

# Rocky Mountain Kid Therapy

11094 Rutgers Court  
Westminster, CO, 80031  
(303) 886-5348  
FAX: (303) 927-5393  
[www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com](http://www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com)



## Handwriting Suggestions

- Prior to engaging in handwriting or typing tasks, the student may benefit from completing some of the following exercises to get his hands and body ready for work:
  - Manipulate putty or playdough (roll it into a snake, form balls by rolling it between palms or between thumb and index finger of each hand, hide objects like marbles in putty and have The student find them, work on finger isolation by pinching the putty between the thumb and each finger).
  - Have The student clean his work space (i.e. clean desk using spray bottle with water and wipe dry) before starting his work.
  - Chair or wall push-ups.
  - Help groom the horses or do some grounds keeping.
  - Animal walks, such as the crab and bear walk.
  - Play catch with ball or balloon.
  - Playing games such as Twister, Hokey Pokey, Pick-Up Sticks, Jacks, popping plastic bubble packing material, spinning tops, Lite Brite, Connect Four, and card games.
  
- Continue to work on increasing his core strength and stability to help him maintain proper sitting posture when writing.
  - Have him sit on therapy ball or inflatable seat cushion during writing activities.
  - Continue to have him participate in activities such as karate and swimming.
  - Have the student write in alternative positions (i.e. write at vertical white board or easel while standing or sitting on ball, watch TV or play video games while lying on stomach and propped on elbows).
  - Wheelbarrow and seal walking.
  - Crawling up a steep incline (i.e. slide at park) or up stairs.
  - Play games on hands and knees (4-point position).
  - Play tug of war, perform monkey bars, or climb on playground structures.
  - Have the student do modified sit-ups, stomach crunches, and roly-poly position (lay on back, cross arms at chest, tuck chin to chest and knees to chest simultaneously).
  - Increase back strength by doing airplane lifts while laying on stomach on the floor or off the edge of the bed (floor: lift head, straight arms, and legs off the floor simultaneously; bed: lay on stomach with stomach and head hanging off the edge...with hands behind head, lift trunk and head up to assume the same level position as legs).
  
- Ideas to help the student develop a more functional, less fatiguing, pencil grip:
  - Perform activities that help strengthen fingers, such as pinching clay, using squeeze toys (i.e. tennis ball, koosh ball), using a paper or thumb punch, pop beads, tying and untying knots, and using clothespins to help hang laundry or to sort small objects (i.e. beads, cotton balls).

# Rocky Mountain Kid Therapy

11094 Rutgers Court  
Westminster, CO, 80031  
(303) 886-5348  
FAX: (303) 927-5393  
[www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com](http://www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com)



- Use tweezers or toast tongs to pick up objects like marshmallows, macaroni, and beads. Reinforce the use of the thumb, index and middle fingers when using these tools.
  - Use small pieces of chalk or crayon when writing to encourage the correct grip.
  - Supply activities that provide sensory input to reinforce the joint and finger position. Write on paper placed over sandpaper or plastic canvas for needle work. Write in clay or playdough using a pencil sized dowel or an actual pencil.
  - Retrain The student to use a tripod grasp. Have him use the new grip a few minutes each day. Gradually increase the time the new grip is used over several weeks.
  - **It may be difficult if not impossible to change his grip because his current grip is already firmly established. But, let's give it a try!!**
- Ideas to help the student with spatial organization when writing:
    - Use a spacer such as a popsicle stick or penny to place consistent spacing between his letters.
    - Use graph paper (experiment with different sizes) to help him visualize spacing of words and letters.
    - Use graph paper or turn lined paper horizontally to create columns to help keep math problems aligned.
  - Other strategies and recommendations:
    - If The student needs to copy from a chalkboard, have him face the board while writing.
    - Keep the blackboard uncluttered.
    - Have another student share his notes or provide copies of important information or of the lecture to limit the amount of copying from the board.
    - Reduce the writing load. Allow oral reports and examinations. Allow The student to dictate or record assignments.
    - Using a timer and setting it for short increments of time may help The student stay focused on his academic tasks.
    - **Continue to have The student work on his typing skills, emphasizing the correct fingering. This will help improve his speed and accuracy, thus making written communication a more enjoyable experience for him!!!**
    - **Continue to have The student work on his cursive signature in order to perform functional and daily living tasks, such as signing a job application and checks.**
  - Ideas to make handwriting fun:
    - Use various writing instruments such as colored pencils, grease pencils, gel pens, and vibrating pens.

