Parent guide for therapeutic play

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PARENT GUIDE FOR THERAPEUTIC PLAY

by

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Signature of Faculty Advisor

Date

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to create a guide for parents of children ages three through six who have transitioned from early intervention services and did not qualify for early special education services. Delays may be present in many areas including cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, social-emotional, and adaptive development (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013), creating difficulty for the child to engage in everyday occupations including play.

An extensive literature review was conducted in order to obtain up to date information on the importance of play in development and facilitation of parent led play sessions. Research articles, textbooks, and current resources available to families of children with developmental disabilities were all reviewed. The guide was created using the Person Environment Occupation Model in order to assist parents in understanding their child’s developmental needs, the impact of the environment, and the skills learned during the occupation of play.

The Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play was organized to be parent friendly. It begins with a brief introduction of the guide’s purpose, followed by an explanation of the Person Environment Occupation Model. This overview provided information for the parent to maximize the fit between the child’s skill level, the environment, and the play occupation.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Developmental delays affect one in six children in the United States (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2015). Developmental delays may affect a child’s cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, or adaptive development (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). In North Dakota, 6.48% of children between the ages of three and five have a developmental disability (United States Department of Education, 2013). Developmental delays can also impact a child’s ability to engage in everyday occupations, including play (Heah, Case, McGuire, & Law, 2007).

One service available to families of children with developmental delays is early intervention. This service is available for qualifying children ages birth to three, regardless of socioeconomic status. In North Dakota, a child will qualify for early intervention services if he or she performs at 25% below age norms in two or more developmental areas including: cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, sensory processing, communication, social-emotional, or adaptive development (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). A child will also qualify if he or she displays a 50% delay in one of the previously listed areas (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013).

Since early intervention services only cover the child until three years of age, it is important that there are supports in place following discontinuation of services. The transition out of early intervention looks different for every family. Transition settings
may include community preschools, daycares, or early childhood special education services (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2013). The children whose delays are not severe enough to qualify for early childhood special education services (less than a 25% delay), and those families that can not afford outpatient services for their child, are often left without resources or knowledge on how to continue to promote the development of these skills. Only 55% of children who have received early intervention services qualify for special education services in kindergarten (National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2010).

The purpose of this guide, *Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play*, is to create a parent friendly resource to support the parents of children with developmental delays and provide examples of how to continue to engage their child in play to address these delays. The guide is specifically designed for the parents of children who are three to six years of age. It provides play activities and suggestions on adaptations that can be made for the child and their environment based on their developmental delay and skill levels. The guide will outline ideas of play interventions that can be incorporated to the family’s daily routines. Each play activity will include ways in which the parent can modify the activity specific for the child. By providing examples of what to look for in the child’s current behaviors, the parent will be able to more easily determine what areas to address.

In order to make the guide parent friendly, the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model will be used to provide a way of understanding occupational performance throughout the development of this product. The model focuses on the fit between the child, the environment, and the occupation. The transaction between these three elements
creates what is known as occupational performance (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). Occupational performance is increased as the transaction and fit between the child, their environment and occupation is enhanced (Law & Dunbar, 2007). This is done by matching the child’s skill level with the activity, their natural environment, and play occupations that the child enjoys. When these factors fit well together occupational performance is enhanced; however, the opposite is true when the fit is poor. The use of this model helps assist parents by guiding to towards specific ideas for modifications based on the environment or the occupation.

Chapter II contains findings from an extensive literature review conducted to guide the creation of this product. Information from the literature review reflects findings from research articles and textbooks and provides background knowledge on developmental delays, early intervention services, family involvement, the impact of natural environment, the importance of play, and the PEO model. Chapter III describes the methodology that will be used to create the product. An introduction to the product as well as the complete guide is contained in Chapter IV. Chapter V concludes with a summary of the product, limitations, and suggestions for implementation.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Play is identified as an essential part of a child’s development. Children with developmental delays often have difficulty engaging in these activities and need environmental adaptations and guidance to increase participation. During therapy, the occupational therapist provides these elements; however, when a child who received early intervention services turns three and no longer qualifies for services, the parent must accept this role. The product of this scholarly project is to provide a guide for parents to support the child through activity ideas and community resources. The literature elements are organized according to the PEO model with a focus on the person skill areas, environmental factors and the occupation of play.

Developmental Delays

Developmental delays affect approximately one in six children 3 through 17 years of age in the United States (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2015). In North Dakota, the rate is slightly lower with 6.48% of children between the ages of three and five experiencing a delay in development when compared to their peers (United States Department of Education, 2013). Children are diagnosed with developmental delays when they fail to meet developmental milestones in one or more developmental areas. These areas include cognition, communication, motor performance, social-emotional interaction, and adaptive skills. (Myers, Stephens, & Tauber, 2010; Shevell, 2008).
Children with disabilities or developmental delays are at risk for decreased engagement and limited participation in daily activities (Heah, Case, McGuire, & Law, 2007; King, Lawm, King, Rosenbaum, Kertoy, & Young, 2003). Therefore, it is essential for parents and service providers to understand the factors that impact a child’s participation (King et al., 2003). Since these factors vary for each child, parents and practitioners must work together to identify specific concerns for the child.

**Cognitive Delays**

Cognitive delays are of concern as cognition provides a foundation for a child’s learning. Cramm, Krupa, Missiuna, Lysaght, and Parker (2013) found that cognitive issues can impact occupational performance negatively in numerous ways including interfering with a child’s independence as well as limiting their engagement in daily activities. Delays in cognition were also found to negatively impact a child’s social participation (Clark Schlabach, 2013). These limitations may be due to lack of understanding or inability to ask for assistance (Cramm et al., 2013). Examples of early cognitive deficits include issues with attention, memory, problem solving, spatial relations, cause and effect, imitation, and classification of objects (Clark & Schlabach, 2013).

Addressing cognitive delays is essential to facilitating future cognitive development and enhancing participation in life activities (Clark & Schlabach, 2013). Cognitive deficits in children can be addressed through participation in daily activities and natural routines (Dunst, Bruder, Trivette, & Hamby, 2006). For this reason, Clark and Schlabach (2013) emphasize collaborating with parents and caregivers to explore learning opportunities that occur in a child’s everyday routine. Facilitating child’s
engagement provides them with valuable learning opportunities. Educating parents on the importance of child development through play and everyday activities is essential for continued development of the child.

**Motor Development**

According to Case-Smith, Clark, and Schlabach (2013), motor performance is another essential area of development. A child’s motor skills impact a child’s ability to participate in daily activities including play, self-care, and social engagement (Case-Smith et al., 2013). Children with delays in gross motor can experience limitations in mobility and therefore miss opportunities to explore their environments (Case-Smith et al., 2013). This is of particular concern as limited interaction with their environment can contribute to limited engagement in play and increase the child’s risk of social isolation (King et al., 2003). Severity of a child’s limitation in gross motor has been found to be a strong predictor of their abilities in the areas of mobility, self-care activities, and social engagement with others (Ostensjo, Carlbreg, & Vollestad, 2004).

In addition to mobility, a child also uses his or her hands to explore the environment (Isbell, 2012). Fine motor skill development begins in infancy with children learning to explore toys (Case-Smith, 2006). This exploration during play can assist children in developing grasp and release of objects, manipulation of objects, as well as integrating the use of both hands together (Case-Smith, 2006). In addition to grasp, manipulation, and use of hands together, Frank and Esbensen (2015) also identified pinch as an additional fine motor skill. As a child ages and becomes more mobile, their fine motor skills continue to progress due to their new found ability to explore more of their environment independently (Case-Smith, 2006). Therefore, addressing motor delays not
only increases a child’s independence in mobility and manipulation of their environment but can also assist in increasing the child’s cognitive performance and socialization skills (Case-Smith, et al., 2013).

**Social-emotional**

Kauffman and Kinnealey (2015) identified seven categories of social skills including verbal presentation, nonverbal presentation, emotional response, play, awareness of self and others, interpersonal relationships, and feelings about self. Due to the number of skills addressed in this area, children may have a unique combination of deficits that must be addressed (Kauffman & Kinnealey, 2015). In addition, children who exhibit issues with social-emotional functioning may do so for a variety of reasons. For example, children with cognitive delays may demonstrate minimal understanding of emotional expression and nonverbal languages or may have limited ability to learn social skills (Case-Smith, 2013). In addition, children with limited social interaction may also display issues when engaging with others.

Social-emotional functioning begins with the infant’s bonding to his or her parents and continuing as the infant forms relationships with other family members and as the child then forms relationships with adults such as teachers, family, and peers (Case-Smith, 2013). Fussell, Macias, and Saylor (2005) found that a child’s social skills play a key role in his or her quality of life and impacts daily functioning. A young child’s development of social competence allows him or her to participate in a range of social environments at home and in the community (Case-Smith, 2013). Therefore, addressing this area is essential to allow a child to have effective interactions throughout his or her life.
In order to foster social-emotional development in children with developmental disabilities opportunities to engage with others is essential (Case-Smith, 2013). In early childhood, this engagement may include interaction with parents, siblings, or peers. Fussell et al. (2005) found that sibling relationships did not have a significant effect on either child’s social skills. However, these findings conflicted with the findings of Case-Smith (2013) which indicated that peer interventions in natural play settings can assist in a child’s social-emotional development. In addition, parent engagement in relationship-focused interventions such as modeling, coaching, and providing feedback, can have a positive influence on a child’s development (Case-Smith, 2013).

**Adaptive**

In addition to a child’s ability to engage with others, their ability to perform everyday activities independently impacts overall functioning later in life. Children with delays in the area of adaptive or self-care may experience difficulties with engaging in everyday activities including dressing and bathing (Duncan & Bishop, 2015). In addition to these skills, self-feeding and toileting are also considered areas of adaptive development (Frank & Esbensen, 2015). Interventions to address delays in this area should focus on skill acquisition and self-sufficiency (Duncan & Bishop, 2015).

**Early Intervention**

Services are available to children who qualify based on a delay in the areas of cognitive development, gross motor development, fine motor development, sensory processing, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). In North Dakota, a child is diagnosed with a developmental delay and qualifies for early intervention
services when he or she performs at 25% below his or her age norm in two or more of the
previously listed categories, or displays a 50% delay in any one of the areas (North
Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). Early intervention services are funded
through Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These
multidisciplinary services, with occupational therapy as an integral part of the team, are
provided to infants and toddlers birth to three years of age with developmental delays and
their families (Myers et al., 2010). Infants and toddlers diagnosed with physical or mental
conditions that have a high probability of resulting in developmental delays also qualify
for these services (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). These
conditions may include chromosomal abnormalities, genetic disorders, sensory
impairments, or disorders secondary to exposure to a toxic substance among others
(North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013).

Early intervention services are provided by a multidisciplinary team of qualified
providers. In order to provide comprehensive care, members of this team may include
pediatricians or other physicians, audiologists, family therapists, nurses, occupational
therapists, physical therapists, psychologists, registered dietitians, social workers, special
educators, speech and language pathologists, vision specialists and others (Myers et al.,
2010; North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). Responsibilities of the
occupational therapist working in early intervention include identification and assessment
of delays as well as intervention (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013).
Intervention includes collaborating with the family in order to facilitate activities to
address the child’s delays (Muhlenhaupt, Pizur-Barnekow, Schefkind, Chandler, &
Harvison, 2015). Occupational therapists may also work with the family to adapting the
environment to enhance the child’s performance (Myers et al., 2010). A goal of early intervention is to work with the child in their natural environment in order to facilitate the child’s functional abilities. Examples of these contexts include the child’s home, school, and community (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). A study by Khetani, Orsmond, Cohn, Law, and Coster (2012) found that families transitioning out of early intervention services attempt to participate in the community and this participation is directly related to the amount of support they acquire. Early intervention providers can help families establish and maintain formal and informal supports to help parents manage child behavior (Khetani et al., 2012).

By providing these services, members of early intervention team play an important role in enhancing developmental and health needs of infants and toddlers who display developmental delays (Clark, & Schlabach, 2013). Evidence presented by Clark, and Schlabach (2013) found that early intervention should include education and collaboration with families and caregivers in order to best care for the child’s needs. According to Msall and Park (2008), parent-based interventions and early education programs are the two most frequently used methods to increase behavioral, social, and school success in at risk children. As early intervention services come to an end, the responsibility addressing developmental delays now falls to the parents or others services.

**Transition Process and Eligibility Criteria**

Once a child reaches three years of age, they no longer qualify for early intervention services but may qualify for early childhood special education services. These services are provided through part B of IDEA (Myer et al., 2010). It is important to note that the requirements for early intervention services and early childhood special
education services differ. The child is required to be re-evaluated in order to determine continued eligibility. Prior to the child’s third birthday, the child’s delays are re-evaluated and based on results the child may qualify in one of several categories (Myers et al., 2010). These include: autism, deafness, deaf-blindness, hearing-impairment, orthopedic impairment, speech or language impairment, visual impairment, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, other health impairment, or specific learning disability (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). For children ages three through nine, if no disability is specifically identified but delays are present the child may be categorized as non-categorical delay to be considered eligible to receive early childhood special education services (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). During the assessment process the team evaluates the child’s eligibility criteria on cognition, communication, motor, social-emotional, and adaptive abilities (Myers et al., 2010).

