

Coordination & Handwriting Improve for Galesburg Boy

M.1 Fine Motor Processing–Handwriting

The first change they noticed had to do with coordination. He could ride his bike without help in balancing.

"He went out and jumped on the bike," said Eugene of his son Tony, "and started taking off."



According to his mother Teresa, Tony, age 6, was having trouble with fine motor skills and problems staying focused. Teachers were concerned about his impulsiveness and his impatience in learning.

Like riding his bike, learning was within his grasp, but also "frustrating" to Tony.

"He had the academics," said Teresa, adding with a shake of her head, "but applying them..." Tony wouldn't cooperate on the tests, showing poor results.

"He knew it, but he wouldn't show it," she said. "Learning is so much easier since he's done the Brain Gym® exercises. It's taken the frustration out of him and for us."

Brain Gym® exercises -- designed to integrate the parts of Tony's brain and provide balance -- are part of his daily routine now, according to Teresa, "like making the bed and getting dressed." He's also encouraged to do the exercises when he experiences particularly high levels of stress.



Tony does Cross Crawl, Lazy-8's, Brain Buttons, and Balance Buttons, all of which help with crossing the mid-line of the body and brain which increases left and right hemisphere communication as well as increase Tony's body-spatial awareness, focus and attention span. The Lazy 8's also increase visual processing which helped Tony read faster and use both eyes while writing.

Teresa believes the program, called Whole Brain/Body Integration and Thinking Skills, gave Tony "tools" to help himself through stressful times and

increase his learning potential. An added benefit is that it improved Tony's coordination, balance and behavior.

"When they're little, they try to have control all the time, but they can't," she said. "It's nice if they have tools they can use."

Teresa and Eugene use the Brain Gym® exercises at home, too. Hook-ups and Positive Points are used when Tony gets frustrated or becomes difficult to manage behaviorally. The Hook-Ups and Positive Points help calm Tony down and be able to use his logic and rationale in a frustrating situation as well as facilitate positive thoughts about himself. The Brain Gym® also help Tony when he does homework. He can focus easier and his attention span is longer after he does the Brain Gym®, Teresa said.

Eugene sees the program as a "very rewarding experience," noting "things started coming easier to him after he starting taking the class."

Among noticed improvements at school were neater penmanship and being able to "stay with-in the lines." Tony learned Alphabet 8's which helped him cross the kinesthetic mid-line corresponding to improved hand-writing.



Eugene said he and Teresa wanted to avoid labeling their son, or watching him be labeled by the education system. He could see the labels coming, and he wanted to do something before Tony was tracked into a system which said he was slower or more difficult than other children. When that happens, he said, a child "starts living by the label and it may not be true."

Although the family had a 45-minute trip to Options Center from their home, they all feel it was "worth the effort and time," said Eugene. "I'd recommend it for anyone else who feels their child is having any difficulty."

***If you would like to communicate with Options,
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