



# Wired For Movement

## Postural Reflexes

The Small Group Programme

9 - 14 years



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# Introducing the Small Group Programme

This 16 week programme is all about small group work and movement-based games and exercises to support children's motor skills, sensory processing, and self-regulation. The small group setting allows for focused, personalised attention, making it easier for children to build confidence, improve emotional well-being, and thrive both in school and beyond. Wired for Movement is a fun, effective approach that enhances children's school experience.

## Programme Highlights:

- Fun, active, and engaging sessions that help children thrive.
- 12 specially selected exercises and games for small spaces with minimal equipment.
- Split into two 8 week blocks for use across terms times and giving flexibility
- Group sizes of 4 - 8 children, with each session lasting 10-15 minutes.
- 2 - 3 sessions per week for the best results (at least 2 required).

## What to do first

- 1 Print and complete the Initial Assessment for each child in your group.
- 2 Complete the optional Child's Aspirations and Goal section.
- 3 Read the page 'Top Tips for Success' to help set up your small group session.

## What to do during the programme

- 1 Do the exercise same time and place - challenge using the progression and refer to the success tips
- 2 Implement some or all of the Day-to-Day Recommendations. Provide a copy of the page for use at home.
- 3 If any of the included games are not suitable for any reason, download an alternative game from our website.

## What to do at the end of 16 weeks

- 1 Complete the Follow Up Assessment and compare to the Initial Assessment (you can also do this week 8)
- 2 Review both assessments and the child's Aspirations and Goals, and celebrate all and any improvements.
- 3 Based on the results you may repeat the Postural Reflex programme, or download another from the website.

# The Amazing body

In the intricate tapestry of child development, the interplay between sensory systems, muscle tone, motor skills, body awareness, and emotional self-regulation forms a complex and dynamic network essential for growth and learning. Each element, distinct yet interconnected, equips a child to navigate their environment with confidence and skill.

From inside the womb, as a baby, into infancy and a young child, the journey of a child's development is an elaborate dance of physical movements and sensory explorations. For the young baby, tummy time is foundational, enhancing motor skills more effectively than back positioning. This stage involves reflexive movements, where moving the head triggers coordinated limb responses, evolving into independent control of the head and limbs. This progression enables complex cross-pattern movements vital for seamless, fluid motion.

Central to this development is the child's mastery over their movements, gradually gaining the ability to bring limbs towards the body's midline and eventually crossing it. This skill is foundational for future physical coordination and balance.

The vestibular system, our internal gyroscope for balance and spatial orientation, begins developing remarkably early, around six to eight weeks after conception, and is fully functional at birth. This system is crucial for a child's ability to navigate their world, providing gravitational security and spatial awareness (proprioception). Its harmonious development with other sensory inputs is vital; any misalignment can lead to disorientation and insecurity, affecting the child's interaction with their environment.

The tactile system follows, enriching the child's sensory world with vital feedback. Touch confirms the vestibular system's readings of the environment, with varying sensitivities influencing engagement with surroundings. Tactile-rich activities enhance the integration of tactile and vestibular information, creating a comprehensive sensory experience).

Early in development, the auditory system plays a crucial role, with the foetus beginning to 'hear' in the last trimester of pregnancy. The transition from hearing to 'tuning in', understanding, and producing language requires fine-tuning, laying the foundation for speech,

reading, and listening skills. Disruptions during this phase, such as from ear infections or allergies, can significantly impact a child's auditory processing and linguistic development.

Visual development, though not starting until after birth, progresses rapidly alongside the vestibular system and motor skills. A strong vestibular system supports the visual system, providing the spatial context needed for processing visual stimuli. Without this support, children may over-rely on their visual system, leading to challenges with tasks like tracking, focusing, and depth perception.

Stress profoundly affects these developmental processes, triggering a 'flight, fight, or freeze' response that diverts neural activity from higher brain functions crucial for learning, reasoning, emotional regulation, and communication. For children with sensory and motor development challenges, everyday situations, including classroom life, can become overwhelming sources of stress.

The Wired for Movement Small Group Programmes are designed to address the developmental and emotional needs of students in a group setting. By focusing on the unique requirements of each group, these interventions enhance not only physical skills but also learning, behaviour, concentration, and emotional well-being. This approach provides a strong foundation for improved growth, self-confidence, and ongoing academic success. Through targeted techniques, exercises and games, the programme fosters a positive, confidence-building environment that helps students develop lasting skills for both academic and personal growth.



