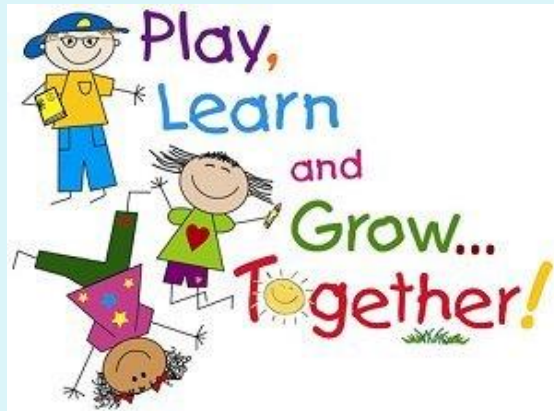




Fine and Gross Motor skills



Part 1 – Gross Motor
Part 2 – Fine Motor

- To develop fine motor skills you need to start

big



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Mrs Amanda Waind



- **Gross motor skills** are movements that involve using the **large** muscles of the body. The development of gross motor skills starts as soon as a child is born. As children age, their gross motor abilities continue to develop and improve. Boys usually develop gross motor skills much sooner than girls, with the exception of skills that involve balance and precise movements (i.e. skipping and hopping).

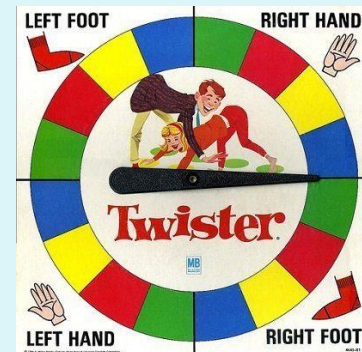


- Gross motor skills are those that enable us to **move efficiently**, to **negotiate our environment**, to **balance**, to **run, jump, play games and with balls and more**.
- Gross motor skill development goes **hand in hand** with development of **speech and fine motor skills**.
- Good gross motor skills stem from having developed **good sensory-motor skills - especially body and limb awareness and motor planning skills** - something which we develop from birth and continue to develop right throughout our life span.
- Good gross motor skills and body awareness are important for **good posture, movement around the school, participation in games and sports and for general fitness, health and wellbeing**
- Gross and fine motor skills are a **prerequisite for writing** and without developing these skills effectively, learning how to write can be a near impossible task.

- Children **rely** on gross motor skills to **engage in physical play**. For example, playing a game of tig requires running after friends and reaching out and touching someone (gross motor skills). Children also rely on gross motor skills for **everyday activities**, such as walking in and out of a room.
- Other examples of gross motor skills include: running, climbing, throwing/catching balls of different sizes/shapes, dribbling/kicking a ball, rolling over, sitting, crawling, pedalling ...

How to help develop your child's Gross motor skills

Games and Activities



- Twister
- I Can Do That Dr Seus game or card game
- Simon Says game (older kids may prefer Bop it)
- Hokey Cokey
- Hop scotch
- Wobble boards
- Bowling
- Stilts
- Follow The Leader
- Musical Statues
- The park and soft play centres – swings, monkey bars, obstacle courses, balance beams, stepping stones/logs, bridges, climbing walls, crawling through tunnels/rollers, zip wire, climbing frame and nets, slide; steps, roundabout, sand pits – digging etc:
- Play - running, bouncing, kicking, skipping, hopping and jumping. (Most of the above activities can be adapted by having the child complete the same thing except fast, slow, forward, backward, sideways, with head turned to one side or the other, or with eyes closed)
- Activities - walking, swimming, ride-ons, cycling, trampolining, scooting, skating, Wii fit, dance games, aerobics/gymnastics, dance lessons, climbing/bouldering.

Motor planning



- **Motor planning** is the ability to conceive of, organise, and carry out an unfamiliar action or sequence of actions. Once a skill has been learned, it no longer requires conscious motor planning. A child with motor planning difficulties often has to plan a task over and over because it does not “sink in” and become spontaneous. They often show hesitancy when confronted with new tasks or poor organization of the body.
- Basic motor planning and motor skill development require a **clear perception of how the body is designed and how it functions as a mechanical unit**. Sensory input from touch, joint position and movement must be organized into a clear “picture” of the body. The brain refers to this picture to move the body accurately.

