

Dear St. Coletta Parents,

In preparation for the potential school closure due to the Coronavirus, the occupational therapy team has put together a small packet of activities for your child to perform at home. This will hopefully allow for maintenance of your child's learned skills and lead to new opportunities for growth and increased independence at home. It is recommended that your child has supervision upon performing any of these activities. These activities cover a variety of different areas, such as sensory strategies (visual, auditory, attentiveness, balance, movement, taste, and smell), visual-motor activities, self-care activities, and fine-motor activities. As you may see there are several options, some of which may or may not be appropriate for your child's needs. Please use discretion when working on these tasks. If you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail your child's occupational therapist, as she would be happy to provide an explanation or other recommendations with a given activity.

Kind Regards,

Your St. Coletta Occupational Therapy Team

Seniors 2, Giants, and Orioles OT: Gloria.bupp@stcoletta.org

Eagles, Capitals, Bluejays OT: Sonya.mitchell@stcoletta.org

Seniors 1, Seniors 3, Seniors 4, and Seniors 9 OT: Aislinn.McKeown@stcoletta.org

Freedom, Ravens, United, Seniors 5 OT: rachael.hill@stcoletta.org

Royals, Mystics, Patriots, Senators OT: meaghan.hanrahan@stcoletta.org

Nationals, Seniors 6, Seniors 8, and Seniors 10 OT: samantha.tobon@stcoletta.org

Red Sox, Wizards, and Seniors 7 OT: alexandra.muro@stcoletta.org

Muscle strength of the hands and fingers increases as children grow and participate in everyday activities. Activities such as climbing, playing with toys or scribbling with crayons all help to develop and strengthen the muscles of the hands and fingers. Hand and finger strength is important as it is required for many everyday activities such as doing up buttons and zippers, climbing monkey bars or cutting up a piece of steak at mealtimes. It also helps to develop the endurance to complete activities such as writing a full page. Grip strength refers to whole hand strength. Pinch strength involves the thumb and index finger (and the middle finger if required).

Encourage as many strengthening activities throughout the day. Any activity that involves gripping against resistance will increase hand strength when used over time. For example, playing with play dough, or building with Lego. As your child's hand strength improves, increase the amount of resistance in the activity. For example, encourage your child to squeeze a soft ball 10 times. As strength increases encourage him or her to squeeze a firmer ball.

Helpful strategies:

- Encourage your child to do everyday activities by herself and only assist if necessary.
- Encourage your child to do fine motor activities as much as possible. For example, drawing, craft activities, playing with play dough, building with blocks.
- Encourage your child to draw and to do activities on a vertical surface. This helps develop and strengthen your child's arms, hands and fingers. For example, encourage your child to draw on a blackboard, color in at an easel or put stickers on a piece of paper taped to a wall.

Everyday activities:

- During bath-time squeeze water out of a face washer, or play with water toys that require squeezing.
- Squeeze out a sponge before wiping down the kitchen table or bench. Use a spray bottle to water plants.
- Get dressed and undressed by yourself.
- Carry shopping bags.
- Cooking - mixing, sifting, kneading or use a rolling pin or cutters. Peel and cut up fruit or vegetables. Start with easier to cut foods such as bananas or cucumbers and build up to harder foods such as carrots or potatoes.
- Grate cheese or carrots.
- Make toast or sandwiches - open jars (such as for nut butter or jam) and use a knife for spreading and cutting.
- Use a butter knife and fork to cut up food at mealtimes. Start with easier to cut foods such as potatoes or sausages and gradually build up to harder foods such as a steak.
- Squeeze juice from an orange or lemon.
- Pour milk or water from a container to a cup.

Fine-motor activities:

Encourage your child to do these activities with her thumb and index finger (and middle finger if required).

- Tear up colored paper for pasting, paper-mache or collage activities.
- Make ten small balls from play dough or Blu-Tack and then squash the balls between your thumb and index finger. (Pretend the play dough is a bug or egg). Repeat with the thumb and middle finger, and then with the thumb, index and middle fingers all together.
- Use sticky tape for art and craft projects.
- Make friendship bands using colorful cotton or thread.
- Play with wind-up toys.
- Deal out the cards when playing card games such as Uno, or Go Fish.
- Art activities that require colouring or scribbling with crayons or pencils for long periods. For example, trace around your child's body on a large piece of paper and get her to draw and color

in all her features and clothing.