# Rocky Mountain Kid Therapy

11094 Rutgers Court  
Westminster, CO, 80031  
(303) 886-5348

FAX: (303) 927-5393

[www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com](http://www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com)



Rocky Mountain  
KID THERAPY

- Practice letter and word formations in/on different media: shaving cream, cornmeal, colored salt, glitter glue pens, and sidewalk chalk.
- Write with paint brushes and water on the chalkboard or sidewalk.
- Begin a letter and/or email exchange program with a friend or pen pal.
- Provide special paper for final copies of work (i.e. paper that has special boarders, colored paper, etc.).
- Play games that incorporate writing, such as writing down clues or guesses with I Spy, Boggle, Scattergories, Hangman, and tic-tac-toe with cursive using letters in signature.
- Have him make his own address and phone book.
- “Fun”ctional ways to incorporate handwriting skills:
  - Address envelopes.
  - Make and send cards.
  - Fill out a job application.
  - Label maps.
  - Take phone messages.
  - Write down directions.
  - Fill out invitations.
  - Make shopping lists.
  - Write a to-do or chore list.
  - Write thank you notes.
  - Send postcards and letters.
  - Keep a diary or journal.
  - Complete crossword puzzles.
- Ideas to help The student improve his sensory processing skills:
  - Place palms on desk with elbows straight and push down – do before starting an academic task.
  - While reading, sit under a table, in a bean bag chair or against pillows.
  - Do push/pull activities: erase boards, wash his desk, carry heavy books as an errand, pull self around room while sitting on rolling chair, tug of war, grounds keeping around barn.
  - Perform other heavy work activities, such as crashing and burning into a pile of pillows, wrestling or rough housing, jumping on his bed, and trying to push the wall over.
  - Donkey kicks, animal walks, wall or chair push-ups.
  - Allow him to manipulate hand fidgets (paper clip, clay balls, Koosh ball, eraser, etc.) while working.
  - Have squeezing and stretching objects available, such as Theraband, Theratubing, and Theraputty.
  - Provide opportunities for movement during academic day (march, hop, skip, run in place, stretch, utilize playground equipment, jump on trampoline).
  - Sit on therapy ball, inflatable seat cushion, or T-stool while doing school work.

# Rocky Mountain Kid Therapy

11094 Rutgers Court  
Westminster, CO, 80031  
(303) 886-5348  
FAX: (303) 927-5393  
[www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com](http://www.RockyMountainKidTherapy.com)



Rocky Mountain  
KID THERAPY

- Utilize crunchy or chewy snacks, such as pretzels, apples, chips, raw vegetables, celery, fruit chews, gum, licorice, and raisins.
- Use a straw with water bottle or cup.
- Encourage him to listen to slow, rhythmical, calming music while working if hyperaroused.
- Play loud, fast-paced music before and during academic tasks if The student appears lethargic.
- Develop a quiet area in your house that can help The student calm down, reorganize, and refocus. Possibly provide a bean bag chair, pillows, or a sleeping bag.
- Have The student complete academic tasks while rolled up tightly in a blanket or in a sleeping bag.
- Roll a large ball over The student while he is lying down. Use firm pressure.
- Make a person sandwich where pillow are piled on top of The student. Add weight by pushing down on the pillows.

Stacy La Bar, OTR