Based on the requirements and parental preference, children who received early intervention services may or may not move on to receive early childhood special education services. Twenty percent of children who have received early intervention services do not receive early childhood special education services (Hebbeler et al., 2007). In 2010, the National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance found this percentage to be even higher stating that only 55 percent of children who receive early intervention services qualify for special education services in kindergarten. This discontinuation of services may present a challenge for parents and children alike. (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013).

Transitioning of services greatly affect both the child with developmental delays and their families (Myers, 2006). Due to the stress experienced during this time, support
and assistance for future planning should be provided. Ways to support the family may include providing resources within the community, in addition to development of activities that can be implemented by the parent in order to support the child’s continued development (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). In addition, it may be beneficial for the therapist to provide the parent a checklist of developmental milestones in order to increase the parent’s ability to track the child’s progress.

**Family Involvement**

Regardless of the supports available to a child, parental involvement is a key component in the full participation of a child (Heah et al., 2007). In addition, Clark, and Schlabach (2013) found parents and caregiver of children with developmental disabilities play a vital role in addressing development. Since children spend the majority of time with their parent or primary caregiver, their level of involvement impacts a child’s engagement in play. Therefore, parents, caregivers, and families become the primary party responsible for structuring children’s social and play experiences (Heah et al., 2007). Although all families contribute to a child’s development, the level of impact is influenced both by family demographics and the dynamics for family function (Chiarello, Palisano, Bartlett, & Wescott McCoy, 2011).

With parental involvement being essential to the facilitation of play for children with developmental disabilities, it is important for occupational therapists to provide support and guide parents through this process (Wilkes-Gillan, Bundy, Cordier, & Lincoln, 2014). According to Piggot, Hocking, and Paterson (2003), with guidance some parents have been able to incorporate therapy strategies and seen success through increased engagement of their child. In addition, Graham, Truman, and Holgate (2014)
found that when parents felt play and therapy could be combined to address their child’s skills, the parents were more likely to facilitate play activities. In order to transfer knowledge from the therapist to the parent, the therapist must provide examples that are effective, realistic, and appropriate (Wilkes-Gillan et al., 2013). With this transfer of information from therapist to parent, the strategies can be consistently implemented at home (Piggot et al., 2003). When provided with guidance and information about implementing play, parents felt more effective at incorporating play activities into their daily lives and creating play opportunities with using strategies learned in therapy (Wilkes-Gillan et al., 2013). In addition, parents have been found to have an increased ability to choose games or activities that would have a positive impact on their child’s abilities (Piggot et al., 2003). This is significant as children with developmental delays have been found to benefit from the use of everyday activity including play in order to facilitate success (Dunst et al., 2006).

Therapy plays an important role in addressing the needs of children with developmental delays; however, since parents provide the majority of interaction with their children it is essential that therapists consider the entire family when planning activities. Fingerfut et. al. (2013) stated that interventions not only have a significant impact on the child but also influence life participation for the entire family. Since families are well equipped to manage their own lives, therapists must work with the family to find ways to achieve success and meet the child’s therapy goals (Dunn, Cox, Foster, Mische-Lawson & Tanquary, 2012). A study conducted by Miedel and Reynolds (1999) hypothesized and concluded that parent involvement in early intervention and
early schooling can help sustain the immediate positive effects of early intervention services.

**Impact of Natural Environment**

A part of family engagement with the therapy process is to assist in identifying the child’s everyday activities, common settings, and child’s interests (Dunst et al., 2006). This information is incorporated into activities in order to create the most effective interventions. By including the parents in this process, the therapist increases the likelihood of parental compliance in implementing interventions without the therapist being present.

Natural environments are important aspects of the intervention process. To create successful interventions within a child’s natural environment, parental insight into their daily routines and traditions is needed (Hanft & Pilkington, 2000). A study by Hanft and Pilkington (2000) recommend guidelines as a starting point for therapist and parent collaboration in a child’s natural environment. These guidelines include assisting family members to determine priorities for their child’s development through engagement in daily activities, prioritize outcomes in order to select the most appropriate interventions, and provide ideas to increase support of the child’s primary environments and caregivers. Therefore, it is essential that professionals and parents alike provide supportive environments in order to allow children with developmental delays engage in everyday activities, including play (Lifter, Foster-Sanda, Arzamarski, Briesch, and McClure, 2011).
Importance of Play

Play is considered a key occupation for children and thus seen as an essential aspect of childhood (Fallon & MacCobb, 2013). According to Heah et al. (2007) children with developmental delays may experience limitations in their occupational engagement. Lifter et al. (2011) came to a similar conclusion and found that during observation, children with developmental delays engaged with only a few toys despite the availability of toys in their environment. In addition, these periods of engagement were also limited. These findings suggest that children with developmental delays experience more barriers than their peers (Lifter et al., 2011).

Children who lack engagement in play are shown to demonstrate less flexibility, increased difficulty in changes, have negative affect or speech and appear physically and emotionally withdrawn (Knox, 2010). Children with disabilities often times are unable to engage in play activities due to these impeding disabilities. Play is important in helping children learn skills and develop physical, cognitive and language skills (Knox, 2010). Therefore, play opportunities should be facilitated to provide children with opportunities to increase knowledge and stimulate development of their skills (Isbell, 2012).

An important factor to increase child engagement in play is to find activities that the child considers fun (Miller & Kuhaneck, 2008). In a study by Miller and Kuhaneck (2008), children expressed that in addition to fun they enjoyed challenges. Children were found to engage longer in play activities that provided a challenge that was appropriate for their skill level (Miller & Kuhaneck, 2008). Being challenged, having fun, and interacting with others all contributed to successful participation for children (Heah et al., 2007).
Person-Environment-Occupation Model

For children with developmental delays, successful participation is affected by many aspects including a child’s skills and abilities, the environment, and the occupation (Heah et al., 2007). These factors work together to influence performance and can be best described using the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) Model. The PEO model focuses on the transactive relationship between these elements and how they interact to impact occupational performance (Law, Cooper, Strong, Stewart, Rigby, & Letts, 1996; Law & Dunbar, 2007). In this model, the person, environment, and occupation are seen as three interrelated concepts with occupational performance occurring where the three concepts overlap (Law et al., 1996). In order to better understand how to maximize fit it is essential to have knowledge of each concept within the model including person, environment, and occupation.

The PEO model views all components of person, environment, and occupation over the lifespan and expresses the continual changes of a person’s characteristics, their occupations and environments (Law et al., 1996). The use of the PEO model within the pediatric population uses a family-centered approach to identify occupational performance issues, and interventions that focus on changing the child, environment and/or the occupations (Law & Dunbar, 2007). Direct support from therapists or parents can facilitate fit between the child and desired occupations, as well as providing an optimal context (Case-Smith, 2010). By maximizing fit of the child, environment, and occupation the occupational performance of the child is increased (Law et al., 1996). In order to maximize fit and increase occupational performance, it is essential to first understand the concepts individually.
Person

According to Law et al. (1996) all individuals are unique and dynamic in nature. These unique characteristics of a child play an important role in the choosing of an occupation and experiences within the environment. These individual characteristics include things such as temperament, skills and abilities, personality, self-concept and health (Law & Dunbar, 2007). Developmental disabilities can affect these unique child characteristics and create barriers and obstacles that limit engagement in occupations including play. This model assists in recognizing the child’s skills and abilities of not only the child as an individual but the child as a part of the family (Law & Dunbar, 2007).

Environment

The environment plays an important role in the intervention process that can either support or hinder a child’s participation and performance (Heah et al., 2007). Environmental factors that influence engagement and development include social, economic, political, institutional, physical and cultural aspects (Law & Dunbar, 2007). Law and Dunbar (2007) stated that environments can influence and play a role in a child’s behavior and a context in which occupation is engaged in. Natural environments are important in facilitating child development. According to Hanft and Pilkington (2000), natural environments are the means to help to reach a child’s anticipated goals and apart of the intervention process, instead of the end goal.

Occupation

The occupation of a child is an activity in which they choose to engage in based on their intrinsic need for involvement, expression, skill development, and enjoyment
(Law & Dunbar, 2007). Play is one of the primary occupations that children engage in. Play development in children with developmental disabilities often times differs from that of normal developing children (Fallon & MacCobb, 2013). Choosing play activities that are meaningful and enjoyable can help facilitate engagement in daily occupations (Law & Dunbar, 2007). Play occupations can be chosen to address certain skills that will work on developmental needs of the child.

**Summary of Literature**

In the United States, developmental delays affect approximately 16.6% of children (CDC, 2015). These delays can occur in many areas including cognition, motor performance, social-emotional interaction, and adaptive skills (Myers et al., 2010; Shevell, 2008). Children with delays in any of these areas are at risk for decreased engagement and have limited participation in daily activities including play (Heah et al., 2007; Laum et al., 2003). Up to the age of three children with developmental delays who perform at levels 25% below that of his or her peers qualifies for early intervention services (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). However, on the child’s third birthday, these services are discontinued and a child must re-qualify for services to receive early childhood special education services. During this re-evaluation process, Hebbeler et al. (2010) found that 20% of children do not re-qualify. The National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (2007) found this percentage to be even higher with 45% of children who received early intervention services no longer qualifying for special education services in kindergarten. With such a high percentage of children not requalifying for services, the occupational therapist can support families by assisting them in finding activities that continue to facilitate the child’s development.
The product, *Parent Guide for Therapeutic* play will be created to support parents during the transition from early intervention services. The goal of the guide is to provide parents assistance identifying the skills and abilities of their child, adapting the environment to support their child’s performance, and to assist them in providing opportunities for their child to continue to engage in play activities. The guide is focused on play activities as this was found to be the key occupation for children (Fallon & MacCobb, 2013).
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Children with developmental disabilities may qualify to receive early intervention services. However, these services are only available until the age of three. Upon a child’s third birthday, he or she must transition out early intervention. Occupational therapists are knowledgeable in the transition process and provide support and resources throughout this time (Kardos & White, 2005). While occupational therapists can provide assistance, once the transition is complete there are a lack of resources to support children and families of children whose disabilities are not severe enough to qualify for further services. The purpose of this scholarly project was to create a product that would assist parents in providing purposeful play opportunities for children that did not qualify for continued services.

To create this product, extensive review of literature was completed on numerous databases including CINAHL, OT Search, PubMed, Google Scholar, and American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Terms used to conduct the research included early intervention, developmental delays, occupational therapy, play, interventions and natural environments. Research articles and current resources available to parents were also included in the methodology of this product.

The review of literature indicated that there are many children who have developmental delays and these delays create difficulty for the child to engage in play. Developmental delays can affect a child’s cognitive, gross motor, fine motor,
communication, sensory, social or emotional development, and adaptive development (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). As children approach the age of three, they begin the transition from early intervention services to either early childhood special education, other appropriate services, or no longer qualify for services. This transition is made easier by working with the family, current intervention providers, and future providers (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2013). The gap between services develops for those children that will not receive future services to address their needs. After early intervention services end, the child may not receive therapy or their developmental delays go unnoticed until they enter the school system. This lack of service might cause the child to regress and their delays worsen. The goal of this product is to provide those necessary resources for parents and caregivers to help bridge the gap between the services.

Resources for parents of this population were reviewed and it was determined that there were no easily accessible references available. Although there was literature on this topic, it was often more focused towards health professionals and difficult for parents to interpret. This product provides a straightforward guide to implementing ideas for play as well as ways to adapt play activities to meet the needs of their child.

The strategies and activities of this guide were influenced by the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model and addresses changes specific to the person, the occupation, and the environment. This model is designed to look at the transactions between the three components. These transactions are addressed in the product by asking the parents to consider child, environmental and activity factors that would enhance the child’s occupational performance (Law & Dunbar, 2007). The parent is instructed to look
at their child’s current skills and abilities, likes and dislikes, what motivates them, and what their current needs are. They are also instructed to look at environmental factors that may distract or enhance their child’s performance as well as to look at the lighting and space requirements for the activity. To assist parents in the selection of play activities, the guide is organized in sections based on developmental delay areas that can be addressed with play activities. These five sections include cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, and adaptive development. The activities within each developmental delay section are then further divided according to age. Developmental guidelines are provided for each age group, and based on these guidelines, activity adaptations were created to provide the best fit for the child. This transactive approach allowed the product to be organized so the child, environment, and occupation elements are easily identified and how they act on one another to impact the child’s performance.

Development of the product focused on providing information in a manner that was parent friendly in order to ensure understanding and facilitate implementation. The guide addresses five developmental delay areas, cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, and adaptive development. These five developmental areas are addressed as individual sections within the guide and have two to three specific play activities with age appropriate adaptations. An introduction to the guide, as well as the entire Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play, can be found in Chapter IV. A summary of the purpose of the guide, limitations, proposals for implementation and recommendations for future development are included in Chapter V.
CHAPTER IV

PRODUCT

The Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play was created to provide ideas and act as a resource for parents of children with developmental delays who do not qualify for additional services upon completion of early intervention services. To support the development of the guide a literature review was conducted. Results can be found in chapter II.

The Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model was selected as the theoretical model to support the creation of the guide. The use of the PEO model within the pediatric population uses a family-centered approach to identify occupational performance issues (Law & Dunbar, 2007). In addition, the model looks at the skills and abilities of the child, environment in which the occupation will be completed and type of activity the child will engage in. The guide describes the aspects of PEO and provides examples of how to maximize the fit between the child, environment and occupation in order to increase a child’s occupational performance.

Finding ways to incorporate learning into play can be a challenge for parents. The guide provides questions that parents can answer in order to assist them selecting an activity that best addresses the needs of their child. Within the guide there is a table of typical developmental milestones for children ages three through six. Examples of milestones for each age range are listed for the areas of cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, and adaptive development. This information is valuable as
parent’s are often unaware of how their child’s skills will develop and progress as they age.

The guide is divided into developmental areas. This allows parents to easily reference the section that addresses their child’s area of delay. For each developmental section the guide provides suggested play activities that can be utilized at home to increase the child’s skills in the areas of cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, or adaptive development. The activities are graded and variations are provided to adapt the activity level to best fit the child’s skill level and goals.
Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play

Amber Brown, MOTS; Corey Lof, MOTS
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Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play

Knowing how to incorporate play into learning can be difficult. The purpose of this guide is to provide information about typical progression through developmental milestones and give ideas on how to engage your child in play activities that will address his or her developmental needs. The guide includes information on what factors to consider when selecting an activity, questions to ask that will assist you in matching an activity to your child’s needs, and suggestions on modifications of an activity to address different skill levels.
The Person Environment Occupation (PEO) Model was used to format the guide in order to assist you in determining which activities are most appropriate for your child. For the purpose of this guide, the term child will be used in place of person since that is who the activities have been created for. The goal of the guide is to assist you in selecting an activity that will maximize the fit between your child, the environment, and the occupation. By maximizing the fit between these aspects you will be able to increase your child’s performance.

- Child refers to the skills and abilities of your child, as well as his or her dislikes.

- Environment refers to aspects surrounding the child including the physical environment and includes things such as lighting, noise, people, or other distractions.

- The occupation focused on throughout the guide is play. It may also be referred to as activity or play activity.

(Law, Cooper, Strong, Stewart, Rigby, & Letts, 1996; Law & Dunbar, 2007)
Increased Performance

In the diagram below, the area of overlap between the child, environment, and occupation is your child’s performance. By maximizing the fit between these elements the area of overlap increases therefore increasing your child’s performance.

Factors that may enhance fit include a match between the child’s skills level and the activity, an environment without distractions, and a play activity that the child is interested in. By maximizing fit between the elements, the child’s performance is increased.

(Law et al., 1996)
**Decreased Performance**

In the diagram below, the area of overlap between the child, environment, and occupation is your child’s performance. When there is minimal fit between these elements the area of overlap is decreased therefore decreasing your child’s performance.

Factors that decrease fit include a mismatch between the child’s skills level and the activity, an environment that is too loud or distracting, and a play activity that the child does not enjoy. Due to the poor fit, the child’s performance suffers.

(Law et al., 1996)
Child Factors

As children age they gain new skills. Although all children follow a developmental progression, each child is unique and may develop his or her skills at a different age. In order to determine your child’s current level of development refer to the guidelines in each activity section. Tables are included for each area of activities with examples of skills that are typically seen with each age group (2-3 years, 3-4 years, 4-5 years, and 5-6 years). Please be aware that these are only guidelines and your child’s skills may vary from the ages listed. The progression should remain consistent with children developing skills from the younger age groups first.

Based on your child’s current level of development the tables provided can assist you in determining activities that you can use to facilitate progression of his or her skills. Each activity in this guide will outline the types of skills required to complete the activity. Using the information in the tables, you can match the activity to your child’s current skills and assist further development.

Challenging your child’s skills is necessary to increase his or her abilities. If a child has been consistently demonstrating a skill, it is time to progress to the higher level. In order to determine your child’s current abilities, observe your child’s play. Match the skills observed with the skills in the tables, this is your child’s current level. Use the tables to find the skills that are next in the developmental progression and select activities that correspond to that developmental level.
Environmental Factors

Environmental factors are things in your child’s surroundings that impact his or her performance. These factors include things such as lighting, noise, and temperature. It’s important for the environmental factors to support your child’s performance. In order to determine if the surroundings are appropriate observe your child in it. If the environment is too loud, your child may not be able to focus. In this example, you would need to decrease the noise in order for your child to increase his or her performance. Examples of other issues that may impact your child’s performance in a certain environment include things such as too many people (i.e. siblings interrupting or playing another game near the child), or poor lighting for the activity.
Occupational Factors

Occupational factors vary with each activity and include the skills your child needs for each activity he or she engages in. Play is the primary occupation for children so this guide focuses on play activities that can be used to increase your child’s developmental skills. Each activity in the guide lists specific skills your child will need to complete the activity.
Areas of Development

The guide focuses on five areas of development and uses the occupation of play to address each. These areas include cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, and adaptive development.

Cognitive development refers to the development and growth of your child’s intellectual and mental abilities. Thinking, reasoning, and understanding are all included within this category. In addition, cognitive skills include cause-and-effect, spatial relations, problem solving, imitation, memory, numbers and counting, classification, and attention (California Department of Education, 2016).

Gross motor development includes skills that incorporate the whole body. Balance, proprioception, bilateral integration, and coordination are all included in this area. Gross motor skills allow a child to explore his or her environment (Case-Smith, Clark, & Schlabach, 2013). Examples of gross motor skills are walking, kicking, sitting up, and standing.

Fine motor development refers to skills associated with small precise movements of the hands. Categories of fine motor development include finger isolation, touch, grasp, pinch, and manipulation (Case-Smith, 2006). Examples would be writing, drawing, feeding, and brushing teeth. Essentially, anything that requires use of your hands would fall into this category.

Social-emotional development focuses on experiences, management of emotions, as well as building and maintaining relationships. The emotional aspect requires your child to identify his or her emotions, regulate those emotions, and express emotions appropriately. The social aspect refers to the child’s ability to interact with others (California Department of Education, 2016).

Adaptive development is the progression of your child learning to care for his or herself (Duncan & Bishop, 2015). All skills that enhance a child’s independence fall into this category. Things addressed in this area are self-care (dressing, feeding, grooming, etc.), personal-social responsibility, and adjusting to new social situations.
Before Selecting an Activity

Consider:

- Child Factors
  - Your child’s current skills and abilities
  - Your child’s likes and dislikes

- Environmental Factors
  - General area where your child will complete the activity
  - Look at things like lighting, noise, people, or other distractions that might be present

- Occupation (Activity) Factors
  - Type of activity child is engaging in
  - Skills your child needs to complete the activity
Ask yourself:

- What motivates my child?
  - This could be certain characters, animals, themes, etc.

- Why type of help does my child need?
  - Does my child need verbal prompting to complete a task?
  - Can my child follow instructions?
  - Do I need to physically guide my child’s hand to help him or her with activities?
  - Can my child imitate my actions?

- What is most challenging for my child?
  - Which aspects of the activity does my child need the most assistance with?
  - Are there any parts of the activity that my child is unable to do with or without assistance?

- What environment is best for my child?
  - Does my child like to play with others or alone?
  - Does my child need it quiet to focus?
  - Is my child easily distracted by noise or other people?

- What types of play does my child enjoy?
  - Does my child like games that are rough and physical?
  - Does my child prefer table top activities?
  - Does my child like to interact with others during play?
  - Does my child enjoy activities that make him or her think?

Answering these questions will help you in selecting an appropriate activity. For each activity, try to find a way to incorporate your child’s interests. This will help to keep your child engaged. Identifying what type of environment your child does best in will assist with your child to focus and pay attention during the activity. Lastly, by determining the type of help and the areas that are most challenging for your child, you can decide where to start.
Cognitive Development Activities
Cognitive Development Skills

Cause and Effect
- Understand the impact of actions
- Relationship between events and consequences

Spatial Relationships
- Relationships between people, objects, and space around them

Problem Solving
- Finding solutions for present problems
  - Use trial and error
  - Act on objects
  - Observation and imitation of others
  - Apply already learned knowledge to new situation

Imitation
- Mirroring behavior and actions of others

Memory
- Ability to remember and recall information

Numbers and Counting
- Able to differentiate between numbers
- Understands relationship between numbers

Classification
- Ability to group, sort, or categorize objects
- Can recognize similarities and differences of objects

Attention
- Ability to maintain concentration on certain task
- Can remain focused with distractions present

(California Department of Education, 2016)
Guidelines for Typical Cognitive Development

Ages 2-3
- Enjoys in playing dress up and wearing costumes
- Plays make believe with toys, animals, and people
- Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces
- Understands the concept of “two”
- Is able to match pictures
- Can sort shapes and colors
- Is able to work toys with moving parts
- Is able to copy a circle

Ages 3-4
- Incorporates imaginary objects into play
- Understands the idea of counting
- Is able to name some colors and some numbers
- Remembers parts of stories
- Can understand the concepts “same” and “different”
- Is able to draw a person with 3-4 body parts
- Plays board or card games
- Has dolls or action figures interact with other toys or carry out roles
- Sorts and categorizes objects and toys
- Displays a sense of humor

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Guidelines for Typical Cognitive Development

Ages 4-5
- Is able to understand rules of a game
- Remembers rules (may need a few reminders)
- Makes up stories and role plays them with others
- Can participate in planning of play activities
- Participates in cooperative play with 2 or 3 others
- Has started abstract problem solving
- Can count 10 or more objects
- Is able to draw a person with 6 or more body parts
- Copies shapes (triangle, circle, square, etc.)
- Knows about everyday items (money, food, etc.)
- Can print some numbers or letters
- Completes up to 10 piece puzzles

Ages 5-6
- Is able to reason through simple problems
- Play is based more on real life than imaginary world
- Participates in organized games
- Is able to use complex scripts during play
- Can imitate others actions at a later time
- Is able to sort objects in more than one way

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Puzzles
Puzzles

Primary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention

Secondary Skills

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability

Adaptive
- Self- sufficiency
Puzzles
Age 2-3

Cognitive Skills
- Able to sort shapes & colors
- Does puzzles with 3-4 pieces
- Is able to match pictures

Activities
- Use non-interlocking puzzles with few pieces
- Shape Sorters
Puzzles
Age 3-4

Cognitive Skills
- Child is able to categorize and sort objects

Activities
- Use non-interlocking puzzles with more pieces
- Block puzzles with few pieces
- Puzzle with images as reference or underlying image to copy
Puzzles
Age 4-5

Cognitive Skills
• Begins abstract problem solving
• Can complete puzzles up to 10 pieces

Activities
• Interlocking puzzles with few pieces (without underlying image)
• Letter and image 2 piece puzzles
Puzzles
Age 5-6

Cognitive Skills
- Sorts objects in different ways
- Copies elaborate structures

Activities
- Block puzzles with multiple images
- Interlocking puzzle with increased number of pieces
Puzzles
Variations & Adaptations

• Homemade Box Puzzles
  o Use a cereal box and cut front image into pieces
  o Base number of pieces on skill level of your child
  o Could also use a picture from a magazine and glue to cardboard prior to cutting out pieces

(https://drjeanandfriends.blogspot.com/2013/04/box-tops-rock.html)

• Homemade Face Puzzles
  o From construction paper cut out eyes, nose, and mouth
  o Use paper plate or construction paper for background
  o Can draw face and have child match construction pieces to correct spot
  o To make more challenging only draw on hair/ears and have child place eyes, nose, and mouth using drawn on images as reference.

