

Movement Experiences

DESCRIPTION

Movement activities and games are a great way for your child to develop their skills of social interaction and communication, as well as coordination, balance and strength. Having good gross motor skills helps your child to participate with other children in outdoor games and P.E. class. Movement experiences can also help your child develop their sensory processing skills, which can help them feel more organised and focus their attention on other play tasks

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Fun Movement Activities:

- Running, skipping and hopping.
- Dancing.
- Walking on stilts (cans with skipping rope handles).
- Tumbling and wrestling.
- Hide-and-Seek.
- Playing on playground equipment.
- Bike or trike riding.
- Hopscotch.
- Playing with hoops/racquets.
- Obstacle courses.
- Ball / beanbag / Frisbee / catch and throw games.
- Swimming.



Heavy Work Activities:

Total body activities that require heavy muscle work for your child have a special organising effect on the nervous system i.e. they help your child to feel calm and focused. They can be very useful to do with your child prior to challenging tasks such as hair brushing or feeding, and as a way of helping to calm your child before bedtime. Try the following activities:

Scooterboard: This is a piece of wood with wheels that the child can lie on and propel. Activities using scooterboards are good for movement and body awareness, as well as foundation motor skills such as muscle tone and arm and back strength. You can make your own scooterboard – ask your OT for information.

Games to play on your scooterboard:

- Rocket Blastoff: the child pushes off the wall with their feet.
- Rocket Blastoff with hands.
- Knee Ride: the child kneels on the scooterboard inside a hoop, you pull the hoop.



- Tummy Spin: the child lies on the board on their tummy and spins themselves.
- Swish Swash: child kneels on the scooterboard with the hoop around them. You kneel behind and chant 'swish, swash, who's in the wash?' as you push them back and forth.

Mini Trampoline:

A mini-trampoline is a versatile piece of equipment that can enable your child to have an intense movement experience, even inside on a rainy day. Make sure you have your trampoline situated in a safe place and that your child is supervised at all times when using it. These games progress from easiest to more difficult:

- Sit and sing 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' while rocking back and forth and gently bouncing.
- Knee bouncing – let them hold your hands in a face-to-face position.
- Standing up holding hands.
- Racetrack – using coloured circles for red/green 'traffic lights' or use a homemade 'stop' sign. Practice jumping and stopping on command.
- Jumping like various animals.
- Drops – bottom drops, knee drops, on hands & knees.

Big Ball Games:

Big ball games are very popular with children, and you can use space-hoppers as well if you turn the handles out of the way:

- Knee Bounce: Child kneels on the ball while you gently bounce them
- Ball Kick
- Humpty Dumpty: Child sits on the ball with you supporting them. On 'fall' of the Humpty Dumpty song you help them fall to the floor (cushions and pillows to be placed on the floor)
- Child lies on their tummy on the floor and pushes or throws a ball to you, or to hit skittles.
- Child bats a ball or a balloon into the air, or to you.
- Child lies on their tummy on the ball.

- Relax and Rock: Child lies over the ball on their tummy and you gently rock the ball backward and forward. If done slowly and rhythmically, this is a very calming game before bedtime.
- Child sits on the ball and bounces themselves up and down with their feet.
- Child uses two feet together to kick the ball away when it is thrown to them.
- You and the child stand on either side of the ball and try and push each other back.

Animal Walks:

Animal walks are excellent for active play at home, and especially when you want to help your child to move to another spot. The positions the child adopts for each walk provides heavy muscle work, which builds body awareness and helps with motor planning skills.

Try:

- Bunny Hop.
- Frog Jump.
- Bear Walk.
- Crab Walk: Child sits on the floor, then lifts bottom up so their hands and feet are on the floor and bottom in the air, and moves sideways.
- Turtle Crawl: crawling with beanbags resting on the child's back.
- Seal Crawl: pulling self along floor with hands, legs straight out and crossed.
- Elephant Walk: Legs straight, one arm touching the floor, one arm acting as elephant's trunk.

Rough and Tumble:

These activities involve face-to-face interaction and help your child to develop their attention and interaction skills.

- Grand Old Duke of York: You lift the child off the ground in front of you coupled with song – start with small lifts until your child is comfortable.



- Yankee Doodle went to Town: You are kneeling bent over, child riding on your back, adult rocking back and forth.
- Row, Row, Row your boat: Adult sitting on floor, child standing in front holding your hands. Sing the song while rocking your child back and forth.
- Teddy Bear Climb the Stairs: Adult standing with legs slightly bent. Child climbs up your legs to stand on your knees.
- Aeroplane Ride: Adult lies on their back, take's child's hands, then rest your feet gently on their tummy and lift your feet up, rocking the child back and forth gently.
- Child stands up straight, sing 'Ring Around the Rosey' and on 'down', child drops down so their hands and head touch the floor.
- Child and adult hold the ends of piece of long material, adult pulls first, then child pulls.

Indoor Games:

Your child can experience fun movement activities even if you don't have easy access to outdoors or playground equipment.

Try the following:

- Cardboard boxes: For rolling, tunnels and cubbies.
- Blankets and hammocks: for swinging, hiding and rolling.
- Swivel chairs for spinning: make sure your child has control of when to stop.
- Blow-up/plastic paddling pools: great sensory bins in the winter to fill with bean bags, balls or pillows.
- Broomsticks or dowel: use to do chin-ups or floor pulls.
- Beach balls: fill with small amount of water to make a fun ball that will not run away because the water weighs it down.
- Old bicycle inner tubes: For stretching and playing Tug of War.
- Laundry baskets: to sit and climb in and out of (good for symbolic play e.g. train or bus ride).

Tummy Time:

Encourage your child to spend as much time as possible carrying out activities when on their tummy as this develops stability and strength in their body and arms:

- Rolling balls into a goal.
- Building with blocks.
- Floor games.
- Drawing pictures.
- Reading a book.
- Whilst watching TV.