A child can be assisted with motor planning in the following ways:

Provide a variety of sensory experiences by using toys and materials of various textures such as brushes, fabric, water, containers of sand, macaroni, rice, etc. The child should be encouraged to explore these freely. Also, encourage the use of large or moving equipment such as climbing bars, barrels, trampoline, and swings. Encourage the child to think of new and different ways to move and use the equipment.

Break down motor sequences into manageable units. Use imitation, verbal guidance and physical help as needed, but try to keep these to a minimum.

Visual copy games like follow the leader

Verbal copy games such as Simon Says

Obstacle courses, climbing and negotiating playground equipment Statues, freeze games, pretending to be... games

Bouncing on a trampoline – jump on feet, bounce on knees, all fours

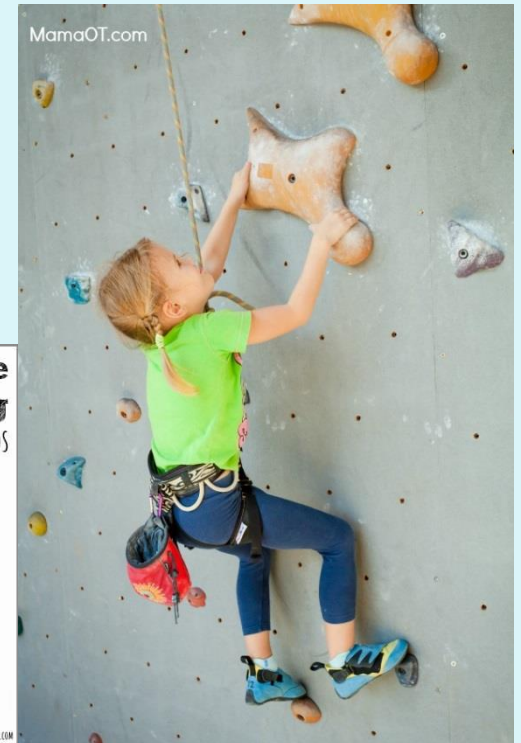
Galloping and skipping, skip with a rope, hopscotch

Dancing and actions to music



Core strength

- Core strength refers to strength in muscles of back, tummy, hips and shoulders that stabilize the body to allow good posture and movement.



Core Strength

These activities are important for posture and to enable good development of motor skills.

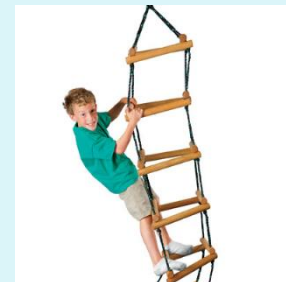
- All fours – lifting one arm at a time, one leg at a time and then progress to lifting an arm on one side while lifting the opposite leg. Arm and leg being lifted should be straight
- Kneeling – pushing a partner or throw and catch a ball
- Kneeling on one knee with other foot forward – (half kneeling) – do same activities as above
- Bridging – lying on back with knees bent and feet flat below knees – lift bottom up till tummy flat – hold and count or can roll a ball under bottom!
- Standing on one leg – hold balance while change position of arms – stand tall like a tree!
- Lunges- from standing – take a big step forward with one leg and slowly lower knee of back leg to hover above the ground – hold. Step back and repeat.
- Bear walk – stand on hands and feet – head down and bottom up – walk forwards on hands and feet.
- Crab walk – sit on floor with hands on floor behind and feet flat on floor in front, lift bottom up and walk hands and feet backwards or forwards keeping bottom off the floor.



Balance Activities

Aimed at improving standing and walking balance.