(https://terrific2s.blogspot.com/2011/11/all-about-me-preschool-ideas-for-two.html?m=1)
• Homemade Shape Puzzles
  o Use small items from around the house
  o Arrange items onto blank sheet of paper
  o Trace around the design to create an outline
  o Can create multiple by rearranging pieces
  o Have child match items to outline
  o Difficulty can be adjusted based on items and arrangement
    ▪ Can use a variety of items

(http://www.cbc.ca/parents/play/view/play_date_idea_homemade_shape_puzzle)

▪ Use small blocks or Legos and create design

(http://www.pleasantestthing.com/color-block-puzzles)
Matching & Memory Games
Matching & Memory Games

Primary Skills

Cognitive
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention
- Numbers and Counting

Secondary Skills

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability
- Interaction with Others

Adaptive
- Self-sufficiency
Matching & Memory Games
Ages 2-3

Cognitive Skills
- Is able to match pictures
- Understands the concept of “two”

Activities
- Matching Game
  - Use cards with images printed on (2 of each image)
  - Place the cards face up and have child find the cards with the same image
- Shape Sorters

(http://www.sunnydayfamily.com/2015/05/dog-memory-game.html)
Matching & Memory Games

Ages 3-4

Cognitive Skills

- Can understand the concepts of “same” and “different”
- Sorts and categorizes objects and toys

Activities

- Memory Game
  - Use cards with images (2 of each)
  - Place cards face down and have child find matches by flipping over 2 at a time
  - If a match is found, remove the pair
  - If the pair does not match turn face down again and repeat steps
  - Continue until all pairs are matched

- Match Image to Object
  - Present child with both objects and a matching picture of the object
  - Have child find the pairs

- Sort by Colors
  - Use pompoms, cubes, or other small objects of different colors
  - Have the child sort the items into containers or onto sheets of paper of the same color

([http://www.howwemontessori.com/how-we-montessori/2013/04/montessori-has-no-limits-.html](http://www.howwemontessori.com/how-we-montessori/2013/04/montessori-has-no-limits-.html))

Matching & Memory Games
Ages 3-4

- Sort in Multiple Ways
  - Use pre-cut shapes of varying sizes
  - Have child sort based on shape and arrange in order from biggest to smallest

[Image: powerfulmothering.com]
Matching & Memory Games
Ages 4-5

Cognitive Skills
- Understands rules of a game
- Participates in cooperative play with others
- Has started abstract problem solving

Activities
- Matching Image to Silhouette
  - Create card set that has one card with picture and second card with same image as a silhouette.
  - Ask child to create pairs from the cards presented

- Recreate Patterns
  - Line up a few small toys
  - Rearrange
  - Have child put them back in the correct order
Matching & Memory Games
Ages 4-5

- Hat Matching Game
  - Free printable cards at powerfulmothering.com
  - Have child match the hat to the correct person
Matching & Memory Games

Ages 5-6

Cognitive Skills

- Is able to reason through simple problems
- Can sort objects in more than one way

Activities

- Sort Objects by Use
  - Provide child with images or actual objects and have them categorize
  - i.e. give the child images of soap, towel, pot, spoon, toothbrush, and glass using these images have the child pick out the ones that belong in the kitchen and the ones that belong in the bathroom

- Match number of Items to Number
  - Write out numbers on large pieces of paper
  - Provide small objects (i.e. buttons, Legos, foam cubes, goldfish, crackers, etc.)
  - Have the child place the correct number on each mat

(http://www.aussiedeafkids.org.au/activities-for-home.html)
Matching & Memory Games
Ages 5-6

- Match Upper and Lower Case Letters
  - Cut out paper squares, writing upper case on one and lower case on the other
    ![Letter Matching](http://whereimaginationgrows.com/glow-in-the-dark-letter-matching/)
  - Can use old plastic eggs and write upper case on half and lower case on other half to make it more of a game
    ![Egg Matching](http://rubsoimedirtblog.com/2011/05/same-old-eggs-new-twist/)
Matching & Memory Games
Variations & Adaptations

- Make Your Own Matching Game
  - Incorporate matching games into everyday activities
  - Have your child help you match pairs of socks, sort silverware, or find a lid for a container
  - Use a timer or have them compete with you or a sibling to make it more fun!

- At Home Memory Games
  - Test your child’s memory during daily activities
  - Ask them where you keep their favorite toy or where you put their favorite snack
  - Any activity that requires them to recall information can be used
General Cognitive Development Activities
General Cognitive Development Activities

Primary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention
- Numbers and Counting
- Cause and Effect

Secondary Skills

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation
- Grasp

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability

Adaptive
- Self- sufficiency
General Cognitive Development Activities

Ages 2-3

Cognitive Skills

- Is able to match pictures
- Can sort shapes and colors
- Engages in imaginative play
- Can follow 1-2 step directions

Activities

- Verbal Yes or No
  - Ask the child questions about objects in their environment.
    - Is the sky blue?
    - Are your shoes pink?

- Sorting
  - Select several of the child’s toys and place in front of him or her
  - Ask them to bring you the ones that are a certain shape (circle, square, etc.) or color (red, blue, green, etc.)

- Singing Games
  - Head, shoulders, knees, and toes – helps children learn body parts
  - Old MacDonald – great for learning animal noises
  - Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear turn around – following directions
General Cognitive Development Activities
Ages 3-4

Cognitive Skills
• Sorts and categorizes objects and toys
• Incorporates imaginary objects into play
• Can follow 2 step directions

Activities
• Hide and Seek
  o Take turns hiding and counting

• I spy
  o Pick out an object visible to the child and give simple clues to help the child identify it
  o i.e. I spy something green...

• Sorting Laundry by Owner
  o Pile for their clothes, pile for mom’s clothes, pile for dad’s, etc...
  o Make it into a game by splitting up the clothes, whoever sorts their pile first wins!

• Putting Away Groceries
  o Where does it go? Cupboard, refrigerator, or freezer?
  o Make it a game by giving each child a bag, whoever puts away their items first wins!
  o You could also use a timer and see how fast they can put away each bag
General Cognitive Development Activities
Ages 4-5

Cognitive Skills
- Is able to understand rules of a game
- Remembers rules (may need a few reminders)
- Can participate in planning activities
- Participates in cooperative play with others
- Has started abstract problem solving
- Can follow 3 step directions

Activities
- Simon Says
  - Give child directions such as pat your head, jump up and down, etc.
  - Child is only to complete actions that follow “Simon says”
  - Take turns and let the child be the leader

- Name that Picture
  - Take turns drawing pictures and having others guess what is being drawn

- Tic Tac Toe
  - Draw a board and take turns filling in Xs and Os, the first with 3 in a row wins!
  - You could also use small objects (M&Ms, Tic Tacs, buttons, etc.)

(http://thenymelrosefamily.com/2013/02/30-valentine-gift-ideas.html)
General Cognitive Development Activities
Ages 5-6

Cognitive Skills
- Is able to reason through simple problems
- Participates in organized games
- Can imitate others' actions at a later time
- Can sort objects in more than one way

Activities
- Patterns
  - Use small items (bead, Froot Loops, etc.) to start a pattern and have child complete
  - Draw patterns out on piece of paper and have child recreate objects
• Color by Number Pages

General Cognitive Development Activities
Variations & Adaptations

- Change Number of Items Available
  - Increasing the number of items increases difficulty as child must determine which is appropriate
  - By only providing materials needed, the activity is easier

- Adjust Number of Instructions
  - To make activity easier give instructions one at a time
  - Giving more than one direction is more difficult for your child since he or she than needs to remember the correct order to complete the activity
Gross Motor Development Activities
Gross Motor Development Skills

Balance
- Ability to maintain stability when moving

Proprioception
- Sense of overall body position
- Awareness of body in space

Bilateral Integration
- Ability to use both hands together

Coordination
- Ability to make smooth and purposeful movements
Guidelines for Typical Gross Motor Development

Ages 2-3
- Able to ride a tricycle
- Ability to catch large ball against body/chest with arms extended
- Jumps from small heights, such as a step
- Beginning to hop on one foot
- Makes messes
- Can easily climb things
- Runs easily
- Stand on tiptoes
- Can kick a ball

Ages 3-4
- Able to jump, climb, and run
- Starting to learn how to skip and hop
- Rides tricycle
- Can stand on one foot briefly, about 2 seconds
- Alternates feet while walking up stairs
- Jumps from a step with two feet
- Enjoys rough and tumble play, physical play
- Likes to swing, slide, jump, and run
- Can throw a ball
- Can catch a bounced ball, most of the time

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Guidelines for Typical Gross Motor Development

Ages 4-5
- Able to jump off of high steps; jumps forward
- Can throw a ball
- Hop 4-6 times in a row
- Climbs on playground equipment, is able to swing from arms or legs
- Throws ball directed at a target
- Skips for long distances
- Walks up and down stairs reciprocally
- Can do somersault
- Swings and climbs

Ages 5-6
- Hops well for long distances
- Able to maintain balance while skipping
- Catches balls with two hands
- Accurately kick a ball at a target
- Can stand on one foot for 8 to 10 seconds

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Obstacle Course
Obstacle Course

Primary Skills

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Attention
- Numbers & Counting

Fine Motor
- Grasp
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability

Adaptive
- Self- sufficiency
Obstacle Course

Create an obstacle course by combining 3 or more activities. Refer to age groups for appropriate developmental skills to incorporate. Can also include skills from younger age groups to add length and work on your child’s endurance and other gross motor skills.

Equipment Ideas:

- Cones
- Hula hoops
- Balance beams
- Couch cushions
- Broomsticks
- Chairs
- Tape
- Bean bags
- Boxes
- Blocks
- Trampoline
- Slides
- Mats
- Balloons
- Bed sheets/blankets
- Laundry baskets
Obstacle Course
Age 2-3

Gross Motor Skills
- Jumps from small heights, such as a step
- Beginning to hop on one foot
- Can easily climb things
- Runs easily
- Stand on tiptoes

Activities
- Use 2-3 Obstacles
- Demonstrate if Needed
- Create a Course that Focuses on
  - Jumping from lower heights
    - off a small step or sturdy crate
  - Running
    - around cones, between objects
    (http://www.howtorunahomedaycare.com/articles/indoor-obstacle-course-for-all-ages/)
  - Hopping on one foot
    - inside of a hula hoop or hop from one object to another
  - Standing on one foot
    - Time, alternate feet
- Crawling
  - under tables, chairs, through boxes, bed sheets/blankets draped across tables or chairs, etc.
- Log rolling (short distances)
- Balance
  - Create a “tape path” throughout your home and have your child follow the path over, under and on to the different obstacles

(https://www.pinterest.com/pin/53058101834638624/)
Obstacle Course
Age 3-4

Gross Motor Skills
- Able to jump, climb, and run
- Starting to learn how to skip and hop
- Can stand on one foot briefly, about 2 seconds
- Jumps from a step with two feet
- Enjoys rough and tumble play, physical play
- Likes to swing, slide, jump, and run

Activities
- Use 3-4 Obstacles
- Demonstrate if Needed
- Create a Course that Focuses on
  - Balance
    - Walk or run on couch cushions
  - Jumping
    - From low heights
    - Hop over cones
  - Kicking
    - Ball into a net, balloon a certain distance, etc.
Obstacle Course

Age 4-5

Gross Motor Skills

- Able to jump off of high steps; jumps forward
- Can throw a ball
- Hop 4-6 times in a row
- Climbs on playground equipment, is able to swing from arms or legs
- Throws ball directed at a target
- Skips for long distances
- Can do somersault
- Swings and climbs

Activities

- Use 4-5 Obstacles
- Create a Course that Focuses on
  - Balance
    - Walk or run on couch cushions
    - Use a pool noodle as a “balance beam”
  - Jumping
    - Use couch cushions, tape Xs, etc. for targets and jump from one to the next
    - Jumping Jacks
    - Jump over cones, hula hoops, etc.
  - Throwing
    - Throw a ball or bean bags at a target or into a container
  - Crawling
    - Create a tape maze by hanging tape from wall to wall in a hallway

(https://starfishtherapies.wordpress.com/2012/03/07/3-d-masking-tape-maze/)
Obstacle Course
Age 5-6

Gross Motor Skills
- Hops well for long distances
- Able to maintain balance while skipping
- Catches balls with two hands
- Accurately kick a ball at a target
- Can stand on one foot for 8 to 10 seconds

Activities
- Use 4-5 Obstacles
- Create a Course that Focuses on
  - Coordination
    - Instead of running have your child skip, bear crawl, crab walk, or hop
    - String tape, streamer, or string to create an obstacle to weave through
  - Balance
    - Alternate feet when hopping
    - Crawl over and under hurdles
  - Throwing
    - Throw a ball or bean bags at a target or into a container
  - Kicking
    - Kick a ball at a target or into a box or net
Obstacle Course
Variations & Adaptations

• Use Household Items
  o Use plastic cups instead of cones
  o Substitute tape for rope
  o Furniture can be used for climbing

• Add Music
  o Adding music can help motivate your child

• Obstacle Course Construction
  o Have your child assist you in creating the obstacles
  o Moving objects to use in course challenges his or her gross motor skills

• Change Scenery
  o Can be created indoors or outdoors
  o Incorporate things in the environment
Jumping & Jumping Rope
Jumping & Jumping Rope

Primary Skills

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Attention

Fine Motor
- Grasp
- Manipulation

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability
- Interaction with Others

Adaptive
- Self-sufficiency
Jumping & Jumping Rope
Age 2-3

Gross Motor Skills
- Jumps from small heights, such as a step
- Beginning to hop on one foot

Activities
- Bunny Hops
  - Lay jump rope on the ground in a straight line
  - Hop back and forth over the rope
- Circle Hops
  - Place jump rope on the ground in a circle
  - Hop in and out of the circle with two feet
Jumping & Jumping Rope

Age 3-4

Gross Motor Skills

- Able to jump, climb, and run
- Starting to learn how to skip and hop
- Jumps from a step with two feet
- Likes to swing, slide, jump, and run

Activities

- Big Bunny Hops
  - Have two people hold jump rope in a line slightly off the ground
  - Hop back and forth over the rope
  - If there are multiple people playing you can make it into a game and if you touch the rope you’re out!

- Helicopter
  - You or an older child holds one end of the rope and spins it in a circle on the ground
  - Your child should stand in the path of the rope and jump over every time it comes around
  - You can provide “jump” as a cue if needed
  - As a group you can make it into a game, if you get caught by the rope you’re out!
Jumping & Jumping Rope

Age 4-5

Gross Motor Skills

- Able to jump off of high steps; jumps forward
- Hop 4-6 times in a row

Activities

- Snake Jumps
  - Use a long jump rope a lay it on the ground to look like a snake
  - Hop in between the rope from one end to the other
  - See how many jumps he or she can do at once!

