

Christian Families Home Schooling a Child with Down Syndrome:

Early Intervention Resources

*This material would be for
Down Syndrome children
about birth-age 3*

Early Intervention and Your Family

Many families have benefited greatly in the beginning from these programs. They are thankful for some help with this special little one. They have a worker that works well with their child and doesn't mind home schooling going on at the same time. Other families decide that after awhile in an Early Intervention program they can do themselves what the worker has come to do. They are thankful for help in the beginning, but now they are ready to do it on their own. A helpful worker might even give the family materials to keep them going on their own for awhile. Others decide right from the beginning that they want to do it themselves and find a resource such as the *Brigance Inventory of Early Development* to aid them. Each family and each situation is unique. The following resources have been used by families teaching their child with Down Syndrome. May the Lord give you guidance and wisdom as you decide what is best for your family.

**Curriculum Associates
PO Box 2001
North Billerica, MA 01862-0901
1-800-225-0248**

- ❖ **Brigance Inventory of Early Development-Revised (Birth-Age 7)
Order # GH674
Revised... \$124.00**

This criterion-referenced manual assesses developmental, readiness, and early academic skills in 11 major skill areas. It is particularly helpful for those that choose not to be involved with early intervention programs and preschool programs. This manual may be helpful in the following ways:

- ∞ It does not require a professional to give the test. The results do not need to be sent away in order to be interpreted.
- ∞ Some student pages can be reproduced.
- ∞ Different assessment methods can be used to accommodate for different situations.
- ∞ It will help you write your own IEPs (Individual Education Plan) since the objective is given for each area (An objective is what you want your child to learn such as *John will point to 5 of the 30 body parts listed on page 3 of the manual.*)
- ∞ It may also be of help to those that need to keep careful records of progress because there is a record booklet that gives a list of skills and ages as to when that skill is normally acquired.

The following skill areas are addressed. A short description of each area is given.

- ∞ **Preambulatory motor** (This gives a list of skills infants and babies acquire before becoming ambulatory.)
- ∞ **Gross-motor:** This area covers such skills as standing, walking, stairs, running, jumping, and kicking. One sample objective under the heading of kicking is *Walks up and kicks a stationary ball.* The information in this section would help you create activities such as games where your child would go up and kick a stationary ball.
- ∞ **Fine-motor:** This area covers such areas such as general manipulative skills, building towers, puzzles, drawing, prewriting, and scissors. A sample objective is *Copying designs* such as circles, horizontal and vertical lines, and crosses. Knowing this objective would help you create activities on a chalkboard, white board, or with colored markers to give practice copying these shapes.
- ∞ **Self-help:** This area covers such topics as eating, dressing and undressing, toileting,

Note: Any prices given are approximate.

and chores. A sample objective is *Pulls down garments*. This dressing skill is also needed for toileting.

- ∞ **Pre-Speech:** This area covers language from birth to age 1.
- ∞ **Speech and language:** This area covers ages 1 through 7. While many parents feel comfortable teaching the other areas themselves, this is one area that most families choose to use a professional. A sample skill in the area of vocabulary asks a child to point to a picture and then name that picture, such as a dog. While normally developing children can do this at 18 months, a child with Down Syndrome may be able to understand speech (receptive skill) and point to a picture of a dog, but he may not be able to say the word “dog” until age 3, 4, or later. Be encouraged that he is learning many new things receptively, even though his expressive speech is very delayed.
- ∞ **General knowledge and comprehension:** This area covers such topics as body parts, colors, shapes, size and positional concepts, and knowing use of objects. A sample objective is to identify objects that are big and little. Your child is also asked to give the words expressively as you point out a big object. Again, you can be encouraged by the fact that he knows a concept receptively even though he cannot give expressive answers.
- ∞ **Readiness:** The first topic in this area concerns experience with books and covers ages 1 to 7. You should have books readily available for your child. Reading to your child is an important part of helping him develop a love of books. The other topics are for ages 5-7. These areas deal with visual discrimination between designs, letters, and words, recitation of the alphabet,

and naming and identifying the uppercase and lowercase letters.

- ∞ **Basic reading:** This area covers kindergarten skills for ages 5-7. Topics such as auditory discrimination, initial consonants, short and long vowels, and first words such as color words, number words, and common signs are listed. One objective for this area is reading the color words. You may need to adapt and allow your child to sign the color or match the color words to color swatches. Your child can still begin a sight reading vocabulary even though he may not speak well. Some research also shows that reading can aid the speech development of a child with Down Syndrome.
- ∞ **Basic math:** This area covers writing numbers, addition, subtraction, recognition of money, and time.

**Woodbine House: Special Needs
Collection
6510 Bells Mill Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
1-800-843-7323**

- ❖ **Babies with Down Syndrome: A New Parents Guide** Edited by Karen Stray-Gundersen @ \$17.00 Every new parent should read this book. It covers such topics as daily care, early intervention, education, and medical issues all in a positive tone.
- ❖ **Communication Skills in Children with Down Syndrome: A Guide for Parents** by Libby Kumin @ \$15.00 Many practical home activities are given for speech and language development starting in infancy.
- ❖ **Gross Motor Skills in Children with Down Syndrome: A Guide for**

Parents and Professionals by Patricia Winders @\$17.00 This book gives 100 activities for children birth – age 6.

- ❖ **The New Language of Toys: Teaching Communication Skills to Children with Special Needs** by Sue Schwartz and Joan Heller @17.00 This book can be used for many years. It shows you how to best utilize the toys that your child has on hand to help develop communication skills.

**NATHHAN
PO Box 39**

Porthill, ID 83853

Web page: <http://www.NATHHAN.com>

- ❖ ***NATHHAN (National Challenged Homeschoolers Associated Network)**

The Bushnells are a Christian family that reside in Idaho one mile from the Canadian border. Tom and Sherry home school their 9 children, 3 of whom are adopted and have special needs. They provide support through the NATTHAN organization to support other families home schooling children with special needs. They provide a quarterly magazine that includes resources, articles from parents and professionals, and lots of letters from families. A Family Directory is available to members to provide encouragement and support to others. A Lending Library is also provided. Members donate postage to and from the library when they use it. The Lending Library Catalog can be reviewed on the NATHHAN.com website. Membership fee is a suggested donation of \$25.00. The actual cost is \$35.00 per family.

*This pamphlet was prepared by Diane Brown.
Permission is given to copy with proper credits.*