# What are Postural Reflexes?

**Postural reflexes are automatic reactions that help the body maintain balance and stability in various positions and movements. These reflexes involve the coordination of the sensory, motor, and nervous systems. They include the ability to maintain balance in different positions, such as standing or sitting, and to adjust the body's position in response to changes in the environment or movement. Key reflexes include the head righting reflex, labyrinthine reflex, and spinal Galant reflex, all of which are crucial for movement and balance.**

During typical development, postural reflexes should become inhibited, meaning they naturally diminish or integrate as the child grows, allowing voluntary movements to take over. This process is essential for the development of mature motor skills and coordination. However, sometimes these reflexes remain 'switched on' or active beyond the usual developmental period. When this occurs, they are referred to as retained

postural reflexes. Retained postural reflexes can significantly impact a child's physical and academic performance. These reflexes play an essential role in maintaining balance, coordination, and overall motor skills. When postural reflexes are retained beyond the typical developmental period, they can interfere with the development of these skills, leading to difficulties with physical activity and academic achievement. For instance, children with retained postural reflexes may struggle with fine motor skills, affecting their ability to write or use scissors effectively.

Furthermore, retained postural reflexes can impact a child's social skills. Children who struggle with balance and coordination may feel self-conscious and have difficulty participating in group activities, leading to feelings of isolation and difficulty forming friendships. Additionally, retained postural reflexes can contribute to behavioural issues such as impulsivity and inattention, further affecting a child's academic and social performance.



# Postural Reflexes

## A Summary view

- Postural Reflexes are automatic reactions for balance and stability involving the sensory, motor, and nervous systems. They naturally integrate as a child grows.
- Postural reflexes should be inhibited as children develop. When they remain active, they are known as retained reflexes, affecting motor skills and coordination.
- With targeted interventions and an Individual Movement Plan, retained reflexes can be integrated, improving posture, muscle tone, spatial awareness, balance, and coordination.

### COMMON SIGNS

- Frequent tripping or clumsiness.
- Preferring to sit with legs in a “W” shape.
- Constant movement or restlessness.
- Struggling with handwriting or using scissors.
- Slumping or leaning on desks.

### Impact on learning

- Difficulty staying on task.
- Slow or illegible writing.
- Challenges with eye tracking and comprehension
- Difficulty in sports or physical activities.
- Acting out, avoiding tasks, or social withdrawal

## Using Wired for Movement to make a difference

By combining repatterning sequences, balance exercises, and neck and core strengthening movements, the Wired for Movement games in this programme aim to improve children's:

- ✓ Enhanced Motor Skills: Improved balance, coordination, and fine motor abilities,
- ✓ Better Academic Performance: Improved handwriting, reading skills, and overall focus
- ✓ Increased Confidence: Boosted self-esteem from overcoming physical challenges
- ✓ Improved Behaviour: Reduction in impulsivity and inattention, leading to fewer behavioural issues
- ✓ Social Skills Development: Enhanced ability to join group activities and form friendships

# Introducing the Assessments

## The Importance of Assessing

The purpose of this assessment is to track each child's development and highlight areas of progress throughout the programme. You have permission to make multiple copies of each assessment for use with your groups. If you already have existing assessments in place and feel an additional one would be redundant, feel free to skip ours.

This assessment is provided as a useful guide, focusing on identifying key areas for improvement and measuring progress after the first 8 week block, and again after 16 weeks, when the programme finishes.

### Why We Find a Baseline and Review?

This assessment serves as a helpful tool to measure where the child starts and track their progress. While it is not a formal research-based measure, it is designed to be a practical and meaningful way to highlight improvements over time. By comparing the baseline with the follow-up results, we can identify key areas of growth and see how the child is benefiting from the movement programme.

### Aspirations and Goals

There's also a page for the child to complete with an adult, focused on their aspirations and goals. This is optional but it is a great way for the child to think about what they'd like to achieve on completion of the programme. It helps them focus on their personal goals and stay motivated as they progress.

### How to Complete the Assessment

- Write the child's name clearly on the assessment form and keep it secure. The information is confidential.
- Involve the child in the process. Ask them to be present when completing the assessment and encourage them to provide their input. Their self-reflection and awareness are of great value.
- Use the 1-10 scale for each question. For example, "1" means 'No Signs' and "10" means 'Very Frequently'. Help the child understand the scale.
- If there is a question that is not possible to answer, draw a line through it and make a note next to it.

# Child's Aspirations & Goals

## Introduction

Setting goals can help you stay focused and excited about this programme. At the end, you can look back and see how much you've improved!

## Before you start:

### 1 Your Top Three Goals

What are the three most important things you want to achieve during this programme?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### 2 What You Want to Get Better At

What specific skills do you want to improve?

For example, moving better, feeling calmer, or being more focused.)

- 
- 
- 

### 3 Anything other to include

Is there anything else you want to work on or achieve?

## After you finish:

### 1 Biggest Changes

What are the biggest improvements you noticed in yourself?

# Postural Reflexes : Baseline Assessment

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this assessment to gain a clearer understanding of the challenges and to track each child's progress. If you have already completed the assessment online, you may wish to record the baseline scores here as well.

## If you haven't yet completed the baseline assessment:

Use the 0-10 scale for each question and circle the appropriate number.

Add up all the scores and record the total.

The Follow-Up Assessment should ideally be completed at week 16, but it may also be done at week 8.