- Hopping on One-Foot
  - Place rope on the floor in a straight line
  - Practice hopping on one foot back and forth over the rope
  - Can alternate feet or do a certain number of hops on one foot before switching sides

- Big Hops on One-Foot
  - Have two people hold jump rope in a line slightly off the ground
  - Hop back and forth over the rope
  - Can raise the rope to make it more of a challenge
  - If there are multiple people playing you can make into a game and if you touch the rope you’re out!

- Ski Jumps
  - Lay the jump rope in a straight line on the ground
  - Jump from side to side over the rope using both feet
  - Can have them jump faster or raise the rope off the ground to make it more challenging
Jumping & Jumping Rope
Age 5-6

Gross Motor Skills
- Hops well for long distances
- Able to maintain balance while skipping
- Can stand on one foot for 8 to 10 seconds
- Can jump from higher surfaces

Activities
- Running Jumps
  - Have your child practice running in while jumping rope

- Reverse It
  - While your child is jumping have them reverse the direction of the rope
  - Can call out “reverse” or have them switch after a certain number of jumps

- One-Foot Jump Rope
  - Have your child practice jumping rope while hopping on one foot
  - Can alternate feet when you tell them to “switch” or after a certain number of hops
Jumping & Jumping Rope
Variations & Adaptations

- Adjust Speed
  - Increasing the speed will increase the challenge
  - Slowing the rope down will allow your child more time to respond

- Adjust Height
  - Having the rope on the ground is the easiest level for your child
  - As you raise it off the ground, the difficulty of the task increases

- Jump Rope Substitutes
  - For any activities where the jump rope is on the ground you can substitute tape on the floor instead
  - Chalk could also be used to drawn lines or boxes to jump over
General Gross Motor Development Activities
General Gross Motor Development Activities

Primary Skills

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention

Fine Motor
- Grasp
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability
- Interaction with Others

Adaptive
- Self-sufficiency
General Gross Motor Development Activities

Age 2-3

Gross Motor Skills

- Able to ride a tricycle
- Ability to catch large ball against body/chest with arms extended
- Jumps from small heights, such as a step
- Beginning to hop on one foot
- Can easily climb things
- Runs easily
- Stand on tiptoes
- Can kick a ball

Activities

- Kicking a Ball
  - Use a large ball to practice kicking back and forth
  - Can also kick at a target or into a net

- Playing Catch
  - Use a large ball to practice catching with your child
  - Under hand toss, bounce, or roll it to them
  - Have him or her throw it back

- Block Tower
  - Help your child build a tower or pyramid of blocks
  - Can kick over the tower and rebuild it
General Gross Motor Development Activities

Age 3-4

Gross Motor Skills

- Able to jump, climb, and run
- Starting to learn how to skip and hop
- Rides tricycle
- Can stand on one foot briefly, about 2 seconds
- Alternates feet while walking up stairs
- Jumps from a step with two feet
- Enjoys rough and tumble play, physical play
- Likes to swing, slide, jump, and run
- Can throw a ball
- Can catch a bounced ball, most of the time

Activities

- Bean Bag Toss
  - Can use different colored bean bags and match them to correct container
  - Provide matching containers for each bean bag color
  - Place the containers away from your child (the farther away, the more difficult)
  - Have your child practice matching the bean bags to the correct color

- Bubble wrap
  - Place bubble wrap on a hard surface
  - Run, jump, or roll over the bubble wrap and make it pop!
• Animal Walks
  o Cut out pictures or draw pictures of animals on one side of the card
  o Place the animals face down on the floor or table and mix them up
  o Have your child pick up a card and act out that animal
  o Take turns until you have picked and acted out all the animals
    ▪ Crab – Started seated, push up on arms and legs, walk forward and backward while keeping your bottom off the ground
    ▪ Bear – walk on all fours, keeping arms and legs fairly straight with bottom up in the air
    ▪ Inch Worm – Start out standing, reach down to the floor, walk hands out into push up position, finally walk your feet in and stand back up
    ▪ Snake – Lay on stomach and “slither” using arms slightly
    ▪ Frog – place hands on the floor to start, jump forward bringing arms and legs off the floor
    ▪ Monkey – Bend over at the waist with hands touching the floor, walk forward
    ▪ Elephant – clasp hands together for the trunk, swing them back and forth while bending forward
    ▪ Bunny – with feet together, jump
General Gross Motor Development Activities

**Age 4-5**

**Gross Motor Skills**
- Able to jump off of high steps; jumps forward
- Can throw a ball
- Hop 4-6 times in a row
- Climbs on playground equipment, is able to swing from arms or legs
- Throws ball directed at a target
- Skips for long distances
- Walks up and down stairs reciprocally
- Can do somersault
- Swings and climbs

**Activities**
- Hop scotch
  - Use chalk or tape to create a hop scotch course
- Bowling
  - Set up bowling pins or water bottles across for your child
  - If using water bottles, you can adjust amount of water to adjust difficulty
  - Have your child roll the ball to try to knock all the pins down

![Image of bowling pins](http://ilovemarysmakings.blogspot.com/2011/07/backyard-bowling.html)
General Gross Motor Development Activities

Age 5-6

Gross Motor Skills

- Hops well for long distances
- Able to maintain balance while skipping
- Catches balls with two hands
- Accurately kick a ball at a target
- Can stand on one foot for 8 to 10 seconds

Activities

- Balloon Tennis
  - Blow up a balloon and use that as a “tennis ball”
  - Use fly swatters or glue popsicle sticks to paper plates for rackets
  - Use string or tape to create a net
  - Have your child stand on one side and your or another child on the other
  - Take turns hitting the balloon back and forth over the net

- Pool Noodle Baseball Batting
  - Using a pool noodle, have your child practice swinging at either a balloon or ball
  - Take turns tossing the ball (the pitcher) and hitting the ball (the batter)

[http://www.supermommy.com.sg/haze-indoor-activities-for-kids/]
• Beach Ball Activity Toss
  o Write gross motor activities on a beach ball (i.e. jump up and down 10 times, Hop like a frog 5 times, Spin in a circle)
  o Toss the beach ball to your child.
  o Have your child perform the task under their hand
  o If both hands land on one, they can choose
  o They can either toss the ball to themselves, or you can toss the beach ball back and forth while taking turns acting out the action
General Gross Motor Development Activities  
Variations & Adaptations

- Increase Activity Length  
  - By increasing number of repetitions or length of task, your child will build up endurance

- Change Ball Size  
  - By increasing the size of ball used, you decrease the difficulty  
  - Using a smaller ball will increase the difficulty level of the activity
Fine Motor Development Activities
Fine Motor Development Skills

**Touch**
- Ability to distinguish between textures

**Grasp**
- Using entire hand to pick up and manipulate object

**Manual Manipulation**
- Ability to control object within your hand

**Pinch**
- Using two or three fingers to pick up and manipulate object

**Finger Isolation**
- Ability to use fingers independent from one another (i.e. pointing)
Guidelines for Typical Fine Motor Development

Ages 2-3
- Is able to work levers and buttons on toys
- Can accurately draw a circle
- Turns pages one at a time
- Is able to turn door handle
- Can snip with scissors
- Is able to trace forms (i.e. cross)
- Colors in large images

Ages 3-4
- Uses scissors
- Is able to copy simple shapes and some letters
- Pours and cuts with supervision, mashes own food
- Is able to color within the lines
- Can manipulate objects within the hand
- Uses mature grasp to color or draw (resembles adult grasp, no longer uses whole fist)

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Guidelines for Typical Fine Motor Development

Ages 4-5
- Is able to write some letters/numbers
- Can copy simple shapes (circle, square, triangle, etc.)
- Uses fork and spoon independently
- Is able to cut out simple shapes using scissors
- Can color within the lines
- Starts using hands together (i.e. holds paper with one hand while coloring with the other)
- Can copy own name
- Strings small beads

Ages 5-6
- Is able to cut with scissors
- Can trace more complex shapes (i.e. diamond)
- Begins to copy most letters
- Can manipulate tiny objects without dropping
- Is able to use both hands together

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Playdough
Playdough

Primary Skills

**Fine Motor**
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation
- Finger Isolation
- Grasp

Secondary Skills

**Cognitive**
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Attention

**Gross Motor**
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

**Social-Emotional**
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability

**Adaptive**
- Self- sufficiency
Playdough

Age 2-3

Fine Motor Skills

- Can snip with scissors
- Is able to work levers and buttons on toys (finger isolation)
- Is able to turn door handle (object manipulation)

Activities

- Squishes Playdough

- Use Scissor to Snip Playdough
  - Roll playdough into snakes
  - Allow child to snip off pieces

- Pulls out objects that are partially stuck in
  - Push straws, popsicle sticks, or spaghetti noodles into playdough part way and have child pull out
Playdough
Age 3-4

Fine Motor Skills
- Uses scissors
- Can manipulate objects within the hand
- Uses tripod grasp to color/draw

Activities
- Cut Outs with Cookie Cutters
  - Roll playdough out flat
  - Use cookie cutters to cut out shapes

- Create textures items around the house
  - Use buttons, silverware, pasta, pipe cleaners, straws, comb, Legos, etc.
  - Can use items independently or glue items to paper towel role or popsicle stick to make fun stamp

[http://www.playdoughandpopsicles.com/2016/02/22/12-diy-play-dough-tools-to-explore-textures/]
Playdough
Age 4-5

Fine Motor Skills
- Uses fork and spoon independently
- Is able to cut out simple shapes using scissors
- Starts using hands together (bilateral integration)
- Strings small beads

Activities
- Cut Out Shapes
  - Use utensils or scissors to cut shapes out of playdough

- Playdough Treasure Hunt
  - Hide small objects (beads, coins, etc.) in playdough and have child pull playdough apart to find hidden treasure
• Roll Out Playdough
  o Uses hands to roll playdough into snakes or balls
  o Using a rolling pin roll playdough out flat

(http://growingbookbybook.com/learning-name-playdough-puzzles/)
Playdough

Fine Motor Skills
- Can manipulate tiny objects without dropping
- Is able to use both hands together

Activities
- Play Dough Mats
  - Draw an outline of numbers, letters, shapes, faces, etc.
  - Use wax paper or laminate regular paper so playdough can be removed and used again

(https://theimaginationtree.com/2012/06/play-dough-learning-mats-for-literacy.html)

- Playdough Carving
  - Carve letters into playdough using fingers, popsicle sticks, plastic knife, etc.

(https://missmernagh.com/2011/01/10/learning-to-write-in-playdough/)
• Creates 3-D Designs
  o Builds vertical designs with popsicle sticks, toothpicks, and straws

(http://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/best-structure-building-activities-kids/)

o Provide child with googly eyes, pipe cleaners, buttons, beads, etc. and allow them to create monsters, bugs, or animals

(http://frugalfun4boys.com/2014/03/17/playdough-bugs/)
**Playdough**

Variations & Adaptations

- **Make Your Own Playdough**
  
  - **Ingredients**
    - 2 cups all-purpose flour
    - 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
    - ½ cup salt
    - 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
    - Up to 1 ½ cups boiling water
    - Food coloring (optional)
      - Mix flour, salt, cream of tartar, and oil in large mixing bowl
  
  - Add food color to boiling water (optional step)

  - Add boiling water to dry ingredients, stirring continuously (Add in increments until dough feels just right)

  - Allow to cool

  - Remove from bowl and knead vigorously for a few minutes (until no longer sticky)

  - If after several minutes, dough remains sticky add more flour (until desired consistency is reached)

*Recipe found at theimaginationtree.com*
Coloring & Drawing
Coloring & Drawing

Primary Skills

Fine Motor
- Manipulation
- Grasp

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Classification
- Attention
- Cause and Effect

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability

Adaptive
- Self-sufficiency
Coloring & Drawing
Age 2-3

**Fine Motor Skills**
- Can accurately draw a circle
- Is able to trace forms (i.e. cross)
- Colors in large images

**Activities**
- **Tracing Worksheets**
  - Create your own by drawing lines or simple shapes (i.e. circle, triangle, square)
  - To make more difficult use dashes

- **Coloring Books**
  - Use pictures with large simple images

[https://forcoloringpages.com/2055/caterpillar-coloring-pages.html]
Coloring & Drawing
Age 3-4

Fine Motor Skills
- Is able to copy simple shapes (i.e. circle, square, triangle) and some letters
- Is able to color within the lines
- Uses mature grasp to color or draw (resembles adult grasp, no longer uses whole fist)

Activities
- Copying Images
  - Draw image and have child recreate
  - Can also be done on chalk board or dry erase board

- Coloring Books
  - Use large more complex images
Coloring & Drawing
Age 2-3

Fine Motor Skills
- Is able to write some letters/numbers
- Can color within the lines
- Can copy own name

Activities
- Coloring Books
  - Use more complex images
- Replicate Name from Sample


[://structuredplay.blogspot.com/search/label/ABCs]
Coloring & Drawing
Age 5-6

Fine Motor Skills
- Can trace more complex shapes (i.e. diamond)
- Begins to copy most letters

