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Dear All,

Brain Gym® is an educational model that, unlike neuroscience, doesn't rest on neurological evidence. Our work is intended to inform learners how to enhance their own learning through specific intentional movement—not through any prescriptive approach. In 1986, Gail and I named the work "Brain Gym" because we designed the movements to support the acquisition of specific academic skills—skills that grow intelligence. For us, it has always been the sensory and educational emphasis that validates the work, not the information on aspects of the brain being activated (which in 1986 were, and even now are, only beginning to be known). We'd like to hear children and adults saying, "I like to do the Calf Pump because it helps me feel relaxed and able to talk more easily;" "When I do the Cross Crawl, I feel more like moving and playing. Reading is easier, too." It isn't our intent that someone might say "I do the Positive Points because it stimulates my frontal lobes." Our Brain Gym 101 handbook, OBO manual, and other manuals already beautifully model this emphasis. Let's leave the scientific explanations to the scientists.

I've just returned from Indonesia where Elisabeth Demuth and I had the honor of meeting with government leaders and neuroscientists. It is, as always, clear that the explanation of our work as it relates to brain function must be left to the neuroscientists. The ones at the Indonesian meeting agreed with our holographic view of the brain, as described in the Dynamic Brain model and extrapolated from the work of neuroscientists Paul MacLean and Elkonon Goldberg as well as Dr. John Ratey, M.D. As educators, we can discuss the acquisition of academic and behavioral skills, and describe improved cognitive organization and focusing abilities, as we can observe them. Yet we must state any conclusion we draw having to do with a particular movement's activation of a specific brain area as a hypothesis only.

To stay in the integrity of the Edu-K work in it's drawing-out model, we discuss Brain Gym only in terms of physical skills, self-monitoring abilities, and such areas as improved coordination, communication, focus, and attention. Any conclusive remarks about changes in brain function for which we have no scientific proof may be interesting, but

Edu-K Tips and Tools:

by Deborah Scott Studebaker

Sipping Water – Brain Buttons – The Cross Crawl – Hook-ups. These four steps of the PACE process are a key element of the Brain Gym® program, providing what Licensed Instructor Kathy Brown, of Phoenix, Arizona, describes as a "power boost" for the mind-body system. Many people around the world practice these activities every day to help keep themselves on track; here are some brief examples of how you, our readers, incorporate PACE into your lives.

Pamela Webster, a teacher in Macon, Georgia, explains how Springdale Elementary School uses Brain Gym: "Our day starts w/ students leading PACE & Thinking Caps each day on the morning news (televised in each classroom)... All students are encouraged to walk throughout the building w/hands in Hook-ups, which facilitates a calm & quiet transition from one activity to another."

In her second grade Special-Ed inclusion classroom, Ms. Webster and co-teacher April Hammet "put a (laminated) list of the specific PACE activities (+ Thinking Caps) on each child's desk, as a reference point & reminder for them to use Brain Gym throughout the day, as they need it... The children have

irrelevant to the effectiveness of the work.

Love to all,

Paul

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2008 BRAIN GYM® DAYS

South Africa

October 3-5 in Johannesburg,

"Celebrate Edu-K"

Contact: Marlize Basson +447769904280

Marlize@penuka.co.za

Florida, USA

October 11-12 in Destin, Florida:

A "Brain Gym Blossoms" retreat

Contact: Anne Hornstein,

LifeDancer@gmail.com

2009 BRAIN GYM® DAYS

Australia

January 10-18, 2009, in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia:

Summer School: "Expand Your Horizons"

Contact: Robyn Hampton,

robynhampton@optusnet.com.au

www.braingym.org.au

2009 BRAIN GYM® INTERNATIONAL

the flexibility to move about doing Brain Gym, as long as they do not disturb their neighbor."

Occupational therapist Shoshana Shamberg of Baltimore, Maryland speaks of using Hook-ups to calm screaming babies and embarrassed parents on three recent long airplane rides. "I held the child or mom's positive points and had the child positioned in Hook-ups, either adapted by crossing over arms when hysterical or in the traditional position for older child...Within 30 seconds to 1 minute of moving to Hook-ups, all three children were calmed and quiet, and two fell into deep sleeps the rest of the flight... Great tool for making an airline flight much more enjoyable for all!"

I'm sure that these anecdotes give all of us new ideas to play with, and I thank Pamela and Shoshana for sharing. Next month, we'll continue with PACE; I know that some of you have special ways that you personalize Sipping Water, Brain Buttons and The Cross Crawl. Please write! And if you have questions about PACE, feel free to ask them here too. Email us at info@braingym.org by October 20th, and reference "Tips and Tools" in the subject line. We look forward to hearing from you!

Featured Faculty Member

Paul Dennison, FOUNDER

Paul E. Dennison, Ph.D., is a professional educator and an internationally known author and speaker in the field of

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Germany

April 16th-19th, 2009

"Movement, Brain and Learning"

Kirchzarten, near Freiburg, Southern Germany

To register: [click here](#).

Spotlight On: *Movement Exploration I (221 MEI) & II (321 MEII)*

Movement Exploration I:

In this experiential course, authored by Carol Ann Erickson, participants explore the developmental sequence of movement from conception to the present. Students learn to integrate movement patterns and reflexes. This course provides a deeper understanding of the importance of integrated movement, the role of play in learning, and the connection of brain and body. Open to all who have taken Brain Gym 101. For a list of upcoming courses, [click here](#).

Congratulations to our NEW Professional Members!

