LEARNING THROUGH MOVEMENT:
BRINGING FUN TO ANY LESSON!

AMY VAUGHAN, OTD, OTR/L, BCP
PARTICIPANTS WILL:

1. DESIGN OR ENHANCE A ROUTINE LESSON USING MOVEMENT STRATEGIES.

2. DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ACTIVITIES THAT ARE GENERALLY CALMING TO A CHILD AND ACTIVITIES THAT MAY TRIGGER HYPERACTIVITY OR INATTENTION.
LEARNING: HOW DO WE SHOW WHAT WE KNOW?
NEURONS THAT FIRE TOGETHER, WIRE TOGETHER!

Repeated meaningful experiences and skill practice shape our skill levels and behavior patterns. Meaningful experiences that are created by “learning though doing” actually change the brain and influence development.
DEVELOPING MEANINGFUL REPETITION, REHEARSAL, & ASSOCIATION

“MAKING THE LOOP”

CAPITALIZING ON THE VESTIBULO-OCCULAR-AUDITORY TRIAD

THE LOOP = SEE IT, SAY IT, HEAR IT, DO IT!
A FEW FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES:

• Early childhood experiences shape how we come to view the world and how we react to it.

• Sensory processing is a natural part of interacting with the world, and, therefore, should be considered in most cases.
“The essence of responding appropriately to the environment is being able to take in the right amount of information in the right context and respond with the right amount of finesse to accomplish your goal.” --Amy Vaughan, Occupational Therapist
The ability to take in information, organize it, and to use that information to respond appropriately to a given situation.
“The sensory input that the brain deposits (creating maps of the body, etc) are the foundations for forming the background for learning and understanding.”

Winnie Dunn, OTR/L

2001 Eleanor Clark Slagle Lecture
WE KNOW THAT “HANDS-ON LEARNING” OPPORTUNITIES....

• Improve test scores  (Garrity, C., 1998)

• Improve Handwriting and written expression skills  (Case-Smith, J., 2002)

• Increase achievement  (Allen, C., 2007)

• Improve learning and performance
  (No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Report)
Teaching Using All the Senses

△ Give movement breaks – alternate periods of sitting and periods of movement.

△ Use different positions during lessons.

△ Uses pictures and schedules to help children “anticipate” what is coming next.

△ Encourage a child to participate through positive reinforcement, never force …
Motor Positions
HANDS-ON PLAY & WORK
THE POWER OF MOVEMENT

CALMING

Just Right!
LEARNING TIME

TOOOOO MUCH!
EXAMPLES OF MOVEMENT LESSONS

- HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/CBCNEWS/VIDEOS/251220275771452/UZPFSTC1MJQ2NZKZNT0ZMDYWNJEXMJK0OTK0MTQ6MTA6MTA6MDOXNTU0MTAXOTK5Oi03NTA4NTK5MTM2OTAWODU0ODU0ODC5/

- AMY’S VIDEO EXAMPLE FOR MEMORIZATION
SIGNS OF OVER-STIMULATION

WHEN A CHILD IS NOT PROCESSING SENSORY INPUT PROPERLY – THEY CAN BECOME OVER-STIMULATED OR DISORGANIZED & OFTEN SHOW CLASSIC SIGNS...

- Sweaty palms/back of neck
- Dark circles or sheen under the eyes
- Hiccups
- Nervous laughter
- Lip-licking
- Gagging
- Vomiting
- Respiration
- Withdraw / Sleep
- Yawning
- Noise-making
SIGNS OF AN UNMET THRESHOLD

UNDER-STIMULATION HAS CLASSIC SIGNS AS WELL...

- LEG SHAKING
- FINGER TAPPING
- CONSTANTLY SHIFTING WEIGHT
- TOE TAPPING
- DRUMMING
- HUMMING
- NON-MEANINGFUL SOUNDS
- FIDGETING
- DOESN’T STAY IN SEAT
- MOUTHING NON-FOOD OBJECTS
BABY DAYS...

TO CALM ...
- WE USE SOFT CLOTHES
- NATURAL OR DIM LIGHT
- QUIET MUSIC / WHITE NOISE
- CALMING & SOOTHING VOICES
- REPETITIVE MOVEMENT
- PATTING
- CONSTANT FIRM TOUCH

TO ALERT ...
- WE BUY BRIGHT TOYS
- VARY TONE AND PITCH OF VOICE
- VARY TEXTURE OF TOYS
- BRIGHT LIGHTING / LIGHT UP TOYS
- INCONSISTENT OR LIGHT TOUCH
- SPORADIC OR LARGE MOVEMENT
- LIVELY MUSIC
APPLICATION TO LEARNING
MOVING* THINKING * MOVING * THINKING

ACTIVITIES THAT ARE USUALLY CALMING INCLUDE SLOW, REPETITIVE, GENTLE, AND RHYTHMIC COMPONENTS.

- SLOW ROCKING (ROCKING CHAIR / AIR CUSHION/ PILLOW)
- SOFT MUSIC
- DEEP PRESSURE (SHOULDERS / HEAD HUGS/ BACK/ LEGS)
- SUCKING THROUGH A STRAW (ESPECIALLY THICK LIQUIDS)
- DEEP BREATHING!!!
- LAP BUDDY OR BLANKET
- CHEWING GUM
APPLICATION TO LEARNING
MOVING* THINKING * MOVING * THINKING

Activities that are usually alerting are those that are quick, varied, have bright colors, are noisy, or include active movement.

- Running, jumping, calisthenics
- Dancing
- Changing activities frequently
- Strongly flavored foods or crunchy foods
TEACHING SELF REGULATION

FUN PLAY THAT TEACHES:
* STOP & GO
* SLOW & FAST
* SOFT & HARD
* QUIET & LOUD

MAKE YOUR BODY QUIET GAME:
LAY ON THE FLOOR (LOW LIGHTS) ⇒ NAME A BODY PART AND MOVE ONLY THAT BODY PART AND THEN “QUIET” AGAIN…
PRACTICE TIME
WANT MORE INFORMATION?
READ AMY VAUGHAN’S BOOK:

POSITIVELY SENSORY!
A GUIDE TO HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP POSITIVE APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND COPE WITH SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFICULTY

YOU CAN ORDER IT ON AMAZON.COM!

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