Activities
- Tracing Worksheets
  - Create patterns or shapes using dashes or dots
    (https://www.myteachingstation.com/writing/fine-motor-skills/trace-the-pattern-bug-trail)
- Replicate Letters from Sample
Coloring & Drawing
Variations & Adaptations

• Use Different Writing Instruments
  o Crayons
    ▪ Break crayons in half to assist in development of a mature grasp
  o Markers
  o Pencils
  o Pens

• Use Different Textures to Color/Draw On
  o Paper
  o Paper Plates
  o Sand Paper
General Fine Motor Development Activities
General Fine Motor Development Activities

Primary Skills

Fine Motor
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability

Adaptive
- Self- sufficiency
General Fine Motor Development Activities

**Age 2-3**

**Fine Motor Skills**
- Is able to work levers and buttons on toys
- Turns pages one at a time
- Can turn door handles
- Is able to snip with scissors

**Activities**
- **Snipping Paper with Scissors**
  - Using scissors work on opening and closing to snip edges of paper
  - Provide strips of paper and have child cut pieces off
- **Turning Pages**
  - When reading books, allow child to turn pages
  - Have child help you lay out newspapers for art activities
  - Allow child to get their own paper out when coloring/drawing
- **Painting**
  - Allow child to finger paint and create designs
  - Can also place paint inside a bag to stay mess free
  - Bags can also be taped to wall or window to give child a vertical service to work on

![Painting Activity](http://www.buzzfeed.com/alessiasantoro/teachers-making-learning-fun-literally?utm_term=.oqM0Jx6Rw#.kjbpdWXI1)
**Discovery Bags**
- Fill large Ziploc bag with hair gel
- Add buttons, beads, stickers, or other small objects
- Let your child explore

[http://nurturestore.co.uk/sensory-bags-babies-toddlers-beyond](http://nurturestore.co.uk/sensory-bags-babies-toddlers-beyond)

**Sensory Bins**
- Fill a plastic tub with rice or beans
- Add small objects and toys
- Have your child dig and see what they can find


**Stringing Beads**
- Have child string large beads on string/shoelace

[http://danaspinkribbon.blogspot.com/2013/02/50-montessori-activities-for-2-year-olds.html](http://danaspinkribbon.blogspot.com/2013/02/50-montessori-activities-for-2-year-olds.html)
General Fine Motor Development Activities

Age 3-4

Fine Motor Skills
- Uses scissors
- Pours and cuts with supervision, mashes own food
- Can manipulate objects within the hand

Activities
- Sensory Bins
  - Fill a plastic tub with rice, beans, or sand
  - Add small objects and toys
  - Have your child dig and see what they can find
  - You can ask them to find certain items or just let them explore

- Stringing Beads
  - Can use pipe cleaner, string, or shoelace
  - Have child thread on beads, cereal (Cheerios, Froot Loops), noodles, pre-cut straw pieces
• Squirt Bottles
  o Use squirt bottles to help clean counters, windows, etc.
  o Have child try to knock bottle over a target using only water from squirt bottle
  o Can use plastic bottles, plastic cups, or ping pong balls as a target

• Building Blocks
  o Use any type of block that connects together (i.e. K’nex, Legos)
  o Allow your child to create and build
  o Have them pull apart creations when it’s time to clean up

• Mosaic Art
  o Give your child paper and have them tear it into small pieces or pre-cut paper into small pieces
  o Provide them with a large piece of paper and glue
  o Have them glue small pieces onto pre-cut layout or pre-drawn design
- **Eye Dropper Painting**
  - Provide child with eye dropper and a few cups of watercolor paint or water colored with food coloring
  - Allow child to create designs on paper, paper towels or coffee filters

- **Lacing Cards**
  - Cut shapes out of cardboard (i.e. cereal box) or foam
  - Use a hole punch to punch holes along the outer edge
  - Have child weave shoe lace through holes
General Fine Motor Development Activities

Age 4-5

Fine Motor Skills
- Uses fork and spoon independently
- Is able to cut out simple shapes using scissors
- Starts using hands together
- Strings small beads

Activities
- Lid Matching
  - Collect a variety of containers
  - Remove lids
  - Have child match lid to correct container and put lid on

- Mosaic Art
  - Give your child paper and have them cut it into small pieces
  - Provide them with a large piece of paper
  - Have them glue small pieces to create a design
• Sensory Bins
  o Fill a plastic tub with rice, beans, or sand
  o Add small objects and toys
  o Have your child use a tweezers or tongs to get objects out
  o You can ask them to find certain items or just let them explore


• Cotton Ball Painting
  o Provide child with paint, clothes pins, and cotton balls
  o Have them use a clothes pin to pick up a cotton ball
  o With cotton ball pinched in clothes pin, dip into paint
  o They can create their own design or you can provide them with coloring book image to fill in

![Cotton Ball Painting Image](http://www.shelnows.com/parenting/articles/1085738/activities-that-keep-toddlers-engaged?utm_source=AMPH&utm_medium=SI&utm_campaign=6073361)

• Sticker Designs
  o Pre-draw a design on paper or have child draw large shape
  o Provide small stickers
  o Have child peel stickers off and place along outline of design

![Sticker Designs Image](http://handsonaswegrow.com/fine-motor-skills-activities/)
General Fine Motor Development Activities

Age 5-6

Fine Motor Skills

- Is able to cut with scissors
- Can manipulate objects without dropping
- Uses both hands together

Activities

- Paper Chains
  - Draw lines along paper
  - Have child cut along lines to cut strips
  - Using a small dot of glue have child secure strip into circle
  - Have child thread next strip through one of the end circles
  - Continue repeating above steps to create chain

- Paper Weaving
  - Using two different color pieces of paper
  - Cut slits evenly along the paper (easiest to fold paper in half and cut, be careful not to cut all the way through)
  - Cut the second piece into even strips (same width as slits in first page)
  - Start weaving the paper strips over and under the slits of the whole page
  - Keep the paper in place by securing with tape or glue
• Construction Paper Faces
  o Provide colored paper for child
  o Allow them to cut out shapes for eyes, nose, mouth, hair, etc.
  o Have them glue pieces in correct position on larger piece of paper
  o Can add details with markers, crayons, etc.


• Yarn Weaving
  o Cut notches/slits around edges of paper plate or pre-cut cardboard shape
  o Provide child with yarn (can use one or multiple colors)
  o Show them how to crisscross between notches
  o Have them create their own design

  [http://www.walkingbytheway.com/blog/what-a-tangled-web-we-weave/]
General Fine Motor Development Activities
Variations & Adaptations

• Change Size of Pieces
  o Increasing size of items will make the activity easier
  o Using smaller items make the activities more difficult

• Adjust Resistance
  o Increasing resistance will make it harder for your child
  o Decreasing resistance will make it easier for your child
Social-Emotional Development Activities
Social-Emotional Development Skills

**Recognition of Ability**
- Knowledge on their abilities
- Understanding they can make things happen

**Self-Awareness**
- Know their own preferences
- Distinguish themselves from others

**Expression of Emotion**
- Use of facial expressions, words, and body language to express their feelings

**Emotional Regulation**
- Knowing when to express feelings

**Impulse Control**
- Voluntarily controlling behaviors such as waiting their turn, inhibiting hurtful or harmful actions, and acting appropriately for the situation

**Social Understanding**
- Ability to understand how their actions impact others
- Knowing what to expect from others

**Interaction with Others**
- Respond and engage with those around them

(California Department of Education, 2016)
Guidelines for Typical Social-Emotional Development

Ages 2-3

- Participates in cooperative play at times, such as taking turns occasionally
- Interested in peers and likes to have companions
- Begins cooperative play and playing in small groups
- Is shy with strangers, especially strange adults
- Tends to be possessive of family members and loved ones
- Seeking and accepting assistance when encountering difficulty
- Wanting to do favorite activities over and over
- Separating from parent in familiar surroundings without crying
- Understanding about 500 words
- Able to say 200 words
- Speaking in 2 to 3 work sentences
- Answering and asking simple “who”, “what”, and “where” questions
- Taking turns in games
- Following simple rules
- Drawing a face from a model
- Stating whether they are a boy or girl

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Guidelines for Typical Social-Emotional Development

Ages 3-4
- Attempts challenging activities
- Group play replaces parallel play
- Prefers to play with other children
- Able to follow turn-taking in play and is aware of social aspects of conversation
- Interested in being a friend
- Prefers to have same-sex playmates
- Participates in games, drawing, art time and circle time at preschool or daycare
- Able to engage in singing and dancing in a group
- Associative play: plays with other children, sharing and talking about play goal
- Begins to show cooperative play without adult supervision
- Accepts suggestions and follows simple directions
- Responds to questions with appropriate answers
- Speaks clearly enough so that 75-80% of their speech is understandable to someone that is unfamiliar with their speech
- Can tell their own age and gender

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Guidelines for Typical Social-Emotional Development

Ages 4-5
- Enjoys clowning around
- Is able to sing whole songs
- Role plays based on roles of parents’ roles
- Role plays with other children
- Likes to participate in “dress” up
- Able to tell stories
- Continues to play pretend that involves scripts with imaginary characters
- Recognizes other’s needs and gives assistance
- Prefers playing with other children vs. playing alone
- Engages in cooperative play

Ages 5-6
- Plays in groups of 2 to 4 with organized and complex games
- Has same sex friends
- Likes to sing and dancing
- Able to reflect on meaning of words and music
- Can demonstrate understating of others’ feelings
- The goal of play is winning
- Responds verbally and positively to the good fortune of others
- Demonstrates tenderness and protectiveness toward younger children and pets
- Expresses anger with non-aggressive words rather than with physical action
- Comforts friends in distress

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Board Game
Board Game

Primary Skills

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability
- Interaction with Others

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention
- Numbers & Counting

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Adaptive
- Self-sufficiency
Board Game
Age 2-3

Social-Emotional Skills
- Participates in cooperative play at times, such as taking turns occasionally
- Begins cooperative play and playing in small groups
- Seeking and accepting assistance when encountering difficulty
- Wanting to do favorite activities over and over
- Following simple rules

Games
- Move & Groove
- Roll & Play
- Matching Game
- Connect Four

- To Select an Appropriate Game
  - Look for games with simple concepts
  - Select a game that can be played quickly to keep your child’s attention
  - Limit number of players (2-3) so wait time between turns is short
Board Game
Age 3-4

Social-Emotional Skills
- Attempts challenging activities
- Group play replaces parallel play
- Prefers to play with other children
- Able to follow turn-taking in play and is aware of social aspects of conversation
- Participates in games, drawing, art time and circle time at preschool or daycare
- Begins to show cooperative play without adult supervision
- Accepts suggestions and follows simple directions

Games
- Candyland
- UNO Moo
- Chutes and Ladders
- The Sneaky, Snacky Squirrel Game
- Don’t Spill the Beans
- Don’t Break the Ice

To Select an Appropriate Game
  - Games should have simple rules and concepts
  - Limit number of players (2-4) so child gets frequent turns
  - Allow your child to have input in selecting the game
Board Game
Age 4-5

Social-Emotional Skills
- Recognizes other’s needs and gives assistance
- Prefers playing with other children vs. playing alone
- Engages in cooperative play

Games
- UNO
- Spot It Junior
- Hungry, Hungry Hippo
- Zingo
- Pop the Pig
- What’s in Ned’s Head?

To Select an Appropriate Game
  - Games can be more complex
  - Can have more players to increase your child’s wait time between turns
  - Allow your child to have input in selecting the game
Board Game
Age 5-6

Social-Emotional Skills
- Plays in groups of 2 to 4 with organized and complex games
- Likes to sing and dancing
- Able to reflect on meaning of words and music
- Can demonstrate understating of others’ feelings
- The goal of play is winning

Activities
- Trouble
- Guess Who?
- Scrabble Junior
- Twister
- Jenga

To Select an Appropriate Game
  - Number of players can vary
  - Allow your child to have input in selecting the game
  - Can begin to incorporate asking questions, giving more complex directions, and more difficult tasks
Board Game
Variations & Adaptations

- Change it Up!
  - You can use the game pieces any way you want!
  - Examples
    - Use cards and pieces from Ned’s head to play a matching game
    - Assign activities (i.e. jumping jacks, bunny hops, etc.) to each color on the Candyland board
    - Add letters, numbers, or words to don’t break the ice and match to determine which block you must hit out
    - Add words or phrases to Jenga and act out what is on the block you take out
Activities for Identifying Emotions
Activities for Identifying Emotions

Primary Skills

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability
- Interaction with Others
- Expression of Emotion
- Social Understanding

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention
- Imitation

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Grasp
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Adaptive
- Self- sufficiency
Activities for Identifying Emotions

Age 2-3

Social-Emotional Skills
- Participates in cooperative play at times, such as taking turns occasionally
- Interested in peers and likes to have companions
- Is shy with strangers, especially strange adults
- Tends to be possessive of family members and loved ones
- Separating from parent in familiar surroundings without crying
- Understanding about 500 words
- Able to say 200 words
- Speaking in 2 to 3 work sentences
- Answering and asking simple “who”, “what”, and “where” questions

Activities
- Reading Books
  - The Feelings Book by Todd Parr
  - Happy Hippo, Angry Duck by Sandra Boynton
  - I’m a Rainbow by Dolly Parton

- Funny Faces
  - Act out an emotion for your child and have them mimic it back to you
  - Let them pick what emotions you do
Activities for Identifying Emotions

Age 3-4

Social-Emotional Skills
- Attempts challenging activities
- Group play replaces parallel play
- Prefers to play with other children
- Able to follow turn-taking in play and is aware of social aspects of conversation
- Interested in being a friend
- Begins to show cooperative play without adult supervision
- Responds to questions with appropriate answers

Activities
- Reading Books
  - The Way I Feel by Janan Cain
  - Glad Monster, Sad Monster by Ed Emberly and Anne Miranda
  - Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day by Jamie Lee Curtis

- Emotions Bingo
  - Premake emotion bingo cards putting emotions in different positions on each card
  - Select emotions randomly and have your child mark that emotion space
  - The first one to get three in a row wins!