- Squeeze clothes pins to remove from rim of a container.
- Undo and do up nuts and bolts.
- Use tweezers to pick up small beads, or toys and put them into a container.
- Use an eye-dropper and food coloring to change or mix colors.
- Use stamps and ink pads.
- Draw with chalk on a blackboard or on concrete.
- Peel off and stick stickers.

Sensory-based activities:

Tactile defensiveness or oversensitivity to touch:

- In general, begin by encouraging play in dry, non-messy media rather than in gooey or sticky textures. If your child will not touch anything, have him or her use containers to scoop and pour the materials.
- When working with your child, always approach from the front (no surprises) and use a firm touch (like when holding or shaking hands), never a light touch.
- For the least offensive sensory play try dry, clean media: use both hands to locate small toys hidden in a bucket filled with birdseed, beans, pasta, etc.

Strategies to increase visual attentiveness:

- Play catch with a slow moving object e.g. balloon, bubbles.
- Play “guess what I see” games: describe an item in the room by its color, size, shape, what it’s used for, etc.

Vestibular Input/Balance:

- Animal and bug walks.
- Playground: swings, ladder.
- Scooter board, sitting or lying on the belly.

Proprioceptive/Movement:

- Carrying a trash can, box or laundry basket.
- Walking, especially uphill.
- Deep “bear” hugs or massages.
- Sweeping the floor, raking leaves.
- Squeezing play dough.

*Please contact your occupational therapist if you have any questions about the above activity ideas.

References:

Skill Areas: Occupational Therapy

<http://therapystreetforkids.com/Sensory2.html>

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne

https://www.rch.org.au/ot/information_sheets/Kids_health_information/

Dear St. Coletta Parents,

In preparation for potential school closures due to the COVID-19, the physical therapy team has put together some ideas to keep your child moving at home. We hope this will assist with the maintenance of your child's motor skills and ability to maximally access their school environment. We encourage you to participate in gross motor activities with your child every day. We provided several options, some of which may or may not be appropriate for your child's needs. Please email your child's physical therapist with any questions or concerns regarding a certain activity, we are happy to help!

Stay Active!

The St. Coletta Physical Therapy Team

Classrooms	Physical Therapist	Email
Freedom Senators United Royals Mystics Seniors 7, Seniors 10	Keith Albarillo	Keith.Albarillo@stcoletta.org
Freedom Patriots Ravens Seniors 6, Seniors 9	Lauren O'Connell	Lauren.O'Connell@stcoletta.org
United Wizards Eagles Orioles Blue Jays Seniors 4	Lacey Sinnett	Lacey.Sinnett@stcoletta.org
Red Sox Nationals Captials Giants Seniors 1, Seniors 3, Seniors 5	Aimee Schuh	Aimee.Schuh@stcoletta.org

Gross motor activities and stretches to promote movement

- Walking for 5-10 minutes every hour
- Walking on uneven surfaces (grass, gravel , mulch, etc.)
- Sitting either on a couch/chair
- Sitting on the floor with legs out
- Practicing going from a sit to a stand
- Going up and down stairs and curbs
- Spending time out of their wheelchair either on their stomach, back, or side
- Playing games such as catch, soccer, baseball, basketball
- Movement games on YouTube such as GoNoodle
- Dancing (Dance kids videos, playing music)
- Stretches for back of the legs: sit with legs out and knees straight
- Wearing braces during waking hours for prolonged stretches
- Use any equipment you may have at home such as standers, walkers, and activity chairs for out of wheelchair time



St. Coletta Special Education Public Charter School

1901 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20003

3/16/2020

Dear St. Coletta Parents,

In preparation for the potential school closure due to the Coronavirus, the speech therapy team has put together a small packet of activities for you and your child to work on at home. We are hoping this will allow your child to maintain the skills they learned this year, prevent regression during a possible long closure, and allow for increased independence at home. Please complete these activities with your child and provide the necessary supervision.

These activities cover expressive and receptive communication skills, or the language your child uses to communicate and the language your child understands. We have provided several activity options for verbal communicators and for students who use a communication system and options for beginning, middle, and advanced communicators. Therefore, some activities provided below may be too easy or too challenging for your child. Please use discretion when working on these tasks.

