

April 2021

POTENTIALS & POSSIBILITIES

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**Spring has Sprung!
Happy Occupational Therapy Month.
Celebrate your therapist and the
profession that helps people across the
lifespan to meet their goals and
participate in all facets of daily life.**

Celebrate OT Month!

APRIL 2021

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

PASSION. PURPOSE. POSSIBILITY.



Sidewalk Chalk Is An Awesome Outdoor Activity

Playing with chalk encourages a child to use their imaginations, fine and gross motor skills and it's a great sensory tool.



- **BE CREATIVE:** Draw what your imagination inspires.
- **MATH GAME:** Draw 2 squiggly lines about 2' apart over a long stretch of the driveway. Divide into several sections and draw a math equation in each block. Kids can roll big foam dice and skip to that place and answer the math question.
- **SHAPES GAME:** Draw many different large shapes over a section of your driveway and focus on teaching which shapes are squares. Child steps in 1 square and needs to jump or step to the next shape that is a square avoiding circles and triangles.
- **CLOCK GAME:** This game works well with 2 kids. Learn to tell time by drawing a clock.
- **TRACING:** Trace your shadow, trace someone else's shadow or trace a favorite toy.
- **ABC GAME:** Start by making the board by drawing a 6'x6' grid. Write the letters in each square but scatter them, don't place in order. Be sure to leave blank spaces throughout as well. Kids can jump to each letter of the alphabet in order using free spaces as needed to get from one to the other.
- **SIGHT WORDS GAME:** Kids need a lot of practice with sight words like of, and, the, he. So pick 10 words and write each word on a separate notecard. Then randomly draw circles and place each word in a circle. Draw a line underneath all the circles. Your child should pick up a card, say the word, locate the matching circle, place the card down and run back to the line for the next.
- **BUILD A MAP:** Make a map of your neighborhood or city. Teach them about your neighbors or retail shops.
- **GAMES:** Recreate a favorite board game on your driveway and have fun while being physical.
 - twister, chess, pictionary, tic tac toe,
 - hopscotch
 - bullseye target practice
 - agility ladder exercises

BABY CORNER: Rotisserie Your Baby

Change Your Baby's Position

As therapists, we are constantly advising parents to engage in tummy time during waking hours as well as following the "baby to sleep" recommendation.

However, it's healthy for baby to play in a variety of positions including back, tummy and sidelying.

Sidelying is a fantastic position for your little one with many developmental benefits.

- it allows baby to bring hands to midline, hands to mouth, kick and begin to roll
- when placing your baby in sidelying, make sure that the top shoulder and hip are slightly forward which allows for reaching, you can place a rolled towel along the baby
- remember to have something engaging for baby to look at such as you, a mirror or a light up toy
- don't set a specific amount of time in this position but do gauge their comfort level



Warning Signs of too Much Screen Time for Kids

The American Academy of Pediatric recommends limiting screen time for children and teens. If your child exhibits some of the signs below, it's time to put some stricter limits on screen time.



Social and Emotional:

- Prefers spending time on screens to doing things with friends and family
- Finds it difficult to make and keep friends
- Has outbursts when it's time for the screen to go off
- Acts irritable when not using digital items
- Lacks concern or empathy for others



Cognitive:

- Has difficulty focusing on the present moment when not using a screen
- Declining grades in school, missing or dreading school
- Obsesses about digital activity

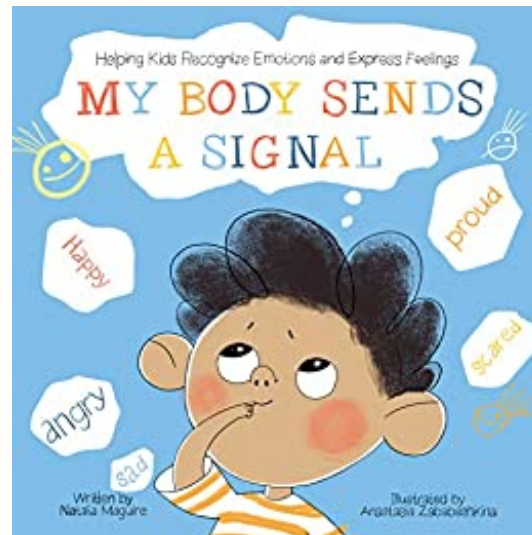


Communication:

- Has difficulty initiating or participating in conversations
- Regularly misinterprets non-verbal social cues
- Texts instead of talking in situations where face-to-face communication would be better

Physical Development:

- Withdraws from sports and outside play
- Loses sleep due to gaming, texting
- Gained weight to the point of being overweight or obese
- Developed carpal tunnel syndrome, eye problems or backaches



BOOK CORNER:

My Body Sends a Signal: Helping Kids Recognize Emotions and Express Feelings

Like us, adults, kids have a wide range of feelings. They get happy, jealous, disgusted, angry, nervous, sad, proud, worried, and excited. But at a very young age, they simply don't possess the vocabulary to express their feelings verbally. They express their feelings through tantrums, mimicry, physical movements, and gestures. These expressions are often sweet and funny, but sometimes they just drive us nuts!

FOOD CORNER: Rainbow Gelatin Cubes



Ingredients:

- 4 packages (3 ounces each) assorted gelatin flavors
- 6 envelopes unflavored gelatin, divided
- 5 3/4 cups boiling water, divided
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1/4 cup water

Prepare:

- In a small bowl, combine 1 package flavored gelatin and 1 envelope unflavored gelatin. Stir in 1 cup boiling water until dissolved. Pour into a 13"x9" dish coated with cooking spray; refrigerate until set but not firm, about 20 minutes.
- In a small bowl combine the condensed milk and 1 cup boiling water. In another bowl, sprinkle 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin over cold water; let stand for 1 minute. Stir in 3/4 cup boiling water. Add to milk mixture. Spoon 1 cup creamy gelatin mixture over the first flavored gelatin layer. Refrigerate until set but not firm, about 25 minutes.
- Repeat from beginning of recipe twice, alternating flavored gelatin with creamy gelatin layers. Chill each layer until set but not firm before spooning next layer on top. Make final flavored gelatin layer; spoon over top. Refrigerate at least 1 hour after completing last layer before cutting into 1" squares.

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