- Sing Songs
  - If You’re Happy and You Know It
  - Can make up new verses
    - If you’re mad and you know it, stomp your feet
    - If you’re sad and you know it, say boo hoo
Activities for Identifying Emotions

Age 4-5

Social-Emotional Skills

- Recognizes other’s needs and gives assistance
- Prefers playing with other children vs. playing alone
- Engages in cooperative play

Activities

- Sorting Faces
  - Cut out or print out pictures of people expressing different emotions
  - Ask your child to sort the images by feelings

- Emotions Dice
  - Use a block or die and write an emotion on each side
  - Take turns rolling the dice
  - Make the face of the emotion you roll

- Emotions Bingo
  - Provide your child with list of emotions and have them make their own bingo cards
  - Select emotions randomly and have your child mark that emotion space
  - The first one to get three in a row wins!
Activities for Identifying Emotions

Age 5-6

Social-Emotional Skills
- Plays in groups of 2 to 4 with organized and complex games
- Likes to sing and dancing
- Able to reflect on meaning of words and music
- Can demonstrate understating of others’ feelings
- Expresses anger with non-aggressive words rather than with physical action
- Comforts friends in distress

Activities
- Feelings Charades
  - Provide your child with feelings cards
  - Take turns drawing a card and acting out that emotion
  - See if you can guess the correct emotion

- Feelings Catch
  - Use a beach ball and write a different emotion on each color
  - Toss the ball back and forth
  - Whoever catches the ball shares a time where they felt the emotion under their hand (select either right or left before starting the game)
Activities for Identifying Emotions
Variations & Adaptations

- Use Real Life Examples
  - Help your child understand his or her emotions by helping identify how they are feeling at certain times
  - Provide examples of appropriate responses to certain feelings

- Emotions Scavenger Hunt
  - When out with your child, let them observe others
  - Ask them if they see anyone who looks happy, sad, excited, etc.
  - Having them identify the feelings of others will promote social awareness and help create empathy
General Social-Emotional Development Activities
General Social-Emotional Development Activities

Primary Skills

Social-Emotional
- Emotional Regulation
- Impulse Control
- Recognition of Ability
- Interaction with Others
- Expression of Emotion
- Social Understanding

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Spatial Relationships
- Problem solving
- Memory
- Classification
- Attention

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Touch
- Pinch
- Manipulation

Adaptive
- Self-sufficiency
**General Social-Emotional Development Activities**

**Age 2-3**

**Social-Emotional Skills**
- Participates in cooperative play at times, such as taking turns occasionally
- Interested in peers and likes to have companions
- Begins cooperative play and playing in small groups
- Is shy with strangers, especially strange adults
- Tends to be possessive of family members and loved ones
- Seeking and accepting assistance when encountering difficulty
- Wanting to do favorite activities over and over
- Separating from parent in familiar surroundings without crying
- Understanding about 500 words
- Able to say 200 words
- Speaking in 2 to 3 work sentences
- Answering and asking simple “who”, “what”, and “where” questions
- Taking turns in games
- Following simple rules

**Activities**

- **Reading Books**
  - Best Behavior Series by Elizabeth Verdick
    - Voices Are Not for Yelling
    - Words Are Not for Hurting
    - Hands Are Not for Hitting

- **Crafts**
  - Allow child to work in same space as others but complete an individual project
  - Provide supplies for each child
  - Although each child can work on his or her project without interacting, you are exposing them to others which encourages social interaction later on
General Social-Emotional Development Activities

Age 3-4

Social-Emotional Skills
- Attempts challenging activities
- Group play replaces parallel play
- Prefers to play with other children
- Able to follow turn-taking in play and is aware of social aspects of conversation
- Interested in being a friend
- Participates in games, drawing, art time and circle time at preschool or daycare
- Begins to show cooperative play without adult supervision
- Accepts suggestions and follows simple directions
- Responds to questions with appropriate answers

Activities
- Activity Dice
  - Write activities on a block or die
  - Take turns rolling and completing the action
  - Another option is incorporating a second die with an animal

- Crafts
  - Allow child to work in same space as others but complete an individual project
  - Have only one glue bottle, set of markers, etc.
  - This will encourage your child to interact with peers in order to share supplies

- Reading Books
  - Llama Llama Mad at Mama by Anna Dewdney
  - Llama Llama and the Bully Goat by Anna Dewdney
  - Llama Llama Time to Share by Anna Dewdney
General Social-Emotional Development
Activities
Age 4-5

Social-Emotional Skills
- Enjoys clowning around
- Is able to sing whole songs
- Role plays based on roles of parents’ roles
- Role plays with other children
- Likes to participate in “dress” up
- Able to tell stories
- Continues to play pretend that involves scripts with imaginary characters
- Recognizes other’s needs and gives assistance
- Prefers playing with other children vs. playing alone
- Engages in cooperative play

Activities
- Crafts
  - Have your child work with you or another child and select a craft
  - Allow each person to contribute to the project
  - This will encourage interaction and group decision making

- All About Me Activity
  - Ask your child a series of questions (i.e. What’s your favorite color? What do you want to be when you grow up? Who is your best friend? etc.)
  - Write the questions and answers on pieces of paper
  - Make it into a book by stapling, gluing, or taping pages together
  - Let your child illustrate each page
General Social-Emotional Development Activities

Age 5-6

Social-Emotional Skills
- Plays in groups of 2 to 4 with organized and complex games
- Has same sex friends
- Likes to sing and dancing
- Able to reflect on meaning of words and music
- Can demonstrate understating of others’ feelings
- The goal of play is winning
- Responds verbally and positively to the good fortune of others
- Demonstrates tenderness and protectiveness toward younger children and pets
- Expresses anger with non-aggressive words rather than with physical action
- Comforts friends in distress

Activities
- Reading Books
  - Best Me I Can Be by Julia Cook
    - My Mouth Is a Volcano
    - Personal Space Camp
    - Sorry, I Forgot to Ask
    - I Just Want to Do It My Way
    - I Just Don’t Like the Sound of No

- Organized Sport or Clubs
  - Find group activities in your community for your child to be a part of
    - Sports team
    - Dance or gymnastics
    - Girl scouts or boy scouts
    - Music groups
  - These types of activities provide many different opportunities for learn social skills
    - How to be a team player
    - How to follow directions
    - Turn taking
    - Emotional regulation
General Social-Emotional Development Activities

Variations & Adaptations

- Random Acts of Kindness
  - Including your child when you do things for others helps them learn empathy and kindness
    - Write thank you cards
    - Bring a meal to an elderly neighbor
    - Donate old toys or books to younger kids
    - Bring flowers or a get well card to a sick friend or family member
    - Leave a treat for the mailman
    - Open doors for people entering the store behind you
Adaptive Development Activities
Adaptive Development Skills

Self-Care
- Ability to dress, feed, and groom his or herself
- Can express need to go to the bathroom or use toilet

Self-Sufficiency
- Ability to meet his or her own needs
- Confidence in his or her abilities

Personal-Social Responsibility
- Knowing their role in different situations

Social Adjustment
- Displaying appropriate behavior in different settings
- Adjusting to new situations
Guidelines for Typical Adaptive Development

Ages 2-3
- Able to handle fragile items carefully
- Drawn to and enjoys interesting tactile surfaces
- Likes to play with water and sand
- Demonstrates difficulty with transitions
- Takes off own shoes, socks, and some pants
- Can tell you they need to use the bathroom fairly consistently
- Can wash and dry hands
- Can brush teeth
- Unbuttoning buttons

Ages 3-4
- Wanting to be a “big girl, “big boy” and acquire new skills
- Accepting the consequences of their own actions
- Showing persistence when completing difficult tasks
- Using the toilet with some help
- Can do more difficult dressing tasks, such as buttoning, sipping, attempting to tie shoes
- Able to put on boots and mittens
- Wiping nose, unassisted
- Brushes teeth independently
- Follows routines independently and completes familiar routines

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Guidelines for Typical Adaptive Development

Ages 4-5
- Waiting in turn for adult attention
- Wiping nose independently
- Demonstrating hand dominance
- Zipping zippers
- Lacing shoes
- Dressing and undressing independently, including front fasteners
- Needs help with ties and back fasteners

Ages 5-6
- Can work alone at a chore for 20 to 30 minutes
- Pointing to and naming hip, waist, toenails, chest, eyebrows, jaw, stomach, fingernails, back, wrist and cheek
- Covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
- Bathing without assistance
- Selects clothing appropriate for temperature and occasion
- Making own bed when asked
- Being responsible for one household chores

(Case-Smith, 2010; CDC, 2016; North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2010)
Playing with Dolls
Playing with Dolls

Primary Skills

Adaptive
- Self-care
- Personal-Social Responsibility

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Problem solving
- Attention
- Cause and Effect
- Imitation
- Memory

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Manipulation
- Grasp
- Pinch

Social-Emotional
- Recognition of Ability
- Self-awareness
- Social Understanding
- Interaction with Others
- Emotional Regulation
Playing with Dolls

Age 2-3

Adaptive Skills

- Drawn to and enjoys interesting tactile surfaces
- Likes to play with water and sand
- Able to handle fragile items carefully
- Unbuttoning buttons

Activities

- Giving the Doll a Bath
  - Provide a tub of water, washcloth, and cup to rinse doll
  - Let your child wash the doll
  - May have to remove clothes from the doll if child unable to do so

- Putting the Doll to Bed
  - Provide a doll, blankets, etc.
  - Let your child put dolly through his or her bedtime routine
    - Wrap in blanket, tuck into bed, read stories, kiss good night
Playing with Dolls
Age 3-4

Adaptive Skills

- Wanting to be a “big girl, “big boy” and acquire new skills
- Showing persistence when completing difficult tasks
- Can do more difficult dressing tasks, such as buttoning, sipping, attempting to tie shoes
- Able to put on boots and mittens
- Follows routines independently and completes familiar routines

Activities

- Giving the Doll a Bath
  - Provide a tub of water, washcloth, soap, and cup to rinse the doll
  - Let your child pump soap and wash the doll
  - Allow child to dress and undress doll if able

- Changing the Doll’s Diaper
  - Provide diapers and wipes (can use real or use fabric ones instead)
  - Allow child to change doll’s diaper

(http://pinkandgreenmama.blogspot.com/2010/05/preschool-at-home-washing-baby-dolls.html#.VwqmAGrKhc)

(http://familysponge.com/create/kidsart/the-importance-of-pretend-play/)
Playing with Dolls
Age 4-5

Adaptive Skills
- Waiting in turn for adult attention
- Zipping zippers
- Lacing shoes
- Dressing and undressing independently, including front fasteners

Activities
- Changing Doll’s Clothes
  - Provide a variety of options for doll’s clothes (including clothing with zippers, buttons, etc.)
  - Allow child to select and dress doll

- Playing House with Doll
  - Allow your child to bring doll along on outings
  - Provide opportunities for your to be “mommy” or “daddy” and be responsible for feeding, bathing, dressing, and putting the doll to bed
Playing with Dolls
Age 5-6

Adaptive Skills
- Can work alone at a chore for 20 to 30 minutes
- Pointing to and naming hip, waist, toenails, chest, eyebrows, jaw, stomach, fingernails, back, wrist and cheek
- Selects clothing appropriate for temperature and occasion

Activities
- Changing Doll’s Clothes
  - Provide a variety of options for doll's clothes (including clothing with zippers, buttons, etc.)
  - Ask child to dress doll as if the doll was going to go outside
  - Allow child to select appropriate clothing based on weather outside
  - Have child dress doll

- Playing Doctor/Nurse with Doll
  - Provide your child with doll and supplies to fix the doll
    - Bandages, gauze, cotton balls, pretend doctor kit, etc.
  - Let the child play and use his or her imagination
  - Could give the child a scenario to incorporate into play

(http://www.surfandshine.com/preparing-your-toddler-for-a-new-baby/)

(http://www.sugaraunts.com/2013/02/imagination-play-teaching-body-parts-to.html)
Playing with Dolls
Variations & Adaptations

- Vary Items Available
  - Having to use other objects during pretend play increases difficulty
  - Varying the type of fasteners on clothing allows child to work on different skills

