

Newsletter

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Therapeace

Therapeace is a multidisciplinary practice in Linden, Johannesburg. With this newsletter we hope to provide you with interesting articles to read, stimulating activities to use at home as well as information about upcoming courses and events. In this issue you will also find information on Tomatis listening tests.

Praxis made easy: by Millicent Roux

Take a moment to play along with me. Think about your daily routine – at home or at work. Walk yourself through a typical day starting from the moment after you are dressed and ready to go. Let's say you are leaving for work. You know the route, how long it will take, where you'll park and the door you'll enter to go inside your building. Your desk or station are all just where they were when you left yesterday. And your schedule, calendar or work is all ready for you to begin your day. Visualize how the day progresses, as you mingle with your peers, consult with your clients and take a break for lunch. All routine for the most part, correct?

Now...think about the last time you began a new job. As you open the car door to leave, you are no doubt rehearsing the travel "exits and turns" in your head, hoping you've calculated the time you'll need correctly. When you get there, you find that all of the parking spaces have a number assigned to them and that the door requires a code to enter. As you scramble to locate your new supervisor's number on your phone, someone lets you in. Now what? Where IS room 446? Of course, the fourth floor. Elevator – no problem. Locating the room number on the wall – got that. Finally, you've arrived. From here on in, however, life as you know it has changed. And you will no doubt find yourself stumbling over your own feet and getting in your own way for about a week or two.

Why is it that although we may struggle with new situations, we can quickly adapt to those that require skills similar to familiar ones? How do we transfer skills without conscious effort? And can everyone do that? This process is called Motor Planning. It is a process that begins in childhood and allows us to develop the skills we will need to learn and adapt throughout our lives.

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WE DO TALKS ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS - AND MANY MORE...

- Parenting and discipline
- Developmental Milestone and ideas to stimulate your child
- Getting ready for Grade R
- Helping my child to study
- Helping teacher to identify and assist children with difficulties

Praxis Made Easy (Cont.)

Motor Planning, simply put, is how a child plans and carries out a movement. It is also called “Praxis.” For every task, from picking up a rattle to crawling to learning to write his name, motor planning is how he uses his muscles to perform a series of movements all at the same time to produce an efficient action. It requires attention and relies upon his ability to relate old movement patterns to new, similar situations. Motor Planning itself is not simple, however. It is a complex system that allows a child to respond to the information he receives from the environment through his senses, select an appropriate response and make adaptations to his response in order to obtain the desired movement. It is not a skill; it is a process that is needed to develop a skill. Motor planning is the result of all sensory-motor experiences that a child collects during the first seven years of his life – and is the “bridge between the sensory-motor and intellectual aspects of brain function.” In fact, it has been labelled as the “highest and most complex form of functioning in children.” As we discuss the components of motor planning, you will begin to discover the reason why this is so.

Motor Planning has four components:

- Ideation (conceive or imagine a task)
- Planning (Organisation)
- Execution (Carry out the task in sequence)
- Adaptation (Feedback and reflection)



Ideation is the ability to visualise the action the child wants to take and how his body should move to do so. This happens in both similar and new situations. Ideation provides the goals for the motor action: what does he want his body to accomplish? For example, if he enters a room and sees a box of coloured spools and yarn on a table, he can generate an idea of how to use them based upon his previous experience with beads and a shoestring. If he should happen upon a box full of plastic nuts, bolts and screws but has never been exposed to the use of them, he could draw upon his past experience with beads and shoestrings and begin to stack the nuts and bolts upon the screw to create an object. The collection of past experiences is automatic. But the decision to put them into use is accomplished through his attention to the task

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SERVICES PROVIDED AT THERAPEACE

PSYCHOLOGY	SPEECH THERAPY	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	SMARTBRAIN
* Play therapy	* Language delay		* Support with Afrikaans and English spelling and reading
* Adult psychotherapy	* Hearing loss	* Ayers Sensory Integration	
* Career Assessments	* Auditory Processing	* DIR Floortime	
* Psycho-educational Assessments	* Articulation	* Neuro-developmental therapy	* Individual or group study method courses
	* Tiny Hands	* Therapeutic Listening	
	* Language learning (reading and spelling)		

