

Learning through movement? Yes it is a science and it breeds success!

I want to share an important message for adults, children with special need and parents and clinicians that interact with these very special and wondrous individuals.

My Intention in this writing this article is to ensure that there is awareness about a profoundly simple co educational tool called Brain Gym®. Brain Gym® was developed from the study of Educational Kinesiology (Edu-K). I will definitely elaborate further on this tool but first I would like to share some personal experiences.

I have ADD and a son that has Autism. I cannot count the number of conversation I have had with parents about the lack of funding provided to this growing group. How the decision is so easily justified to seek programming privately at their own financial endeavor at the cost of all of their family savings and even selling their homes to ensure that their child(ren) receives the appropriate training like ABA or IBI when it will have its greatest impact (1 – 6 years of age). They share how they feel there hands are hands tied as they wait for the government to provide enough funding.

I found it all very de-motivating and so I started to research methods that I could initiate that would directly support my own and my child's learning readiness. Hearing the concept of learning through movement was information I had been waiting for as I struggled with sitting still for long periods of time at a desk and failed miserably in the school system.

If you put me at a desk, I zone out. But if you engage me by making it fun and allow me to move while I am learning something new, I am successful! Research tells us that two thirds of the populations are kinesthetic learners which means they learn through moving and doing. Currently the public school system does not honor this type of learner even though they are the dominant learning style. Ironically, this learning style also is specifically linked to learning disabilities due to high need for sensory stimulation.

Part of my experience as a mother with a child with Autism is the major difficulty of making "transitions". Transitions were very difficult for my son. Anything that I could do to help him to make transitions smoother, I wanted to do. I would go through at least 6 transitions with my child before he is out the door to school every day. For example, brush our teeth, wash our face, eat breakfast, get dressed, get snow cloths on and take out to bus. In the past each one of these tasks would erupt into a full blown temper tantrum and usually the strongest won. That is me right now but I can tell it won't be for long.

I had to find a way to change this behavior that I could implement right now on my own. It is the blockage or lack of connectivity that makes the transitions so difficult. Can you imagine the stress and exhaustion of having 6 wrestling matches before your child is even out the door? Things had to change.....and they have. Now we do Brain Gym® every morning for 5 minutes, and now instead of 6 tantrum wrestling matches I get

resistance in the form of “nooooo” on the first request and with some gentle reframing I get cooperation. This is huge!!!!

Brain Gym® training is financially achievable, easily initiated by any of the above described individuals, fast, easy but strategic to directly support successful learning and development of individuals with special need. It directly and immediately impacts fine and gross motor skills, cognitive abilities, behavioral, emotional as well as visual and reading to name a few.

Brain Gym® is the application of natural movements that stimulates the growth and connectedness of developmental pathways between the head, heart and body. Focusing on the performance of specific physical activities that activate the brain for optimal storage and retrieval of information. Brain Gym (Edu-K) re-educates the mind/body system for accomplishing any skill, function or goal with greater ease and efficiency. How it works? Brain function requires efficient connections across both sides of the brain, these are called neural pathways. Stress inhibits these connections, while Brain Gym movements integrate the brain allowing information to flow easily from the senses into memory and then out again as new learning. One is able to perform with less stress and to express their creativity using more of their mental and physical potential. The movements are very effective in clearing emotional stress from the system.

These movements can be used strategically; they can be used based on the skill required for the task. For example, if I have to take a test or preparing to work with the Speech Pathologist where communication skills are the area of development. Or how about whole body movement in preparation for an Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy or skiing? There are specific Brain Gym® movements that can put the individual in an integrated state in preparation for the individual task so they are able to access their whole brain for any new learning experience.

To increase awareness on a broad scale my business partner, Jill Hewlett and I provide workshops that train individuals how to use movement to support their individual learning needs. We do this through Brain Gym®. People usually start with our workshop called “Introduction to Brain Gym®”. It is a two and a half hour workshop that provides an overview of Educational Kinesiology and Brain Gym®. It also provides the knowledge to put Brain Gym® to the test with the special needs individuals’ life where you can measure the results and determine if you are ready to go to the next level with Brain Gym Certification (3 day course).

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For more information and calendar for up and coming workshops or to register on line go to <http://www.brainworksglobal.com> or call 905-830-6902

