# A Message to Parents and Educators

Brain Gym® is a series of simple and enjoyable movements that we use with our students in Educational Kinesiology (Edu-K) to enhance their experience of whole-brain learning. These activities make all types of learning easier, and are especially effective with academic skills. The word education comes from the Latin word *educare*, which means "to draw out." Kinesiology, derived from the Greek root *kinesis*, means "motion," and is the study of the movement of the human body. Educational Kinesiology is a system for empowering learners of any age by using movement activities to draw out hidden potential and make it readily available.

Traditionally, educators have addressed failure by devising programs to better motivate, entice, reinforce, drill, and "stamp in" learning. These programs succeed to a degree. However, why do some learners do so well while others do not? In Edu-K we see that some individuals try too hard and "switch off" the brain-integration mechanisms necessary for complete learning. Information is received by the back brain as an "impress" but is inaccessible to the front brain as an "express." This inability to express what is learned locks the student into a failure syndrome.

The solution is whole-brain learning, through movement repatterning and through Brain Gym activities that enable students to access those parts of the brain previously inaccessible to them. The changes in learning and behavior are often immediate and profound, as children discover how to receive information and express themselves simultaneously.

Other books in this series include *Edu-K for Kids*, which teaches the repatterning procedures recommended for everyone who wants to improve the quality of his or her living, learning, and enjoyment of movement. The *Brain Gym* book teaches simple activities which have changed many lives since they were first introduced. Although Brain Gym activities will help any individual, young or old, to make better use of innate learning potential, they are most effective after Dennison Laterality Repatterning (described in *Edu-K for Kids*). This teacher's edition offers a more in-depth explanation of the Brain Gym movements and whole-brain learning concepts.

For more than fifty years, pioneers in behavioral optometry and sensorimotor training have provided statistical research showing the effects of movement upon learning. Dr. Dennison's familiarity with this research, oriented mainly toward children with specific language disabilities, led him to extrapolate this information into quick, simple, task-specific movements that benefit every learner. These movements of body and energy are appropriate to the special needs of people learning in our modern, highly technological culture. This book was written so that people can experience the vitalizing effects of these movements in their daily-life activities.

Many teachers use all of the Brain Gym movements in their classrooms every day. Others use only the movements related to reading, during the reading hour. Of course, no one should ever be required to move in a way which feels unnatural or uncomfortable. Each student should work within his or her own abilities, and be encouraged, yet never forced, to do any of these activities. People tell us they do these movements automatically, just "knowing" when they can benefit from Brain Gym!

For parents or teachers using the *Brain Gym Teacher's Edition*, the categories entitled ACTIVATES THE BRAIN FOR, ACADEMIC SKILLS, and BEHAVIORAL/POSTURAL CORRELATES may be especially helpful. Often, doing Brain Gym movements for a specific skill will allow the student to make an immediate improvement in behavior or performance. However, in most cases the information will help the parent or teacher guide the learner gradually to long-term benefits.

When students are introduced to Brain Gym, they seem to love it, request it, teach it to their friends, and integrate it into their lives, without any coaching or supervision. The skilled teacher who enjoys movement will inspire that motivation without effort!