.

~ Shoshana Newman, Director, Pediatric Potentials

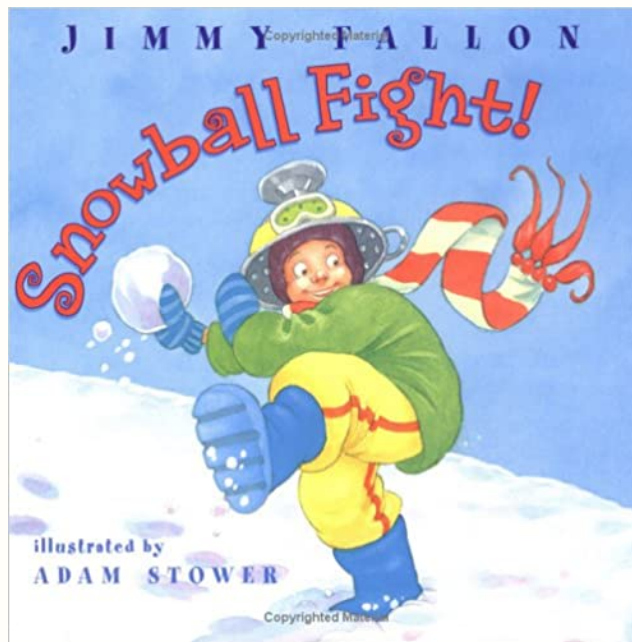


Handwriting In a Pandemic World

Long before the COVID 19 pandemic forced schools to close or go virtual and screen time to rise exponentially, there were many studies and discussions regarding the necessity for teaching handwriting including cursive writing.

Here are 10 reasons to teach handwriting in a digital age:

1. Brain science has confirmed that the discipline of handwriting helps children with both verbalization and creative thought according to Functional MRIs.
2. Handwriting promotes child's visual memory which is linked to reading skills.
3. Handwriting promotes manipulation and finger isolation.
4. Learning a skill that takes patience and diligence is beneficial for a child.
5. Legible handwriting is still necessary as many students do not have access to a computer and printer.
6. Often, the quality of written ideas is judged by the penmanship.
7. Since cursive requires less isolation of the hand muscles, it is often easier than keyboarding.
8. Since cursive handwriting is deeply embedded in our history, such as in historical documents, it is important to be able to read them in their original form.
9. Children who can write quickly and legibly are more likely to demonstrate skills in expressing their thoughts through the written work.
10. Children still need to learn how to sign their first and last name for official documents.



The Snowball Fight! by Jimmy Fallon is a fun simple story for younger children to read and inspires many wonderful activities for the whole family

- recycle some paper, crumple it up and have an indoor snowball fight
- make edible snow dough
- prepare a snowman snack
- mimic snow tracks inside by having your child walk around the house to make "tracks"
- trace images from the book cut, paste and create
- build a cotton ball snowman with paper, cotton balls, glue markers, ribbon felt and a popsicle stick
- create paper snowflakes
- write snow day poetry by asking kids to jot down all the words they can think of to describe snow and have them use the words to write a poem ([how to write poems](#))

Snow day activities are not only fun but offer many developmental benefits

- bilateral coordination (using both hands together in a coordinated fashion)
- eye hand coordination
- hand strengthening
- sensory planning and sequencing skills
- math and measuring skills
- spacial relationships



FUN WITH FOOD:
Snowman Snack

- 1 rice cake or any round cracker
- cream cheese
- 4 raisins or chocolate chips
- red & orange peppers or a piece of carrot or apple



PAPER SNOWFLAKES

What you'll need

- Printout of [snowflake](#) on blank copy paper
- Scissors
- Tape (optional)
- Small hole punch and string (optional)

How to make it

- Cut around the outside solid lines to make a square
- Fold the square corner to corner twice, creasing along the dotted lines on the outside of the snowflake design to form a triangle
- Fold the triangle into thirds, following the dotted lines to form an arrow shape
- Cut along the solid lines of the snowflake with your scissors
- Tape it to a window or hang it from a string (optional)