If you have any questions about your child's communication system, activities that are appropriate for your child, or any concerns please email your child's classroom speech therapist.

Sincerely,

Your St. Coletta Speech Therapy Team

Erin.weisenberger@stcoletta.org

- Mystics, Royals, Seniors 3

Nora.eskin@stcoletta.org

- Red Sox, Wizards, Nationals

Jacqueline.reber@stcoletta.org

- Freedom, United, Seniors 7

Nicole.hearn@stcoletta.org

- Patriots, Senators, Ravens

Alyssa.berger@stcoletta.org

- Giants, Blue Jays, Seniors 1

Kristen.letkiewicz@stcoletta.org

- Eagles, Orioles, Capitals

Emma.feldmann@stcoletta.org

- Seniors 2, 4, 5

Sandy.fallon@stcoletta.org

- Seniors 6, 8, 9, 10






Amanda.soper@stcoletta.org

- Assistive Technology Specialist

Expressive Vocabulary:

Your child uses **Core Vocabulary** to communicate. Core Vocabulary is a relatively small number of words that make up the majority of what is said in normal communication. With a few hundred words, a person can say over 80% of what is needed! Frequently used core words include the words "work", "feel", "play", "read", "more", "stop", "like", "go", "want", "turn", "put", "help", "do", "don't", "good", "bad", etc.

For Beginning Communicators: we start with frequently used and motivating words such as "more", "go", "help", "eat", "drink", etc. Below are some examples of how to incorporate the Core Words "More" and "Help"


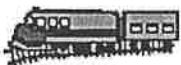



Activity	Ideas
 Mealtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give only a small portion of food, say MORE before giving your child more- Put/ keep food in container that your child cannot open, say HELP before helping them to obtain what is inside the container.
 Metro/Car Ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- When you reach a metro stop that isn't your stop, say "three MORE stops, two MORE stops, etc."- When on a train that is stopped or at a traffic light say "go MORE" when it is time for the train or car to move- Ask your child to HELP swipe a metro card, hand over fare, etc.- If your child is being assisted onto a train, bus, car, etc. say HELP before providing assistance
 Playtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Play with your child and take control of toys / actions. (e.g. Making a car go, making faces, tickling, etc...) stop the action and say MORE before doing the action again.- Give your child a toy he /she cannot operate alone and say HELP before operating it.- Give your child a toy without batteries and say HELP before "fixing" it by putting in batteries.
 Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- After reading the page, say MORE before reading the next page- Ask your child to HELP turn the page.
 Bedtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- While helping your child get ready for bed, say HELP whenever you assist him/her.- Read a story or sing a song before bed, after the first story / song say MORE and do it again



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For Middle Communicators: we continue to use core words but use more challenging concepts such as pronouns (e.g. "I", "you", "we") and negation (e.g. "not", "don't"). Below are examples of how to incorporate more challenging words into everyday activities. Many middle level communicators are working on combining 2 to 3 words when communicating. If your child is at this level, encourage them to use more than one word when communicating (e.g. "I DON'T" like).

Activity	Ideas
 Mealtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ask your child "do you want something DIFFERENT?"- Put something on your child's plate that he doesn't like, say DON'T like it if they try it or refuse to try it.- If someone finishes and still has food on their plate, point to it and say DON'T want more, finished
 Metro/Car Ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Look at the metro signs, read the rules DON'T eat, DON'T drink, DON'T run, DON'T leave bags, etc.- If waiting at a platform with multiple lines, point to the trains you aren't getting on (e.g. blue while you wait for orange) and say not this one, DIFFERENT.
 Playtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- After playing with a toy, ask your child if they want something DIFFERENT.- Talk about rules say DON'T throw the ball inside, DON'T yell, etc...
 Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Hold up a book say THIS one or DIFFERENT" if your child doesn't like that book, give them a different one.- Talk about the book or pictures in the book; talk about if you like it or DON'T like it.
 Bedtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If you have more than one flavor of toothpaste, show one kind and say this one or DIFFERENT.- When picking out pajamas, hold them up and say not these DIFFERENT, then pick out another pair.

For Advanced Communicators: these communicators should be working on using 3 to 4 word phrases and full sentences to comment, ask questions, and answer questions. Reading with your child is a great way to work on these skills. Encourage your child to read the book to you and ask you questions. Alternatively, you should ask your child "wh" questions about the book. Make sure to pick a book that is appropriate for your child's cognitive level!