- Walking along a narrow beam or line marked on the ground – forwards, backwards, sideways
- Stand on one leg – can put one foot on a phone book, a ball if unable to hold balance and for fun try picking up marbles with one foot while standing on the other - place into container!
- Stepping up and down or from one box/bucket to another
- Walking along different surfaces – e.g. pillows, foam, mattress etc.
- Balance on wobble or balance board
- Walking on toes and on heels
- Follow a wiggly line – walk on line or feet either side
- Stepping over rungs of a (horizontal) ladder or on the rungs or along the edges



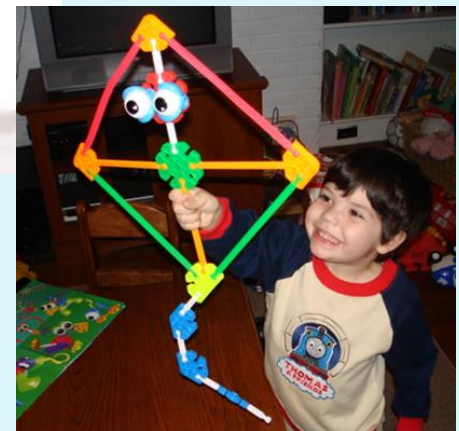


General Strength

- Tug of war games (upper limb and core strength)
- Wall squat – stand with back against wall and feet out in front a step. Slowly slide down the wall till knees are nearly at right angle – hold for as long as can. (quadriceps strength)
- Play with heavy ball or fitball – catch, bounce, push (upper limb and core strength)
- Step-ups – step up and back down on a step – do a number of times (lower limb strength)
- Wheelbarrows – walking on hands while feet are held (legs straight) (upper limb strength)

Part 2

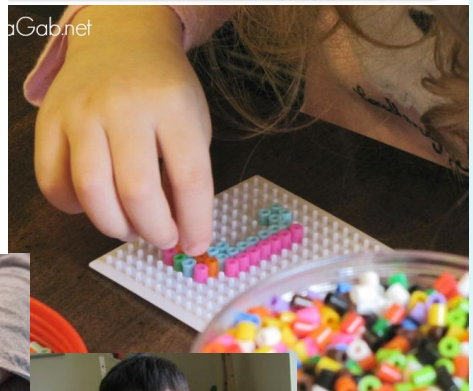
Fine Motor Skills



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Fine Motor Definition: The ability to co-ordinate the small muscles of the hand. This includes the ability to grasp, pick up, release, imitate and copy patterns. These small muscles perform the movements used in writing, or holding a pencil.



Writing is more than holding a pencil and making marks

- *Many of the activities that help children learn to write, do not actually involve children writing.*

30 VERBS THAT PROMOTE FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

Stay At Home Educator

scooping pinching linking
pouring stacking lacing
transferring squirting placing
tweezing tonging cutting
tying tracing rolling
sprinkling picking twisting
beading pushing squeezing
tearing peeling poking
wrapping crumpling popping
sewing turning weaving

School Age Fine Motor Fun:



Manipulative toys: Building toys, lacing, pegboards, blocks, transformers and puzzles are just a few examples of toys that require small finger movement and develop strength and control.

Painting, Colouring, Drawing: Children love being given creative license to change a plain piece or roll of paper into one filled with colour! Lots of opportunity to do this will help them develop their “pencil” grasp and eye-hand coordination.

Multi-sensory visual motor activities: If printing practice with paper and pencil gets boring, using a variety of materials may be more fun: Finger painting, sponge tracing/drawing, drawing in sand with a stick, stickers, scoobies, stencil tracing, magna doodle, wikki stix.



Cutting: Ripping paper and using tweezers can help prepare the child for holding and using scissors. Learning to cut is a long process. Sometimes small child-sized self opening scissors can help. Begin with single snips on stiff paper and gradually progress to cutting lines etc.

Self help: As children progress in their dressing skills and begin to attempt fastenings, they improve their fine motor skills. Teaching step by step and making some adaptations (such as a zipper ring) can make this process more successful. Spreading and cutting with a knife strengthens the index finger.

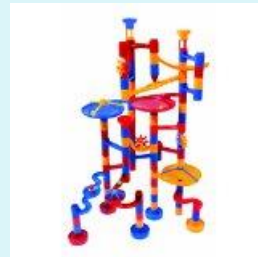
Computers: Using a mouse, iPad, and keyboard develops eye-hand coordination. Sometimes adaptations can make computer use more successful (mouse alternatives, keyboard adaptations etc).

More Fine Motor Activities to try at home...

