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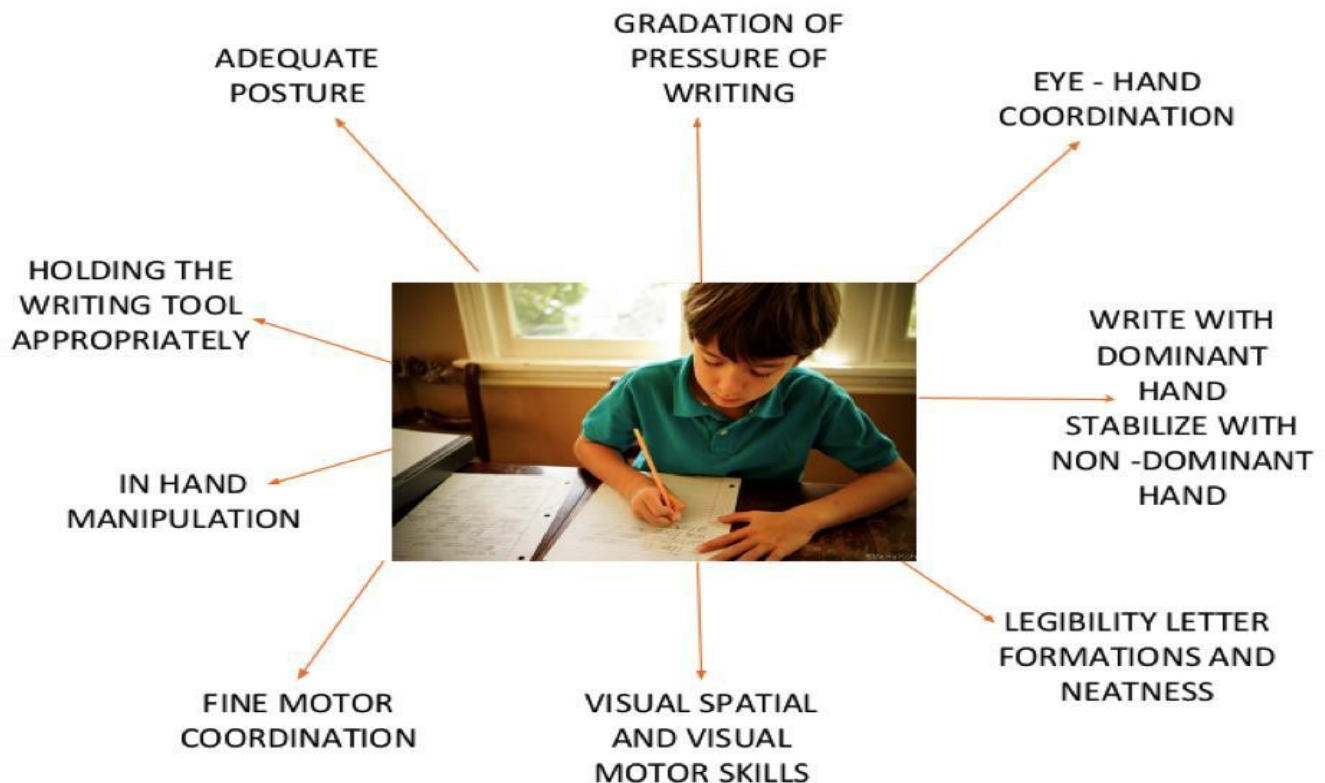
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## SEPTEMBER, 2017

### WRITING WITHOUT WRITING!

As discussed in the last month's article writing can be overwhelming, and very often children with writing difficulties detest the act of writing. To help improve their handwriting does not necessarily mean imposing them with writing every day. There are many fun ways to work on these skills.

The foundation skills for handwriting involve;



Each of these above skills need to be worked on separately as per the child's needs.

Play lots of games that improve your child's fine motor skills and in hand manipulation such as clay modeling, the paper clip game, coloring, painting with a paint brush, coin stacking, screw/unscrew nut and bolts, origami or paper folding art and craft activities, beading, twisting bottle lids, lacing etc. This will help improve his/her ability to hold the writing tool appropriately and write with adequate pressure, making your child's writing legible.



For a child to be able to efficiently copy-write, visual perceptual skills and visual motor skills (scanning, tracking, etc.) play an important role. Good visual motor skills aid in reducing the child's visual effort/strain while writing and considerably decreases the chances of letter omissions. Encourage your child to play a lot of building and construction games like Lego, puzzles, marble racer or games like mazes, word search, spot the difference, I-spy games etc. This will improve the child's visual motor and visual perceptual skills. Which will improve the child's letter formations, legibility and neatness and make his/her eye-hand coordination smoother, thereby making reading and copy writing easier.



Proximal strength and upright posture also affect a child's handwriting. Physical activities such as swimming, therapeutic wrestling, heavyweight overhead lifting, playing in jungle gyms etc. all lead to strengthening core and proximal muscle strength, which helps the child sit upright, maintain an erect posture and write for longer durations without getting tired.



Once all the foundational skills are in place, the child will be more confident while writing.