CANADA

Fran BurkeNorth York, ON

Tracy CukulinCalgary, AB

Maryse MichaudSaint Lenard, NB

MaryAnn SwanMarkham, ON

CHINA

Karen Chan Ka LunHong Kong

Elizabeth Leontieff-JohnsonHong Kong

Andrew Leung Hoi MingHong Kong

Linda Tsang Suk YuHong Kong

USA

Kate FeganSylvania, OH

Patricia UrbanBaldwinsville, NY

speaker in the field of movement-based learning. The originator of Dennison Laterality Repatterning, Paul is a recognized authority on cognitive skills and reading achievement. He and his wife and colleague, Gail E. Dennison, are the cocreators of the Brain Gym processes, the cofounders of Brain Gym® International, and the coauthors of the Edu-Kinesthetics series of books and manuals on learning through movement, including Brain Gym®: Simple Activities for Whole-Brain Learning. Paul's most recent book is Brain Gym® and Me: Reclaiming the Pleasure of Learning.

Paul's BG Story:

"As a child with learning challenges, I wondered what made learning easy for some and difficult for others. In 1968 I became a public



school teacher in East Los Angeles, and then also opened a group of learning centers that shared offices with developmental optometrists. During those years, my staff and I observed the specialized movements that optometrists use to support binocular vision and cross-lateral coordination. As I began adapting some of these movements to the learning needs of my students, I was able to witness firsthand a positive correlation between academic achievement and the acquisition of motor skills. In 1975 I earned a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Development from the University of Southern California, and continued to incorporate into my new teaching philosophy and methodology the latest approaches from the fields of developmental optometry, child growth and development, and (as learned from my friend Richard Tyler, DC) kinesiolog

Balancing in the Classroom

by Kate Swenson

I teach 2nd grade in an urban elementary school where budget cuts have taken all aide support and our counselor. Of my 22 years as a teacher this was by far, the most stressful and overwhelming start to a school year. During opening week, teachers were given a brief training on several new assessments that had to be completed. Additionally, my class includes 24 students who are diverse, needy, challenging, active and doing their best. I

believe in establishing rituals and routines the first six weeks of school. This year I was being told to assess first, build relationships later.

Although I have been using the Brain Gym® movements for two years, I have never felt comfortable attempting a whole class balance. In June, I attended a Brain Gym retreat and received the newly revised Brain Gym 101 manual which is much more straightforward and easier to understand. After a week of non-stop chatter I knew where I wanted to begin, and basically took my goal right out of the manual. I was still very uncomfortable attempting this.

Our first balance was to increase listening by turning off our voices and opening our ears. We did it on Monday morning. No change. During Reader's Workshop on Wednesday I realized they were actually reading quietly for ten minutes! They were quiet for an extended period of time and when the teacher was talking, most of them were attending. It became our goal for the week and I gently reminded them as the week went on.

The following Monday we balanced for getting their ideas from their head onto the paper. The next day, TB, a new student who didn't speak much and had not placed pencil to paper yet, came up to me with his writer's notebook. There were five words on his page. I gently persuaded him to tell me his story, "I went on a boat and we went fishing". I was thrilled. Later, I realized he had copied the words off the "T" chart and that he had known he could put his story down on the page and "read" it to me.

I have become a true believer in balancing with children, and will do my best to meet their need to move every day with Brain Gym exercises. Some of them are doing hook-ups on their own during the day.

Ask Dave

Dave administers and answers questions posted to our [website](#) message board, "Ask Dave". To visit or post a question [click here](#).

Question:

I understand Double Doodles as being an activity which strengthens the Lead development of the dominant hemisphere. How does this contribute to creativity and also to the ability to cross the midline?

Dave's Answer:

Performing the Double Doodle exercise involves using both hands simultaneously in a slightly different manner, mirror rather than same movements. The theory is this stimulates

friend Richard Tyler, DC), kinesiology. Those early gleanings led to the birth of the Brain Gym program. Today, in my intention to introduce the possibility of pleasurable learning to people everywhere, I'm privileged to teach this remarkable program all over the world. "

A Brain Gym Story

Licensed Instructor, Eric Biskamp, of Dallas, TX shares an inspiring story:

I was vacationing in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Northern California, and met up with some friends who live there. They have a 4-year-old son who is on the autism scale. I shared the good effects Brain Gym® can have with severely learning-challenged children. They were happy to try anything because little had helped, including the thousands of dollars they were spending on "nutritional therapy."

Over a 30-minute period, I worked with their son doing Lazy 8s, Double Doodle, Hook-Ups, Thinking Cap, and Cross Crawl. Often, I had to assist by moving his limbs for him. I did Lazy 8s on his back, and even helped him finger paint Lazy 8s.

A few days later, I got a phone call from his mom, "After you did the Brain Gym® activities, the next day my son put a harmonica in his mouth and an egg shaker in each hand. He walked along playing his harmonica while he shook the shakers. And then he switched-out the harmonica for a flute and did the same thing! He's never done anything like that before, where he multi-tasked

both hemispheres of the brain at the same time, right hand stimulates and is controlled by left hemisphere and left hand is controlled by and stimulates the right hemisphere, thus practicing and improving the connections between them. This is what helps to improve ability to cross the midline and whole brain integration, which helps to improve creativity. This also helps students choose their own best lead hemisphere if they have not already. The Brain Gym(R) exercises are dynamic activities that have many facets to each one. Many of the exercises have multiple uses and benefits that may not always appear to be related.

with three things at once. I've never seen him do even two things at once before using the Brain Gym movements."

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Subscribe to the *Brain Gym*® Journal

Stay connected and learn more about the Edu-K model and how others are using the program in diverse settings and situations. The cost is only \$25 per year for three issues. They make great gifts and your contribution helps the Edu-K Foundation continue to grow and spread the importance of movement as it relates to learning, achievement, and self-discovery.

email: info@braingym.org