

Connections

A Newsletter For Teachers Working With Autism
Educational Equity For All



January 2020



Does your child walk on the toes or balls of the feet? Toe walking can lead to falling, and may be symptomatic of vestibular issues and developmental delays. Try our movement activities to help prevent and reduce toe walking. Remember to encourage kids to walk on their heels, and improve balance and coordination. Vestibular stimulation, like swinging on a [glider swing](#), can also help reduce or eliminate toe walking.

<https://funandfunction.com/blog/prevent-reduce-toe-walking>



Suggested activities to help stop a child chewing on their clothes or other items.

Breathing exercises are being increasingly shown to help to calm and organize our nervous system and brains. The paid version of the Headspace app has some excellent guided breathing meditations for children. The Smiling Minds app is free and also has good content for children.

Blowing bubbles is also an easy way to help younger children take deeper breaths. BLO pens are also lots of fun and a simple way to encourage children to take deep breaths. <https://www.griffinot.com/child-chewing-clothing/>

REGAL
myWay
matinee

Sensory friendly
Sound lower
Lights brighter

Second & Fourth Saturday Every Month
10:30 am

Sensory Friendly Movies

January 11 January 25

Regal's My Way Matinee gives everyone the opportunity to experience a movie with the lights turned up and the volume turned down. This becomes safe space where our guests are free to express themselves by singing, crying, dancing, walking around, talking or shouting while enjoying Hollywood's latest films! All screenings for our sensory friendly movies will begin at 10:30am on the second and fourth Saturday of the month for a special discounted ticket price!

<https://www.regmovies.com/static/en/us/promotions/my-way-matinee>

AMC Sensory Friendly Films has not posted January Movie listing at the time of publication.

<https://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films>

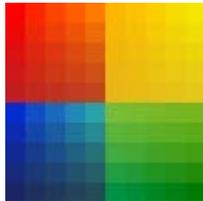
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY FOR ALL
..... Giving kids what they need to succeed.

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FEATURED IDEA OF THE MONTH



Touch and Learn - Emotions
Free app helps kids identify emotions, recognize body language
Bridges the gap between feeling or witnessing emotions and using words to describe them
Grades: K–2 Price: \$1.99



The Mood Meter
Well-designed tool encourages kids to reflect on and manage emotions
Appealing, thought-provoking tool builds emotional intelligence.
Grades: 6–12 Price: \$0.99

Why a Pincer Grasp Is Crucial for a Baby's Development

Stages of pincer grasp development

Pincer grasp development is usually the result of building on several grasping and coordination milestones. Some of the early developmental milestones that later allow a child to perform the pincer grasp include:

- palmar grasp: bringing the fingers in toward the palm, allowing babies to curl their fingers around an object
- raking grasp: using the fingers other than the thumb like a rake, curling the top of the fingers over the object to bring items toward them
- inferior pincer grasp: using the pads of the thumb and index finger to pick up and hold objects; this precursor to the pincer grasp usually takes place between 7 and 8 months of age

A true pincer grasp is when a child uses the tips of their fingers to pick up objects. This is also called a superior or "neat" pincer grasp. t.ly/pepW7

TIPS ON HOW TO STOP CHILDREN WITH AUTISM CHEWING ON CLOTHES

Self-stimulatory behaviours (or "stimming") is prevalent in many special needs children, mostly appearing in children with autism. Stimming occurs when the need to relieve distress, reduce anxiety, or to combat sensory overload arises. Stimming can take form in a multitude of ways. Typically these actions fall into six categories; visual, auditory, physical touching, fidgeting, smell, or through taste. The latter form is the most common trait.

- Give your child something different to chew
- Consider adaptive clothing for children
- Replace chewing with alternative activities

SpecialKids.Company stock a variety of adaptive clothing for children with various sensory issues.

t.ly/GjGp9

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

<https://www.stageslearning.com/pages/free-autism-resources>
t.ly/gDPEJ
t.ly/erKr



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

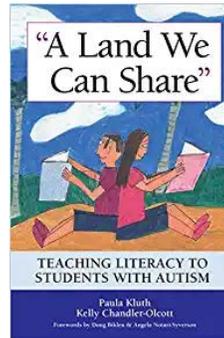
Project ACCESS Online Introduction to the Education of Students with Autism

Request to be enrolled in [Project ACCESS online Introduction to the Education of Students with Autism](https://education.missouristate.edu/access/onlineintro.htm) workshop. Access the [online workshop](https://education.missouristate.edu/access/onlineintro.htm) after you've signed up.

<https://education.missouristate.edu/access/onlineintro.htm>



RECOMMENDED READING & VIDEO



Land We Can Share:
Teaching Literacy to
Students with Autism 1st
Edition

by Paula Kluth

Teaching Students to Use an ID Card: A Critical Safety Skill with a Freebie

1. Teach students to stay with an adult

Well, clearly we can teach our higher functioning students to stay with their parents or teachers when they are out and about. We also need to practice it—talking about it is not enough for our students.

2. Help families develop safety plans

Autism Speaks has some great resources for developing safety plans. Lean On Us has a nice identification packet for law enforcement. The Big A Word has a Pinterest Board on safety that is worth checking out for resources as well. Dennis Debbaudt's site also has great resources.

3. Teach students to identify safe adults

We teach a lot of stranger danger to our students. So much so that sometimes typical kids who get lost don't talk to a stranger to tell him or her how to find their parents. Don't get me wrong....this is important. However, for kids on the spectrum, they will follow these rules often more strictly. So teach them who might be a good person to talk to as well—a store clerk or someone in a police uniform.

4. Teach students identifying information

Teach your students their first and last name, their address and phone number. Teach it in such a way that they know how to provide that information to unfamiliar people who may ask in unfamiliar ways.

t.ly/EJABB