At THERAPEACE we also provide WORKSHOPS, TOMATIS LISTENING THERAPY, INTERACTIVE METRONOME TRAINING AND FORBRAIN

Planning requires a child to have an accurate self-awareness or body image. Body Awareness is his ability to recognise spatial concepts (such as left, right, up, down) on himself and on objects in his environment. It helps him to determine where his body is in relation to his surroundings. Body awareness is a foundational skill that provides him with the ability to pre-plan an activity before he tackles it, allowing him to sequence a series of motor actions in the correct order to achieve the expected response from his body. For example, if a child has been exposed to paint brushes and crayons, and he is faced with a pencil, he will begin to position it in his hand and attempt to make marks on a surface. This is the result of his retrieval of past information to visualise what he could do with it (ideation). But, planning gives him the ability consider the sequence of motor movements he would need in order to make it produce an expected outcome – how to pick it up, place it in his hand either like a paintbrush or crayon, and move it back and forth to see if it makes a mark he likes. This happens automatically based upon his past experience.

Execution is a child's ability to efficiently coordinate his planned motor movements simultaneously, resulting in bilateral coordination and actions that require timing and movement through space. Execution demands that a child be aware of what his body is doing and that he is able to accurately process movement through his vestibular, proprioceptive and visual senses. For example, if a child has experienced crawling along a flat surface in his living room and he is introduced to a small pile of pillows along his path, he will be able to coordinate his planned arm and feet movements as he pushes his way up to the top of the stack of pillows. He is using his vision to determine that the pile is higher than the floor, his proprioception to recognise that it is softer and less sound than the floor, and his vestibular system to consider the shifting of his body movements to the left or right. Of course, he will need a bit of help from the next component, Adaptation.

Adaptation is required for the motor planning process to be complete. As a child pursues the task at hand using past experience as his guide, he must be able to make corrections to his movements that will bring about the expected response. If the child crawls to the pillows, attempts to use his bilateral arm and leg movements to reach the top and falls each time that he leans too far to left, he will not gather the experience necessary to lay down a new motor plan. Once he begins to recognise that his body is shifting to the left and he consciously shifts his trunk toward the right, he will achieve his goal of making it to the top. With practice, the motor planning process becomes a skill that allows him to perform "pillow climbing" without giving it another second's thought!

It is important to note that motor planning does not exist as a solitary process in learning. In order for it to happen successfully, a child needs to have good core muscle strength, efficient visual skills, and the ability to grade (adapt) his movements. When these elements are not working properly, a child can be mislabeled as oppositional, clumsy, inattentive, lazy or learning disabled. Motor planning becomes tedious and difficult to concentrate on, leaving the child confused and frustrated. Continues on Page 4



SmartBrain

LINDEN

0722522708

SMARTBRAIN Eagle Study Course:

R1800 per learner - including course materials

What the course offers:

- **Creating the right atmosphere for study success**
 - **Preparation for effective studying**
 - **Reading techniques**
 - **Memory techniques**
 - **Mind maps, etc.**

This course can be presented in Afrikaans or English and is suitable for learners from Gr 4 and older. The study course is presented over the course of 2 days. Cost per learner is R1800 and includes course material. Please contact Tanya for more information, at 0722522708 or tanya@therapeace.co.za.

What is a listening test and why should I do one? By Michelle Hunt

The Listening test is NOT a hearing test or an audiogram! It is test developed by Dr Tomatis to look at the way the left and right ear listen through air and then through bone conduction.

It looks at how the left and right brain work together and the emotional associations. A good balance between the left and right ear shows that the two sides of the brain are working well together.

Differences in how the left and right ear respond can indicate difficulty with processing information that is heard. Difficulty in this area can result in poor processing speeds.

The listening profile is divided into 3 different zones: the body zone, language zone and cortical arousal zone.

These zones are used to pinpoint where difficulties are being encountered so that the correct, specific and tailored music program is used, as well as the right Therapy.

The listening test can also be used to analyse how efficient the right ear is at extracting what is being said. Over use of the left ear makes it difficult to hear what is being said in a noisy background, such as a classroom. Over use of the left ear can also be tiring and make processing auditory information slower.

Furthermore, the Listening test can indicate a person's ability to perceive variations in frequencies of sound. This skill is important for good articulation and phonological awareness as well as good attention and working memory.

If a person is very anxious it can block or veil this ability to perceive frequency changes. The Listening test can pick this up and a more accurate picture of why a person is struggling with learning is possible.

