



Bringing the Educational Support Work Into the Home

By Mary Jo Oresti

A good relationship with parents and families is absolutely necessary in order to be effective teachers, although the depth of that relationship will, of course, vary with each family. Still, we strive to form a circle of consistency around the child. One useful tactic used by Class Teachers and Educational Support Teachers is a list of at-home activities. This list is just one example of how to organize your suggestions. It connects normal, at-home work and play with educational definitions the parent is familiar with. It can be encouraging to know that we are already doing a lot to support our children with these daily activities.

Activities for Home and School Building Capacities that Aid Learning

Midlines and general coordination: Washing dishes; washing clothes on a scrub board; sweeping; raking leaves; bread baking.

Eye hand: Knitting; braiding; sewing; origami; bead work; knot tying.

Eye tracking: Following the light from a flashlight on the ceiling while lying down; color or paint single bands of color horizontally across a page of paper; cup and ball; yo-yo; crafts.

Fine motor coordination for the hand: String games; finger-plays which help speech, coordination, and body geography; beeswax modeling.

Breathing/rhythm/coordination: Jump rope; spiral exercise from Extra Lesson; swimming; folk dancing and line dancing.

Dexterity and handwriting: Draw shapes or letters on paper taped to the floor with a pencil in between the toes. Pick up marbles with the toes.

Balance: Roll on the floor and between each roll take a short pause; swings; spinning on a merry-go-

round; activities where the head is lower than the waist, such as hanging upside down on monkey bars and handstands; balance boards; scooter boards; large gym balls; rocking.

Coordination and integration of early movements: Crawling on the floor; rolling; wheelbarrow walking; “angels in the snow” on the floor.

Boundary issues and touch sensitivity: Deep pressure massages; rolling up tightly in a blanket; foot rubs.

Sequencing: Songs and games with sequences such as “There Was a Little Tree,” “My Aunt Went to the Attic and Found,” “There Was an Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly.”

Attention: Adequate sleep, warmth, water, and nutrition. Appreciation for process and completion.

—Mary Jo Oresti M.A.

Resources:

AHE Exercise Manual, v. I and v. II, healingeducation.org
Smart Moves, Carla Hannaford, PhD, Great River Books
Extra Lesson, Audrey McAllen, Rudolf Steiner College Press
Out of Sync Child, Carol Kranowitz, Skylight Press
Healing Our Children, Susan R. Johnson, www.youandyourchildshealth.org
Beyond the Rainbow Bridge, Barbara Patterson and Pamela Bradley, Michaelmas Press
Adventures in Parenting, Rachel Ross, AWSNA Publications

“But now man’s whole faculty of attention, the ability we possess to be attentive to the world around us, depends on our being able to establish the right adjustment between soul and spirit on the one hand and bodily-physical nature on the other.” —Rudolf Steiner, *Education for Special Needs*

