

## **Brain Bites - A mother, daughter and son with Autism ALL benefit from Brain Gym® - December 2008**

### **Category - Autism and personal development**

There are so many ways to share what Brain Gym® is, how it evolves the Brain and the many transferable applications in the workplace, classroom and daily life.

Here are some observations from a parent who took our Brain Gym® 101 Certification and put Brain Gym® to the test with herself, both of her children (son has Autism). We enriched this testimonial by linking corresponding Brain Gym® summaries of content.

*“It is interesting watching for the little things that make a difference and Brain Gym® is helping us all in different ways. We have been doing PACE activities in the mornings and I have been telling my children that the Brain Gym® exercises helps them to wake up.”*

Every individual has a unique pace - optimal rhythm and timing for learning. When we connect with our own pace we can become self-initiating learners, able to recognize our own next appropriate learning step. PACE resets the mind, body system through a 4 step sequence of Brain Gym® movements that only take 2 to 5 minutes.

It's common practice that I help my son get dressed, because he is so sluggish in the morning and takes too long, and usually asks for help. It takes about 20 minutes to wake him up. He is 11 years old with Autism. Very high functioning, but with many issues.

Yesterday, he had climbed into bed with us and when the alarm went off I immediately said that we should do Brain Gym® to wake up. He was dozing so I said we would do it lying down. My daughter came in and the 3 of us did PACE lying down. I started doing the movements with my son by holding his hands and doing it for him but he quickly woke up and took over on his own. He suggested some alternatives to what we were doing and got right into it. When we were done, both kids jumped out of bed and ran to their rooms racing to get dressed. My son came back a few minutes later, totally dressed saying “look at me”.

*“Today, I was up early and went upstairs to help wake my son up. He had climbed into bed with my husband who was still asleep and I entered the room just in time to hear my son say “copy me papa” and he was doing the Cross Crawl. Then my son said “this will help you wake up” and I joined in with them as my son lead my husband through the PACE exercises (although not in the right order but that will come). He was so proud of himself for teaching his dad!”*

The Cross Crawl is a midline movement, which focus on the skills necessary for easy two-sided (left-right) movement across the midline of the body. The vertical midline of the body is the necessary reference for all such bilateral skills. This area is where the left and right visual fields overlap, requiring the paired eyes and all of their reciprocating muscles to work so well as a team that the two eyes function as one. Development of bilateral movement skills for crawling, walking, or seeing depth is essential to the child's growing sense of autonomy. It is also a prerequisite for whole-body coordination and ease of learning in the near-visual area. The Midline movements help to integrate binocular vision, binaural hearing, and the left and right sides of the brain and body.

*“We are doing our best to associate different movements, mostly the (Energy Exercises Brain, Space and Earth) buttons and more passive movements, to helping the kids get through a*

*frustrating moment, redirect thoughts and give them energy. My hope is that eventually my son will be able to do these things on his own at school as a coping mechanism for different situations. And have a positive and quiet activity to do that he knows helps him at home. I am putting together a little visual for him on what he can do himself, 'when you feel like this... try this. I'll keep you posted.'*

The Brain Gym® Energy Exercises and postures for Deepening Attitudes help to re-establish neural connections between body and brain, facilitating the flow of electromagnetic energy throughout the body. These activities support electrical and chemical changes that occur during all mental and physical events. Left-to-right/right-to-left, head-to-foot/foot-to-head, and back-to-front/front-to-back circuitries establish and support our sense of directionality, of sidedness, of centeredness, and of focus, as well as our awareness of where we are in space and in relation to objects in our environment. The Energy Exercises validate important tactile and kinesthetic information about inner-body relationships that are usually developmentally established during the infant's first year. More information is available through the Brain Gym Teachers Edition.

*"I am noticing things in my daughter as well. She tends to get very frustrated, especially if she is tired. When working on something, if she gets frustrated, we stop and she does Brain Gym®. The other day she went from "this is stupid, stupid, stupid I can't do it" while doing music homework to "I will do this how I think is right and if it's not, my teacher will tell me" after about having done 3 minutes of Brain Gym® exercises."*

Brain Gym® clears physical, emotional and mental blocks and positively shifts attitudes. Blocks occur when the body is tense and information cannot flow freely among the brain centers and sensory systems. When actions originate from the whole brain balance, the individual's natural learning abilities are revitalized and performance becomes effortless. Using Brain Gym will change their brain chemistry, and build new neurological pathways, where there was no pathway in existence before. Brain Gym® movements can be used strategically to support personal learning styles and lay the foundation to create positive outcomes.

For myself, I am noticing my thoughts are much clearer, and they seem to be more organized. I am not as easily distracted and when I have so many thoughts at once, it seems to be easier to single out one to concentrate on at a time. When using Brain Gym, there is a better, more organized flow to thoughts. After doing the movements, I will get these great thoughts and ideas that just pop into my head that will be the solution to something I have been thinking about or trying to work through. It's like there are doors opening inside my head to let the thoughts flow better.

All new learning, whether as a toddler starting to walk or a spouse learning to communicate, requires the ability to notice and be aware. Noticing is a process of focusing one's attention in the present and paying attention to how we do what we do. Like noticing how we observe and being aware of the ways we accumulate information through our visual, auditory, tactile and other senses.

In Micole's recap, she is noticing for her self and for her entire family the many benefits of incorporating Brain Gym® into one's daily routine. We receive positive feedback on a regular basis like this and it is an honor for us to be involved in making a solid difference in people's lives. According to the co-founders of Brain Gym International, Paul & Gail Dennison. Each time we notice (\*observe without judgment) we create greater connection between our possibility-oriented prefrontal cortex which engages reason, insight and communication, and

our survival-oriented brain stem responsible for automatic action. When this connection is activated we move into a state of focus, comprehension and higher brain function.

Learning naturally takes place through curiosity, life experience and frequent noticing.

In Brain Gym® training, we teach participants how to develop and master their noticing skills and develop their Noticing Bridge. The most important and fundamental skill in education, and life.

Jill Hewlett and Sharon Todd are both Educational Kinesiologists and Licensed Brain Gym Trainers. Their company, Brain Works Global Inc., trains clients on how to maximize their learning potential while working in conjunction with their individual goals.

They provide keynotes, in house training, and sponsored events to a wide range of organizations and the community. For more information go to [www.brainworksglobal.com](http://www.brainworksglobal.com) or call 905.830.6902.