

We LOVE
Our PT
staff

October 2013
Keeping the Learning Going and Just for FUN

Alternatives
For Children



What's Wrong With W Sitting?

Children have a variety of ways to sit during play or while participating in class activities. Generally, we like to promote alternate positioning especially for children with limited mobility. There is however, one style of sitting that needs to be discouraged no matter what level of function a child is at. This style is "W" sitting. "W" sitting is not an appropriate form of sitting because the negative effects far outweigh any stability they may gain from this position.

The negative effects of "W" sitting include:

- Providing a base of support which allows the child to utilize very little trunk musculature, thereby impeding the acquisition of trunk strength.
- Promoting knee instability and increasing the risk of future orthopedic problems.
- Promoting lower extremity muscle tightness.
- Hindering appropriate weight shifts and righting reactions.
- Hindering more appropriate and mature movement patterns and acquisition of fine motor skills.



W Sitting Tailor/Pretzel Sitting Long Sitting Side Sitting

What Can Be Done About "W" Sitting?

"W" sitting can be diminished by:

- Having "no "W" sitting" pictures placed in a prominent place in the child's room or on the refrigerator.
- Encouraging other types of sitting; tailor/pretzel sitting, side sitting or long sitting while on the floor.
- Use cues like, "fix your feet" or "sit like a pretzel!"

Read MORE About "W" Sitting HERE

<http://www.pediatricservices.com/parents/pc-22.htm>



Does the Shoe Fit? Fitting Footwear For Your Child



1. There should be a thumb width between the end of the shoe and the end of the longest toe = length is correct.
2. You should be able to pinch the upper of the shoe between your thumb and forefinger = width is correct.
3. Does the shoe fit snugly around the heel and instep? How stable is the shoe when trying to "pull off" the shoe = good fit.

Read MORE about your child's feet and shoes HERE

<http://www.epodiatry.com/children-footwear.htm>



Find more Physical Therapy Resources on our website

<http://www.alternatives4children.org/>

Click on the NEWS & EVENTS tab

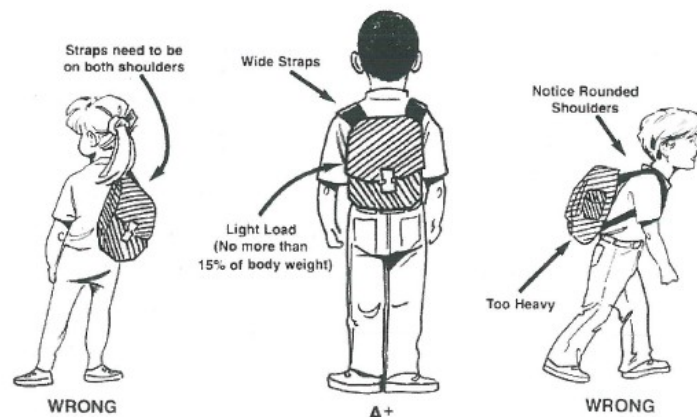
Is Your Child's Backpack Making the Grade?

Read MORE Backpack info HERE

<http://www.apta.org/Media/Releases/Consumer/2009/4/14/>

Alternatives For Children's Physical Therapists recommend the following features when selecting a backpack:

1. A padded back to reduce pressure on the back and prevent the pack's contents from digging into the child's back.
2. A waist belt to help distribute some of the load to the pelvis.
3. Compression straps on the sides or bottom of the backpack that, when tightened, compress the contents of the backpack and stabilize the articles.
4. The bottom of the backpack should be at waist height.



Fine & Gross Motor Skills Activities

- Download printable Halloween characters (http://www.firstpalette.com/tool_box/printables/halloween.pdf). Have fun coloring, and with child safety scissors have your child cut out the pictures as decorations. The use of short pencils or a broken crayon when drawing will help to promote a mature grasp.
- Make play dough with your child. Orange & Black would be great for this month! You will need: 2 cups plain flour (all purpose), 2 tablespoon vegetable oil, 1/2 cup salt, 2 tablespoons cream of tartar, 1.5 cups boiling water (adding more in increments if needed), food coloring (optional), few drops glycerin (optional-adds more shine!)
Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil in a large mixing bowl. Add the boiling water. Stir continuously until it becomes a sticky, combined dough. Add the food coloring and glycerin (both optional). Allow it to cool down then take it out of the bowl and knead it vigorously (especially good for the little fingers to do) for a couple of minutes until all of the stickiness has gone.*This is the most important part of the process, so keep at it until it's the perfect consistency!* (If it remains a little sticky then add a touch more flour until just right).



Then let the fun BEGIN! Roll the play dough into snakes, then cut with scissors or a plastic knife. Roll the play dough into balls and shape into pumpkins; use a toothpick to make the lines and the shapes for the face. Hide beads or coins in the play dough for your child to find.

- Take a Family Hike. A really beautiful Fall walk choice would be the Wertheim Preserve in Shirley (http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Wertheim/visit/plan_your_visit.html) They have flat/handicapped accessible trails along the Carmans River. Collect some leaves on your hike to bring home for sorting and decorating.

October is Fire Safety month



Kid's Checklist

- Does your home have smoke alarms on every level, inside each bedroom, and outside each sleeping area?
- Do you know the sound that a smoke alarm makes?
- Do you know what to do if you smoke alarm sounds?
- Are all the exits in your home clear of furniture, toys, and clutter?
- Can you see the number on your house from the street (have a grown-up go with you to check)?
- Has your family picked a safe place to meet outside if a fire occurs?

Ways to Support Your Child's Learning

- Talk positively about the "school experience." Rather than: "You have to go to school today," try: "You get to go to school today."
- Talk positively about your child's teachers and school. Your positive attitude can help your child develop an optimistic approach to school and learning.
- Let your child teach you. As someone once said, "To teach is to learn twice." You can strengthen your child's learning by letting him/her explain new concepts and ideas to you. Listen.
- Let your child's teacher and the school know about circumstances going on at home, such as illness, death, divorce. These can have an effect on children the most. Teachers can often help. Informing the teacher will alert her to possible changes in your child's behavior.

Sing a Song Along with Miss Beth
<http://www.alternatives4children.org/>
Click on the NEWS & EVENTS tab and go to Video Gallery

October is Fire Safety month

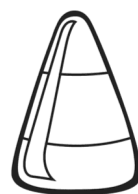


STOP, DROP & ROLL

- Are the batteries working in all your smoke alarms?
- Does your home have interconnected smoke alarms (when one sounds, they all sound)?
- Do you test the batteries in the smoke alarms at least once a month?
- Does your family have a home fire-escape plan that includes two ways out of each room?
- Does your entire family practice your plan twice a year?

Social Emotional Skill Activities

- Play a game of "How do You Feel" Trace candy corn, leaves or pumpkins on orange paper, and together with your child cut them out. On the back of each piece, draw the face of a different feeling, making several of each one.. Play hide and seek with them at home with your child. When they are found, you can either match them, identify that feeling or make the feeling face.
- This is a good time to talk with your child about what makes them happy, sad, scared, or mad. Begin by speaking for the child, "Susie/Johnny feels happy (sad, scared, mad) when _____." Then share when you experience these feelings. Keep going until the child can name some of his/her own feelings and when/what makes them happy, sad, scared, or mad.



Facial Expressions



Thank You Catherine Mequia
Alternatives For Children
Social Worker
For this FUN FEELINGS Game!