- Provide Scenarios (i.e. Dolly is hungry, Dolly is tired, Dolly is hurt, etc.)
  - Scenarios can help a child identify appropriate responses
  - Some children repeat the same actions over and over so providing them with scenarios makes them adjust their play
Cooking & Baking
Cooking & Baking

Primary Skills

Adaptive
- Self-care
- Personal-Social Responsibility
- Self-Sufficiency

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Problem solving
- Attention
- Cause and Effect
- Imitation
- Memory
- Numbers and Counting
- Classification

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Manipulation
- Grasp
- Pinch
- Finger Isolation
- Touch

Social-Emotional
- Recognition of Ability
- Self-awareness
- Social Understanding
- Interaction with Others
- Emotional Regulation
Cooking & Baking
Age 2-3

Adaptive Skills
- Able to handle fragile items carefully
- Drawn to and enjoys interesting tactile surfaces
- Likes to play with water and sand
- Can wash and dry hands

Activities
- Making Cookies
  - Find your favorite cookie recipe
  - Ask your child to get ingredients from the cupboard or fridge
  - Allow them to get out the baking utensils (i.e. measuring cups, spoons, etc.)
  - Have your child dump the pre-measured ingredients into the mixing bowl
  - Let them help you mix dry ingredients

- Kitchen Tea Party
  - Have your child find dishes, cups, and utensils to set the table
  - Allow them to pour drinks
  - Let your child get out the snack
  - If it needs to be prepared, let them help!
    - Spread peanut butter, separate cheese slices, peel banana slices, pour cereal
Cooking & Baking
Age 3-4

Adaptive Skills
- Wanting to be a “big girl, "big boy” and acquire new skills
- Accepting the consequences of their own actions
- Showing persistence when completing difficult tasks
- Follows routines independently and completes familiar routines

Activities
- Making Cookies
  - Find your favorite cookie recipe
  - Ask your child to get ingredients from the cupboard or fridge
  - Allow them to get out the baking utensils (i.e. measuring cups, spoons, etc.)
  - Have your child assist you in measuring out dry ingredients
  - Let them dump the ingredients into the mixing bowl
  - Have the child stir dry ingredients and add them to wet ingredients
  - Once dough is ready, let them scoop cookie dough onto pan

- Making Homemade Ice Cream
  - Items needed
    - Ziploc bags (1 quart or sandwich, 1 gallon)
    - ½ c. milk
    - 1 TBSP sugar
    - 1 tsp vanilla
    - 8-10 c. ice
    - 6 TBSP salt
    (Recipe from http://www.sciencekiddo.com/science-ice-cream/)
  - Have your child add pre-measure milk, vanilla, and sugar into small Ziploc bag
  - Place ice and salt into large Ziploc bag
  - Insert the small bag into the large bag, seal, and start shaking!
  - Take turns shaking the bag until it becomes a soft solid (about 5 minutes)
  - Remove the small bag and rinse off salt water
  - ENJOY!
Cooking & Baking
Age 4-5

Adaptive Skills
- Waiting in turn for adult attention
- Demonstrating hand dominance

Activities
- Making Cookies
  - Find your favorite cookie recipe
  - Ask your child to get ingredients from the cupboard or fridge
  - Allow them to get out the baking utensils (i.e. measuring cups, spoons, etc.)
  - Have your child assist you in measuring out wet and dry ingredients
  - Allow your child to attempt to crack the eggs
  - Let them dump the ingredients into the mixing bowl
  - Have the child stir or mix ingredients
  - If using a mixer, allow child to switch on and off
  - Once dough is ready, let them scoop cookie dough onto pan

- Homemade Pizza
  - If using prepackaged crust mix have child cut open package and dump into mixing bowl
  - Have child measure out water and add to mix
  - Your child can began mixing ingredients (may need assistance as dough thickens)
  - Allow your child to knead the dough
  - Have him or her assist you in rolling it out onto the pan
  - Your child can get the toppings from cupboard or fridge
  - Allow your child to spread the sauce and add other toppings
Cooking & Baking
Age 5-6

Adaptive Skills
- Can work alone at a chore for 20 to 30 minutes
- Covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
- Being responsible for one household chore

Activities
- Making Cookies
  - Find your favorite cookie recipe
  - Ask your child to get ingredients from the cupboard or fridge
  - Allow them to get out the baking utensils (i.e. measuring cups, spoons, etc.)
  - Have your child measure out wet and dry ingredients
  - Allow your child to crack the eggs
  - Let them dump the ingredients into the mixing bowl
  - Have the child stir or mix ingredients
  - If using a mixer, allow child to switch on and off
  - Once dough is ready, let them scoop cookie dough onto pan
  - Let your child set the timer for specified baking time

- Make Your Own Sandwich
  - Allow your child to decide what kind of sandwich he or she wants to have
  - Have your child get out all need items from the cupboard and fridge
  - Let your child spread peanut butter, jelly, or mayo onto the bread
  - If adding meat and cheese, let your child open the package, remove slices, and seal package
  - You can also have your child wash fruit or veggies for a health side
Cooking & Baking
Variations & Adaptations

- **Set Up**
  - In addition to getting out needed ingredients, your child can set the table or get needed utensils

- **Clean Up**
  - After completing the kitchen activity, have your child assist with clean up
    - Examples of clean-up activities include
      - Clearing the work space
      - Rinsing off or handwashing dishes
      - Loading dishes into the dishwasher
      - Putting ingredients, utensils, and other supplies away
      - Wiping of counters

- **Easy Bake Oven**
  - Allow child to bake new and fun dishes with Easy Bake oven
General Adaptive Development Activities
General Adaptive Development Activities

Primary Skills

Adaptive
- Self-care
- Personal-Social Responsibility
- Self-Sufficiency

Secondary Skills

Cognitive
- Problem solving
- Attention
- Cause and Effect
- Imitation
- Memory
- Numbers and Counting
- Classification

Gross Motor
- Proprioception
- Bilateral Integration
- Coordination
- Balance

Fine Motor
- Manipulation
- Grasp
- Pinch

Social-Emotional
- Recognition of Ability
- Self-awareness
- Social Understanding
- Interaction with Others
- Emotional Regulation
General Adaptive Development Activities

Age 2-3

Adaptive Skills

- Able to handle fragile items carefully
- Likes to play with water and sand
- Takes off own shoes, socks, and some pants
- Can tell you they need to use the bathroom fairly consistently
- Can wash and dry hands
- Can brush teeth
- Unbuttoning buttons

Activities

- Sensory Play
  - Provide a tub of water, rice, beans, etc.
  - Give them measuring cups, pitchers, spoons, cups, etc.
  - Allow your child to practice scooping and pouring

- Duplo Dentistry
  - Use shaving cream or pudding to get Legos or other small toys dirty
  - Provide your child with a tooth brush and water
  - Let them practice good brushing to get off all the gunk

- Buttons
  - Cut slits in piece of paper or fabric just slightly bigger than buttons
  - Allow child to slide buttons through slits
  - Can make it into a game by timing or taking turns

(http://www.sugaraunts.com/2015/10/teaching-kids-how-to-button-self-help-skills.html)
General Adaptive Development Activities

Age 3-4

Adaptive Skills

- Wanting to be a “big girl, "big boy” and acquire new skills
- Accepting the consequences of their own actions
- Showing persistence when completing difficult tasks
- Can do more difficult dressing tasks, such as buttoning, sipping, attempting to tie shoes
- Able to put on boots and mittens

Activities

- Dress Up
  - Provide shirts, pants, hats, etc.
  - Make sure there are a variety of fastener types including large buttons and zippers
  - Allow your child to dress up and play pretend!
  - You can even help them make items to incorporate into play (i.e. a crown for a princess, a tool belt for a carpenter, etc.)

- Reading Books
  - Behavior Series by Elizabeth Verdick
    - Noses Are Not for Picking
    - Germs Are Not for Sharing

- Tying Board
  - Create a tying board using a piece of cardboard, egg carton, or tissue box
  - Poke holes along each side
  - Have your child practice threading laces
  - Show your child how to tie and let them practice

General Adaptive Development Activities

Age 4-5

Adaptive Skills
- Waiting in turn for adult attention
- Wiping nose independently
- Demonstrating hand dominance
- Zipping zippers
- Lacing shoes
- Dressing and undressing independently, including front fasteners
- Needs help with ties and back fasteners

Activities
- Dress Up
  - Provide shirts, shoes, dresses, hats, etc.
  - Make sure there are a variety of fastener types including buttons, zippers, snaps, ties, etc.
  - Allow your child to dress up and play pretend!
  - You can even help them make items to incorporate into play (i.e. a crown for a princess, a tool belt for a carpenter, etc.)

- Clothing Sort
  - Provide a variety of clothing items or pictures of items (i.e. shorts, pants, hat, mittens, swimsuit, sweater, t-shirt, flip flops, etc.)
  - Have your child sort them by season or the conditions outside (i.e. what would you wear to go outside to build a snowman? Which items should we take to the beach?)
General Adaptive Development Activities

Age 5-6

Adaptive Skills
- Can work alone at a chore for 20 to 30 minutes
- Pointing to and naming hip, waist, toenails, chest, eyebrows, jaw, stomach, fingernails, back, wrist and cheek
- Covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
- Selects clothing appropriate for temperature and occasion
- Being responsible for one household chore

Activities
- Playing Doctor
  - Provide your child with supplies including gauze, Band-Aids, cotton balls, tongue depressors, etc.
  - Allow your child to treat your injuries, listen to your heart, check your eyes, mouth, and ears
  - If playing with multiple children, allow them to take turns being the doctor and the patient

- Reading Books
  - Responsible Me Series by Julia Cook
    - I Just Want to Do It My Way!
    - That Rule Doesn’t Apply to Me!
    - But It’s Not My Fault!
General Adaptive Development Activities
Variations & Adaptations

- Get Creative!
  - Have your child help with things around the house!
  - Allow them to help you fix things, do laundry, cook, and clean
  - Exposing your child to these tasks allows them to build needed self-care skills
References


North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (2010). ND early childhood outcomes process age expectation developmental milestones quick reference. Adapted from http://dpi.state.nd.us/speced/early.index.sthm
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this scholarly project, *Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play*, was to create a guide for parents of children with developmental delays who have received early intervention services but no longer qualify for continued services. The literature reviewed in Chapter II indicated that play is the primary occupation of a child and can be used to address developmental areas including cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, social-emotional, and adaptive. Currently, there are resources available to assist families in the transition process to early special education services; however, there are no services to assist families who do not qualify. For those families that do not qualify for services offered by the state, they might be recommended to seek outpatient therapy or community services for their child to continue to address their developmental delays. These services can be costly and many of the families do not have the funds to seek these extra services for their child. Although, children may no longer qualify for services, they would still continue to benefit from play activities to address their developmental skills. This guide was designed to provide parents with play activities in the areas of cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, social-emotional, and adaptive development. The activity suggestions are intended assist parents in engaging their child in play activities that will assist in their developmental progression. In addition to activity suggestions, the guide also includes modifications of each activity to assist the parent in creating the maximizing fit between the child and activity.
The authors’ intent for the *Parent Guide to Therapeutic Play* is to provide cost effective activities for families, while incorporating family routines. The guide also includes the child and family’s natural environment components to help meet their needs. The authors focused on creating an easy to read guide with parent friendly terminology and descriptions of key elements, as well as activity modifications to increase parent understanding.

A limitation of this guide is that it has not yet been trialed by families of children with developmental disabilities. In order to better format the guide, feedback from parents who have implemented activities suggested in the guide would be beneficial. In addition, more activity examples would provide more ideas for families in how to better incorporate play activities into daily routines.

Implementation of this guide could be done through early intervention services or by pediatric physicians. For children who are currently enrolled in early intervention services, the guide could be provided by their occupational therapist during the child’s transition process. For children who are not currently participating in early intervention services, the guide could be distributed to pediatric physicians who could provide them to families of children that display developmental delays not severe enough for them to qualify for special education services.

It is anticipated that this guide will assist families of children with developmental delays to engage their child in appropriate play activities. By including suggestions to assist parents in maximizing fit between their child, the environment, and the activity, it is the hope of the authors that the parents can increase their child’s occupational
performance. This increase in performance will assist the child in developing skills in their area of delay.

To measure the effectiveness of this guide, surveys may be distributed to families that have received and used the *Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play*. The survey could be used to determine parents’ understanding of the strategies, effectiveness of the play activities, and parental satisfaction. These results could then be used to make changes to the guide. In addition, more activities could be added to the guide to increase opportunities for play engagement.

It is anticipated that this product will create increased parent and child interactions while addressing specific areas of developmental delays, including cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, and adaptive. Early intervention facilities can begin implementing the *Parent Guide for Therapeutic Play* into their programs as the child begins to transition out. The therapists can collaborate with the families and educate them on the usefulness of the guide. Implementation of the guide will ultimately result in improved parent/child engagement in daily activities and to ease the transition process for families.
REFERENCES


North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (2010). *ND early childhood outcomes process age expectation developmental milestones quick reference.* Adapted from http://dpi.state.nd.us/speced/early.index.sthm


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