

FOSTER CARE JOURNAL



October-December
2008

Foster Care Journal, 2008
© American Foster Care Resources, Inc., Jacob R. Sprouse, Jr., Publisher
P.O. Box 271, King George, Virginia 22485
Published Quarterly; AFGR, Inc., A non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization.
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Just a Few Tips

for a successful school year for the disorganized, very active child

MOVEMENT

- ◆ Schedule, plan and allow students some movement during seat work.
- ◆ Allow high protein snacks and frequent water breaks. A five minute break can give the teacher an hour's worth of attention.
- ◆ Though movement is allowed in the classroom, this does not give a child the right to freely roam the classroom or the school. Provide visual parameters or cues to help the child stay in bounds.
 - ◆ Place masking tape on the floor which surrounds the area that is within limits for movement.
 - ◆ Inform the student verbally of their boundaries; if the verbal information does not work, go to a visual reminder system.
- ◆ Give the child specific tasks which allow movement, such as:
 - ◆ taking the attendance sheet to the office
 - ◆ taking the trash to a designated place
 - ◆ checking to see if certain windows are open at the start of the day
 - ◆ checking to see if certain windows are closed at the end of the day
 - ◆ delivery of library books to the library
 - ◆ helping raise and lower the flag
 - ◆ taking announcements to the office
 - ◆ help with watering plants, or taking dead leaves off plants

STAYING PUT

- ◆ For young children, up to the sixth grade, the use of carpet squares for identifying a child's space can be useful.



- ◆ An "X" marked on the floor can be used to identify the space where a child needs to be.
- ◆ Allowing a child to lie on the floor or stand to work is a viable way for a child to complete their academic task.

LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

- ◆ Remember, the future of technology is here today. We recommend the use of computers, tape recorders, headsets and calculators as often as possible. The earlier the child is exposed to this technology the more capable the child will be in the use of these devices.
- ◆ If the child knows the basic concept of doing the math problem, but cannot remember the multiplication or addition facts, we recommend the use of a calculator. Continuing to get the problem wrong will not improve the child's memory for math facts.
- ◆ Allow the child to use a headset to listen to acceptable music while the child is in the classroom working on assignments. Noises generated in the hallway and inherent noises in the classroom setting distract some children.
- ◆ Allow the use of computers for written assignments and the correction of spelling errors.
- ◆ Assign homework in small amounts.
- ◆ Give grades based on what is correct versus what is wrong.



FIELD TRIPS

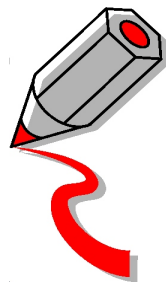
Field trips may be a major problem for many children. With the introduction of a lot of transitions, unfamiliar surroundings and routines, change in the rules and new stimuli, it may seem the perfect set up for the child and those involved.

- ◆ Pair this child with an adult volunteer or parent.
- ◆ Convey to the volunteer the specific expectations, strategies and discipline strategies to be used. Plan, plan, plan. Let the volunteer know that the child's hand is to be held at all times; have the child take a Koosh Ball (TM) so she or he has something to manipulate; let the child know she or he will be sitting with the volunteer on the bus and at lunch, and so on.
- ◆ Use hand signals when giving a command or when disciplining this child. The thumbs-up sign might show that the child is doing O.K.; the index finger raised to the teacher's lips indicates silence; an opened hand, with palm facing the child in a firm and clear way may indicate STOP doing what you are doing.

ART CLASS

If a child has fine motor and handwriting difficulties, then art classes are often frustrating. Art can be a positive method for children to express themselves; however, if continuously met with feelings of ineptness and inadequacy, they will view art as another place to experience failure.

- ◆ Allow the child to use a pencil grip.
- ◆ The use of large diameter ("fat") pencil can increase competence and confidence.
- ◆ Have loop scissors available; and left-handed scissors for those who are left-handed.
- ◆ Outline the material to be cut with a wide, dark marker. Outline the area which is to be cut at a wider distance. This gives the child more room for error without cutting into the design.
- ◆ Have the child practice cutting on a variety of materials, such as: cardboard, construction paper and poster board.
- ◆ Some children need to "warm-up" their hands prior to performing fine-motor tasks such as writing, cutting, drawing, and coloring. A child can warm up their hands and muscles with clay. Children can knead, roll and poke at clay before an activity.
- ◆ Inform the art teacher that the child has specific challenges with fine-motor skills and needs adaptations with assignments.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS

Group activities, such as PE class, are another area of stress for some children. They have difficulty getting organized,



meeting the time-lines with dressing and undressing and staying on task in a large room without getting sidetracked. Self-confidence can plummet quickly. The child may have apprehensions about their athletic abilities, skill levels and possess a poor body image. In a large gym room, echos cause distractions.

Outside, there are often many extraneous noises from traffic, nature and people. The bright lights in the building or the sun outside offers more freedom and less structure than the classroom setting does. It can be quite demanding for this child to stand in line and wait their turn.

- ◆ Give the child some responsibility such as being a score keeper or handing out equipment.
- ◆ Keep the child close to the PE teacher.
- ◆ Anticipate dangerous situations and plan ahead. Dangerous situations for children can be present in gymnastics (where larger equipment is used) or even in simple games like softball. Children who are impulsive and cannot immediately predict the consequences of their actions are more likely to have scrapes and bruises.
- ◆ Pair this child with a peer. Change peers as needed as this task can be wearing.
- ◆ Provide visual cues as to where the child should stand or sit. This helps during times of transitions.