SNOW DOUGH RECIPE

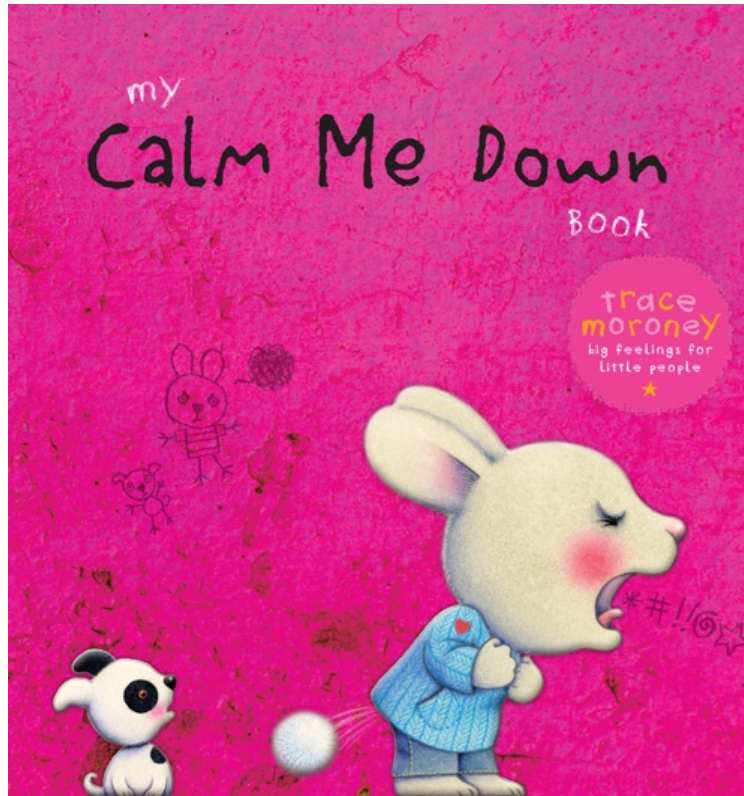
- 3 cups corn starch
- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- mix the dry ingredients and then add 1/4 cup of vegetable oil at a time
- mix together with fingertips until you have a fluffy consistency
- consider adding a few drips of essential oils to the vegetable oil to make it smell pleasant

Play time

- place snow in big Rubbermaid type tubs or ice cube trays
 - add plastic animals to create a farm, zoo or jungle
 - build a snowman
 - use cookie cutters to make shapes
 - add plastic cars, trucks, people
-

BOOK CORNER: We Recommend Tracey Moroney's [*My Calm Me Down Book*](#) the first in a series created to help equip children with the necessary skills to navigate their way through life's ups and downs

The pandemic has increased emotional turmoil in children and adults. This book discusses a feelings storm, provides a range of techniques to try with your kids to help calm that feelings storm. Check it out



BABY NEWS: Attached below is a copy of our latest informative flyer educating our families about tips to prevent flat spots and torticollis. This flyer will be distributed to local pediatricians offices. Please feel free to share this with anyone you think may benefit

TIPS TO PREVENT FLAT SPOTS AND TORTICOLLIS

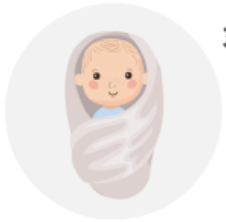


1. BACK TO SLEEP, TUMMY TO PLAY!

- Start tummy time from day 1 and make it fun! Tummy time on caregiver's chest is a cozy place to start
- Strength gained in this position is the foundation for all motor skills
- Place baby on tummy every time she wakes
- Aim for at least 3 times per day. Start with 5 min and gradually increase

2. ENCOURAGE BABY TO TURN BOTH WAYS

- Alternate holding baby on your right and left while breast/bottle feeding and while carrying
- Put interesting toys on both sides while playing
- Alternate baby's direction of position in crib and on changing mat



3. HELP BABY FIND THE MIDLINE

- Play, make eye contact, and sing with baby in your lap facing you
- For babies that are eating solids, position high chair directly facing you while spoon feeding
- Encourage head and body in midline using tightly rolled thin blankets or washcloth towels while in the car seat or stroller if baby needs more support

4. LIMIT TIME IN BABY "HOLDERS"

- Prolonged time (10+ min) in infant swings, reclined seats, and rockers increase pressure on the back of the head and can make flat spots and rotated head position worse
- Take baby out of infant car seat when you're out of the car
- Set up a safe area on the floor as the first choice for playtime for free movement and exploration



5. CALL A PHYSICAL THERAPIST

- If you notice flat spots, consistent head tilt or head turning, get help early
- Early PT treatment results in faster and better outcomes
- PT can help baby achieve equal range of motion and strength for healthy motor development