

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT

Gross Motor Skills and Coordination

Please ensure that adult supervision is given when completing these activities.

The development of gross motor skills including body & spatial awareness and bilateral integration are essential for good motor coordination.

Gross motor skills are required for playing outside and indoors, physical education at school, leisure activities e.g. swimming, dressing and every day actions like walking, running, jumping and sitting upright at a desk to develop other skills such as handwriting.

Body Awareness and Spatial Awareness

To encourage your child to explore their environment more fully and to develop body awareness and spatial awareness

Activities:

- Completing puzzles, games or drawings on your tummy or while laying over a gym ball (make sure the ball is small enough for the hands to reach the floor)
- Plasticine/clay/play dough activities: encourage pressure through wrists and fingers and heavy kneading, pulling, pressing through individual fingers
- Helping in the garden: including raking grass/leaves, pushing wheelbarrow with toys in, watering plants and trees with a watering can and digging
- Helping around the house – wiping the table after dinner, putting away toys, carrying shopping bags, pushing chairs under the tables
- Rolling, bouncing and catching a ball with a heavy ball, in sitting, kneeling and standing
- Animal walks (crab walk, bear walk, army crawl, frog jumps)
- Obstacle Courses- set up obstacle courses at the park, in the garden or in the house where the child must crawl, go under and over objects, go through/ between objects, jump, big steps, climb and any actions or activities where they must negotiate objects.



Bilateral Integration (Coordination of both sides of the body)

Bilateral integration involves the ability to use two sides of your body together in a co-ordinated way. This develops by using both sides to do the same thing, such as fastening buttons, moving on to using alternating movements such as walking up the stairs. This finally moves on to using different actions with both sides such as using cutlery.

Activities:

- Windmills: stand with feet apart and arms open to the side. Bend forward and make the left hand touch the right foot. Come back upright and then make the right hand touch the left foot. Do this slowly so that you do not get dizzy.
- Stand upright with feet together. Bend up the left knee to touch the right hand. Then bend the right knee touch the left hand.
- Cross over jumps- jump with feet open and then jump and cross over. Try doing it with crossing the arms too.
- Spotty dogs jumps. Stride forward with one leg, whilst taking the other leg back. Once you can do this, bring in the arms, either taking both arms forward and back together, or alternate them with the opposite leg, i.e. left leg forward at the same time the right arm goes forward, then jump and change to the other side.
- Jumping games e.g. hopscotch and jumping on a trampoline, star jumps
- Marching games
- Catching bubbles in various ways such as clapping hands together, popping with one finger or catch with one hand. Use bubble wands and wave them from side to side.
- Heavy work activities: Helping in the garden and around the house e.g wiping the table, putting away toys, carrying shopping bags and pushing chairs under the table.
- High Fives: using opposite hands to the other person.



Together with you, in your local community