Low Vision Conference:
Increasing Low Vision Skills for Students at the Practical Academic Level
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Developed for
Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Outreach Programs
Activities that Enhance Learning

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Objectives for Today’s Presentation

- Importance of Play in a Child’s Life
- Fun activities to play at home or in school
- To be a Play advocate for your child in school
- How Play and activities in the classroom enhance learning
- How to adapted games and activities for students with Special needs

Types of Play

- Physical Play – Usually social, boisterous and involves activity
- Manipulative Play - Attempts to manipulate objects. Toys can include rattles, puzzles, legos. Sensory input is also important allowing the child to feel the texture
Thinking on Your Feet Notes

Does Physical Activity Increase Learning?
- According to Dr. Germund Hesslow says that physical activity give a child an advantage in learning.
- Eric Jensen says “Exercise may grow a better brain.”
- “When we learn something new, we grow dendrites”, writes Jean Madigan.
- Dendrites are finger-like projections on the neuron that help axons communicate with other dendrites

Movement and Learning
- Aerobic – Is defined by exercising the heart and lungs to elevate the heart rate.
- Brink suggests that aerobic conditioning assist in memory.
- Research show it helps short term memory, creativity, and reaction time.
- A Canadian studied found when physical education time was increased to one-third of the school day so did academic scores

Social Benefits
- Learn social skills, Take turns, share, speak
- To General Education Students – Buddy System
- Can Help Change Attitudes and Culture of School – Level III of Awareness…Fundraiser, Special Olympics
- Use Age Appropriate Music and Activities
  o Train
  o Movie Soundtracks

Need for Fundamental Movements
- If children do not reach a degree of competence and confidence in fundamental movement skills by the 6th grade, they will not engage in regular physical activity or sports for the rest of their lives.
- The need to teach these skills to students with disabilities can make a difference in their independent movement and motor control.

Movement and the Classroom
- Movement is defined as physical activity, navigating one’s environment
- Movement prepares the brain for learning by forcing blood to travel throughout the body and brain at greater rates.
- When this happens nutrients such as glucose feed the brain and oxygen.
- The brain is one-fiftieth of the body’s weight but, uses one-fifth of the body’s oxygen
What the Experts Say

- Dr. John Ratey, the author of SPARK calls exercise the body’s natural Ritalin.
- He suggests that the benefits of exercise on the brain are:
  - Efficient brain function
  - Improved cognition
  - Increased memory retrieval
  - Regulate mood and behavior
  - Reduce stress
  - Refine Social skills

Notes:
Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Outreach Programs

Figure 2 TSBVI logo.

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Figure 3 IDEAs that Work logo and OSEP disclaimer.