WHAT TO KNOW & HOW TO DEVELOP GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

*** PRESCHOOL - SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

BALANCE, COORDINATION, & STRENGTH

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW.

- Balance refers to your child's ability to remain upright and steady.
- Coordination refers to your child's ability to use different parts of their body together in a smooth manner.
- Strength refers to the amount of force your child's muscles can make. This helps them to hold their body in challenging positions and lift heavy objects.
- Today's children spend much more time indoors engaged in sedentary activities.
 Without regular exercise that promote balance, strength, and coordination, a child is at risk for weight gain and poor endurance. This means he/she may easily tire.

TRY THIS

Help your child monitor time spent on sedentary activities such as watching TV and video games. Spend as much time being active!
Walk on a "balance beam". Make a pretend beam using a rope, line drawn with chalk on sidewalk/driveway, or tape on the floor
Take a long walk
Jump on a trampoline
Ride a bicycle
Use a scooter
Swim
Yoga
Play catch & throw with a ball
Kick a ball back & forth
Play on swings & a slide
Run around an athletic field, backyard, or park
Play in the snow
Roll in the grass
Jump rope
Use a Pogo Stick
Touch your toes
Put on music & dance

WHAT TO KNOW & HOW TO DEVELOP GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

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GROSS MOTOR PLANNING

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW:

- Motor planning refers to the ability to conceive (think of) and perform unfamiliar and complex body movements in a coordinated manner. Children should be able to see the possibilities in their environment for movement.
- Motor planning also includes the ability to organize and sequence (put in order) the actions correctly.
- One aspect of motor planning involves a child's ability to imitate (copy what you do).

TRY THIS

"Encourage your child to use their words to explain their ideas about how they want to start (initiate) the movement activity and then gently guide them as needed
Play Simon Says
Roll like a caterpillar
Jump like a frog
Spin like a top
Fly like a butterfly
Use a log to "walk the plank"
Build a fort outdoors
Play hop-scotch
Jumping Jacks
Yoga
Make an obstacle course in the backyard (jump over a log, walk backwards on a rope, step into/out of a box, etc.)
Some commercially available games that help with gross motor planning are: Twister, Red Rover, Wiggle & Giggle, I Can Do That (Cat in the Hat), and Hullaballoo

WHAT TO KNOW & HOW TO DEVELOP FINE MOTOR SKILLS

*** PRESCHOOL – SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

UPPER BODY & ARM STRENGTH

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW:

- Adequate hand and finger strength is required to exert enough force to match the qualities of the object to be grasped and manipulated.
- Without adequate strength, child will not be able to use tools and/or operate objects as required.
- The child may fatigue before the task is completed.

TRY THIS!

Push Ups
Wall Push Ups – child stands facing the wall about an arm's length away. He/she places both hands on the wall at shoulder height. The child slowly bends elbows to bring his/her upper body toward & then away from the wall. His/her feet remain stationary. Repeat many times.
Outdoor Painting - provide a large paint brush and bucket of water. Allow your child to "paint" outdoor walls, fences, railing, etc.
Bounce on a Hippity Hop Ball
Animal Walk - see your Occupational Therapist
Playground Equipment - use arms to climb up rope ladders and the jungle gym
Pull - a wagon or pillow case full of heavy toys or other objects
Push - box full of heavy toys or other objects
Household Chores - carry bags of groceries & put objects away on shelves
Blocks & Cups - try to stack as high as you can
Ball Play – throw and catch
Pound a ball toy
Dig in sand & soil
Swimming - great exercise to build strength and endurance while having fun!
On the Wall - use an easel or hang paper on the wall for your child to decorate. Use crayons, pencils, paint, makers, or chalk to color or produce works of art!
On the Floor - while on his/her belly, child can color, write, watch television, do puzzles, etc.

GET OUT OF THAT CHAIR!

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO ASSUME DIFFERENT POSITIONS

www.ToolsToGrowOT.com www.ToolsToGrowTherapy.com

******* 1/2 KNEEL

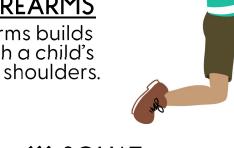
1/2 Kneel increases core strength and improves hip

stability. Also prepares body for single limb stance.



PRONE ON FOREARMS

Prone on forearms builds strength through a child's neck, back, and shoulders.



<< SQUAT

Playing in a squatted position works on balance and stretches a child's heel cord musculature.



SIDE SIT >>>

Side sit encourages rotation through the trunk, weight shifting, and crossing midline.







***** TALL KNEEL**

Tall kneel strengthens hip extensors and works to improve core stability.



2-POINT QUADRUPED

Hands and knees or 2-point quadruped works on core strength, hip and shoulder stability, weight shifting, and balance