- Have your child put together small beads, lego, meccano toys, etc.
- Collect small objects from around the house e.g.. buttons, dry macaroni, beads, etc. Spread them out on the floor or table and encourage your child to pick them up with a pair of tweezers or peg and place them into a container
- Place different sized pom-poms (you can purchase at the craft or discount shops e.g. Poundland, B&M) into narrow and wide containers. Using kitchen tongs, encourage the child to pick up the pom - poms one at a time with the tongs and place into another empty container
- Water squirt bottles are great for squirting outdoors on the walls, paths, plants, etc.
- Finger painting is always great fun! Old rolls of wallpaper are great for big art work. Chalk on the pavement and at the park. Bath crayons in the bath.
- Have fun making necklaces using a variety of materials to string such as: buttons, popcorn, macaroni, cut-up straws
- Get your child to clip clothes pins on containers, around thick cardboard or at the end of a shirt
- Using a hole punch, get child to randomly punch holes around paper to create their own special design
- Have child poke small marshmallows through toothpicks or tiny grapes and serve as snack
- Hide tiny objects or toys in playdough and get child to find them
- Provide clay or playdough for the child to knead and manipulate. You can pretend to make pizza or build a variety of things
- Cutting activities
- Using glue, meat trays or paper and various collage materials, allow child to make a collage or their very own design. If you don't have glue, you can use syrup or honey and a lolly stick for spreading
- Tear and crumble newspaper; Make a game throwing the crumbled balls of newspaper into recycling bin.

Games and toys to promote fine motor skills

- Fishing games
- Hooking games
- Stacking games
- e.g. Tobbles, Jenga
- Tumbling monkeys, Ker F
- Buckaroo
- Mega sketcher
- Marble run
- Hama beads



Crossing the midline

- Crossing this midline means that a body part (e.g. hand or foot) is able to spontaneously move over to the other side of the body to work there.
- Before this ability is well established, you may have noticed that your young child may tend to use the left hand on the left side of the body and the right hand on the right side of the body.

Why Is Midline Crossing Important?

The ability to cross the midline is important on the physical level as well as on the brain level.

On the **brain level**, a lack of midline crossing may indicate that the left and right sides of the brain (the left and right hemispheres) are not communicating well together. The left and right brain hemispheres communicate across a mass of tissue called the **corpus callosum**. Because each hemisphere carries out different tasks, it is important for each hemisphere to **communicate** with the other across the corpus callosum in order to **coordinate learning and movement**.

On a **physical level**, when your child spontaneously crosses the midline with the dominant hand, then the dominant hand is going to get the practice that it needs to develop good fine motor skills. If your child avoids crossing the midline, then both hands will tend to get equal practice at developing skills, and your child's true handedness may be apparently delayed and fine motor skills may not be as good as they could be.

One of the factors affecting handwriting is having a specialized, strong hand that does a good job of controlling the pencil.

If both hands are being used equally, then your child may well end up with 2 mediocre hands rather than one strong, specialized hand.

And mediocre hands do not produce great handwriting!

Some children with poor midline crossing skills go to school having developed a dominant hand, but may have developed some "compensatory mechanisms" that make writing really awkward for them.

Why is good posture important?

- Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Over the years children spend a great deal of time writing, and sitting in an awkward position can cause headaches, fatigue and pain in the shoulder, arm or hand. It can also slow down a child's writing.
- Children will be able to sustain writing for longer if they become used to sitting comfortably.
- Ensure that they have a good pencil grip - use commercial pencil grips only if other methods have failed.
- Check that tables are large enough for the children not to be jostling each other's arms.
- Check that the height of tables and chairs allows children to sit comfortably, with their feet flat on the floor. Their legs should be free and not come into contact with the underside of the desk top. They should be able to sit up at the table without having to lean over it or stretch to reach it.
- The lighting should be good, so that the children can see what they have written.
- Children should use their non-writing hand to steady the paper and bear some body-weight.
- The paper should be tilted slightly.
- Provide a slanting board for those who need it (a partially filled A4 file is a useful shape).

Useful websites

- <http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk>



- <http://theimaginationtree.com/2013/09/40-fine-motor-skills-activities-for-kids.html>