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Receptive Language: this is the ability to understand words and language.

For Beginning Communicators: These students are working on understanding the meaning of simple words such as “eat” vs. “drink” or learning the name of common objects or actions.

- A great way to support these students is talking about everything you are doing. When feeding the student you can say “you are EATING applesauce” or “time to DRINK juice”.
- These students might also be working on following simple 1-step directions. Playing Simon Says is a fun way to practice directions and learn the name of body parts (e.g. “touch nose”).

For Middle Communicators: Many of these students are working on learning the meaning of prepositions (e.g. “in” “out”, “on”, “under”) and descriptive language (e.g. adjective such as “big”, “little”, “hot”, “cold”, etc.)

- A great way to target this skill is by helping in the kitchen (e.g. “put the tomatoes “ON” the cutting board” or “put the milk IN in the bowl”) or playing Simon Says (e.g. “put the bear UNDER the bed”, “FIRST, put the duck ON the table, THEN put the horse BETWEEN the chairs”).
- To target descriptive language you can point to and label colors and sizes in a book (e.g. “This is the BIG horse” ,”That is the LITTLE duck”) or play with common toys such as play-dough and blocks while commenting “The playdough feels SOFT and COLD” or “The blocks are HARD and SMALL”.

For Advanced Communicators: Many of these students are working on problem solving or answering higher level “wh” questions (e.g. “why” or “how” questions).

- Problem-solving can be targeted by sabotaging the situation. For example, you could give your child a colored pencil that is not sharp enough to use. When they realize they can’t use the pencil ask “What can you do to fix it?” – Answer: “Sharpen it”, “Use a marker”, “Find a different pencil”, etc...
- Reading newspapers, magazines, and fun stories is a great way to target high level “wh” questions (for example, when reading a book you can ask “Why do you think “Sally” was crying?” or “How do you know that an apple is a fruit?” – answer: “It has seeds.”).

****Please reach out to your student’s speech therapist with any questions!****

Dear St. Coletta Parents,

In preparation for the potential school closure due to the Coronavirus, the social work team has put together a small list of activities for your child to perform at home. This will hopefully allow for maintenance of your child's learned social skills and lead to new opportunities for growth and increased independence at home. It is recommended that your child has supervision upon performing any of these activities. These activities cover a variety of different areas, such as social and communication skills. As you may see there are several options, some of which may or may not be appropriate for your child's needs. Please use discretion when working on these tasks. If you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail your child's social worker, as we would be happy to provide an explanation or other recommendations with a given activity.

Thank you,
Your St. Coletta Social Work Team

House 2 Social Worker: elliott.lane@stcoletta.org

House 3 Social Worker: maryam.khatami@stcoletta.org

House 4/5 Social Worker: JDrake@stcoletta.org

Social skills:

- Games, like Uno, Candyland, Sorry, Jenga, Connect 4 and Animal Charades, help with building social skills, such as turn-taking, self-expression and decision-making.
- Doing a chore or a task together is a great way to practice social skills, such as problem-solving and working as part of a team.
- Reading books or stories about social dynamics and situations together will help to understand appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and interactions in different social situations.

Anger Management:

- Paying attention to warning signs that tell you you're feeling angry.
 - Warning signs include:
 - Thinking negative thoughts
 - Feeling the anger in your body, such as a fast heartbeat, making a fist, sweating, making an angry face, feeling heat, and having tense or tight muscles.
- If you have or feel these warning signs then use the coping skills below:
 - Coping skills:
 - Take a walk
 - Coloring or Drawing
 - Use "I feel...because" statements
 - Practice deep breathing: blowing bubbles, blowing out candles on birthday cake
 - Listen to appropriate music e.g. relaxation
 - Count to ten

- Lay on the floor
- Talk to someone
- Take a break

Problem-solving:

You may use the following steps with your child to help them solve various problems and make decisions while at home:

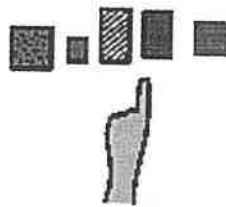
1.) State the problem.



2.) Brainstorm and think of possible options



3.) Choose the best solution.



4.) Give it a try.



5.) Evaluate...did it work?