The Listening test is used to assess which Tomatis program to use and if more specialised work is needed. It is also used to track changes and improvements after the Tomatis programs.

Ideally a Listening test should be done before starting a Tomatis program to give a baseline from which to work, then again 2-3 weeks after each subsequent program to assess improvements. It is a quick and reliable way of tracking improvements as well as assessing what areas still need addressing.

The listening test is not done on preschool children.



5 Ways to Help Your Child with Motor Planning:

1. Do activities that are composed of a series of steps (i.e. making a craft, making a sandwich, or creating an obstacle course). As you do this, help your child identify, plan, and execute the steps to promote the ability to sequence and map actions. Break down the steps to make them more manageable and attainable, which can build self-esteem.
2. Determine what aspects of motor planning are a strength for your child (e.g. imitation, following verbal directions, timing, sequencing, coming up with ideas). Play to these strengths when doing activities with your child to compensate for the areas of difficulty.
3. Engage your child in activities that involve climbing over, under and around large objects. For example, playing on playground equipment or coming up with obstacle courses will help your child gain basic knowledge of how to move his body through space.
4. Encourage your child to come up with an idea for a new activity, or a new way to play with a toy or equipment, to promote motor planning.
5. Play games that involve imitation (e.g. Follow the Leader, Simon Says, etc...) to help your child to plan actions based on watching and copying peers.

by Millicent Roux

'TIPS' TO STIMULATE YOUR CHILD'S SPEECH- AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT: Suzette Lampbrecht

The first few years of a child's life are key to the development of speech, language and cognitive skills. It is therefore important to create an environment that helps to develop speech and language skills that give them all the stimulation, positive role modelling and human contact that they need. Here are a few 'tips' to keep in mind with speech- and language stimulation.

<p>Be a Good Model Speak clearly and face your child when speaking. If your child says a word or sentence incorrectly, rather than correct them or ask them to repeat it, just say the word / sentence back to them correctly to show you have understood. This way your child hears the correct version and will likely imitate it correctly later on.</p>	<p>Feed, don't force Comment and expand on your child's words and sentences, rather than asking them to repeat words. If your child says "car", respond with "big car" or "yellow car" or "fast car". This is how children learn words, by hearing new vocabulary and linking it to the items or events they are focusing on</p>	<p>Make Time Sit down with your child – even if it is for a few minutes a day and spend some quiet time with your child, away from distractions. Play what they would like to play or look at a book together and talk about the pictures.</p>
<p>↓ TV/Screen Time Children do not learn language and social skills by watching TV, and new evidence shows that too much TV watching prior to starting school can affect listening and attention skills, which will impact on their learning once they start school.</p>	<p>Observe & Comment When you are playing with your child, take a step back, do not feel that you have to fill the silences, just comment on the things your child is doing so they can hear (and learn) the new vocabulary.</p>	<p>Let your child lead Let your child lead the play, let them be the 'boss' of play. This can build self-confidence and does not put pressure on them to talk and respond to the adult all the time.</p>
<p>Books, books, books Books can be used in many ways to develop language and early literacy skills. Evidence shows that children that have more exposure to books prior to schooling often find it develop early literacy skills earlier.</p>	<p>Sing songs and rhymes Songs and rhymes contain rhythm and rhyme, skills that help with speech and literacy development.</p>	<p>Make Every Opportunity A Language Learning Activity Whether it's a trip to the shops, or bath-time, you can make every activity a language learning activity. Point to things, name them, sing a nursery rhyme, or ask a question. You don't always have to set aside a specific time of day to learn language, every activity can be a language learning activity.</p>



Griffiths III

Griffiths III provides an overall measure of a child's development, an individual profile of strengths and needs, as well as an age equivalent across five areas:

Foundations of learning, Language and communication, Eye and hand coordination, Personal-social-emotional and Gross motor.

The Griffiths III is culturally fair: As many of the items are based on natural activity linked to experience (walking and talking). The test is criterion referenced in nature. The child is compared to an established criterion and not to another child. It assesses the degree of mastery of the child and serves to describe rather than to compare with other children. What's the child's potential.

Ages: 0 – 5yrs 11months. Testing will be done individually.

For more information contact Christel at christel@therapeace.co.za



May your winter be warm and cosy !!!

All our love,

THE TEAM AT THERAPEACE