I agree that it's easier said than done and is a long, time consuming process. But it is important that we support our child through this process.

Other ways to help your child with writing are:

Providing him/her with low-pressure writing situations is beneficial, for e.g. making a list of items that we must buy from the supermarket, or keeping a track of scores while playing a game in a group, helping out by cataloguing your bookshelf

etc.

At school, request the teacher to give the child a partially completed worksheet

Simplified assignments involving less written work  
Giving the child plenty of time to write and letting

him/her take breaks along the way

Encouraging your child to learn other mediums of writing as well, such as keyboarding can be helpful

Writing is essential, but it is equally essential for children to be given their own time and pace to catch up on this skill. Remember that your child is really trying hard probably

*"Once all the foundational skills re in place, the child will be more confident in writing."*

# 5 WAYS TO TEACH YOUR CHILD TURN TAKING!

We have a number of conversations in our day, it maybe with our parents, friends, peers etc. have you ever noticed how we wait for the other person to finish their thought, idea or statement, before responding to them. It often occurs just subconsciously. Even children follow this pattern be it in the classroom such that when a teacher asks them a question most of them instantly raise their hands, and wait until they are picked to answer, or while playing in the park they need to take turns to play on all he equipments with their peers.

Turn taking is a foundational skill for the development of many other social skills such as impulse control, sharing, and discipline. It is an important skill that all children must know in order to engage with their peers/adults. Like many social skills though, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger's syndrome ADHD and social communication disorder need to be taught these skills directly as they do not develop them innately. 5 ways to teach your child effective turn taking are as follows:

## 1. Teach them the concept of waiting:

Waiting is like the flip side of turn taking. The child must learn to wait for his/her turn. What we can do, is help the child realize how waiting for his turn will definitely be rewarded, and in turn reinforce the concept of waiting. Also, it is helpful if we lay down, specifically what is expected of the child during waiting time. Using a hand fidget while playing a sitting game or a specific spot to wait at while playing a standing game can be beneficial. Hence, while teaching a child how to take turns, it is extremely important for us to teach them the concept of waiting.



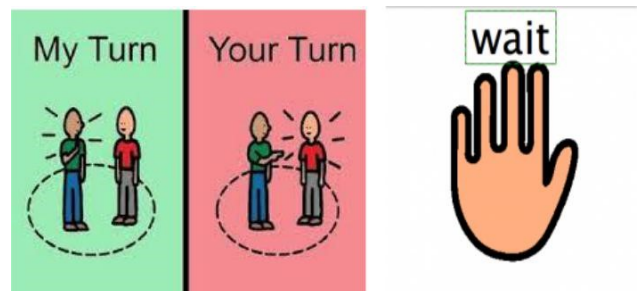
## 2. Model:

Children learn best if they are showed what to do, instead of being told. Modeling is nothing but demonstrating to the child how turn taking is important and an extremely significant skill that will help them engage with others. Show your child how a conversation with your friends is an exchange, i.e. you wait for your friend to stop talking before you speak or how you wait for the opposite player to roll the dice, move their coin and then follow in sequence, while playing a board game.

*“Turn taking is an important skill that all children must know in order to engage with their peers and adults.”*

## 3. Use Visual and Verbal cues:

For children with autism or ADHD using visual and verbal cues is extremely beneficial. Using visuals precisely depicting “your turn”, “my turn”, “wait” will help the child understand when it's his/her turn.





Use specific turn taking language while giving verbal cues. Actually using the phrases "my turn" and "your turn" on the appropriate turns so that your child will know exactly who's next. A visual spinner is another great visual cue to help with turn taking.

Using a timer is another way of reinforcing being fair and letting everyone have an equal chance to play with something since each person will receive the exact same amount of time. Furthermore, a timer acts as a visual and auditory cue for turn taking with children.

**4. Always provide Positive Reinforcement:**

Praise your children give them a sticker or a tattoo, every time they take turns appropriately. Also, be specific while you reinforce them, i.e. tell them exactly what you like, for e.g. while giving your child a star tattoo tell him/her how you were very impressed when he/she waited for his/her turn.

Make sure you convey to them that you appreciate their effort.

**5. Play games that involve turn taking:**

Provide your child with maximum opportunities to practice this skill. It can be done by playing games that involve turn taking. It is advisable to use a game that the child is fond of initially, as it will be incentive enough for him/her to wait for their turn. Eventually, playing a variety of board games or card games such as Chess, Candyland, Snake and ladders, Jenga, Twister etc. is a good way to master this skill. Playing games that can randomly switch the order of the turn part way through the game like in UNO, also aides in challenging and refining this skill.

For younger children making turn taking a part of their routine while performing their activities of daily living can be helpful. For e.g. while dressing (you wear one sock then my turn to help you wear the other) or feeding (you eat one bite then my turn to eat the next bite).

**Turn taking is a vital skill and can be taught to every child with patience and practice.**



For any question or concerns regarding the newsletter please write to us on: [reachtherapycenterforchildren@gmail.com](mailto:reachtherapycenterforchildren@gmail.com)

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