0 No Signs    2 Occasionally    4 Bit more than average    6 Frequently    8 Very Frequently    10 Always

- 1 Do they often slouch or have difficulty sitting or standing upright? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 2 Do they have trouble maintaining balance when standing, walking, or participating in physical activities? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3 Do they struggle to coordinate their movements during activities like running, jumping, or playing sports? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 4 Do they experience unexpected or uncontrolled movements, like jerking, twitching, or sudden tics? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 5 Do they find it challenging to plan or complete new or complex tasks, such as tying shoes, riding a bike, or using new tools? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 6 Do they have difficulty with tasks that require precise hand movements, such as writing, buttoning clothes, or using utensils? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 7 Do they struggle with activities that involve large muscle movements, like running, jumping, climbing, or hopping? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 8 Do they react strongly or negatively to certain types of touch, such as light touches or pressure on their body? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 9 Do they have trouble focusing or staying on task, particularly during activities like school work, reading, or games? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 10 Do they experience emotional or behavioural challenges, such as anxiety, impulsivity, or difficulties with social interactions? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

# Postural Reflexes : Follow up Assessment

Name of child:

Date:

Adult Assessing:

Congratulations on completing week 8 or 16 of the programme. Please **do not look** at the Baseline Assessment before completing this one to avoid bias. Once you've completed this assessment, compare the results, reflect on the progress, and celebrate any improvements. Remember, each child progresses at their own pace. These scores are a guideline, and it's nice to celebrate any growth, no matter how small.

## Results Guidelines:

66 - 100 - Consider the Wired for Movement Individual Programme. If that's not possible, then repeat the 16 week programme.

46 - 65 - Repeat this programme. Consider downloading alternative Reflexes games to keep sessions engaging.

26 - 45 - Repeating one 8 week block will be beneficial. You may also use our online Chooser Chart to identify another area for support.

- 1 Do they often slouch or have difficulty sitting or standing upright? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 2 Do they have trouble maintaining balance when standing, walking, or participating in physical activities? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3 Do they struggle to coordinate their movements during activities like running, jumping, or playing sports? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
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- 10 Do they experience emotional or behavioural challenges, such as anxiety, impulsivity, or difficulties with social interactions? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Total:

# Top Tips for a Successful Session

Starting a new programme and working with a new group can be both exciting and a little nerve-wracking. To help you get the most out of your first sessions, here's a simple guide based on what's worked well for others. Keep these tips in mind, and you'll be off to a great start, building positive connections and setting the stage for success.

## Consistency is Key – Focus on Repetition and Routine:

We recommend three sessions per week, each lasting 10 - 15 minutes, to ensure steady progress. Adapt the sequence of games if needed, but aim to stick to the recommended schedule as this will improve performance over time.

## Follow the Programme Structure, but Keep It Engaging:

Stick to the planned exercises and games, but use the built-in variations to keep the sessions dynamic. Adjust the pace and energy based on the children's responses to keep them engaged.

## Create a Positive and Supportive Environment:

Start each session with a welcoming tone. Use praise and encouragement throughout to build confidence and keep children motivated. Focus on effort and participation, not just results.

## Engage the Children in Active Participation:

Involve children in helping set up and preparing the exercises and games and ask for their input when possible. Encourage effort, reminding them that improvement is the focus, not perfection.

## Celebrate Progress and Reflect Together:

At the end of each session, keep the positive atmosphere by reflecting on what went well and celebrating achievements. After the first 8 week block, use the follow up assessment with the students to highlight and celebrate their progress. At 16 weeks repeat the follow up assessment and review their Aspirations and Goals, and allow them to rewrite them if they wish.

# Day-to-Day Activities Supporting a Child with active Postural Reflexes

In addition to this programme of specific Wired for Movement exercises, there are a number of day-to-day activities at school and home that are beneficial for children who need extra support.

## Provide Visual and Auditory Cues

- 1 Use visual aids and verbal reminders to help your child maintain proper posture and improve postural control. Visual aids like posture charts, mirrors, and coloured tape on chairs or desks can provide constant reminders and guidance.

## Practice Core Strengthening Exercises

- 2 Encourage your child to engage in exercises that strengthen their core muscles, such as planks or sit-ups. A stronger core will help improve their overall posture and stability, making it easier for them to maintain proper alignment throughout the day.

## Provide Opportunities for Active Play

- 3 Encourage your child to engage in activities like climbing, crawling, and jumping, which promote movement. Additionally, have them practice balancing on one foot, walking heel-to-toe, or standing on a balance board. These activities help improve their balance and strengthen their postural reflexes.

## Use Sensory Input

- 4 Incorporate sensory input into your child's daily routine. Use a therapy ball or rocking chair for vestibular input, or a weighted blanket for deep pressure input. These sensory activities can help improve your child's body awareness and postural control.

## Encourage Good Posture

- 5 Remind your child to sit and stand up straight, with their shoulders back and head up. Provide supportive seating options, such as a stability ball or a chair with a backrest, to help them maintain proper posture.

# How to use the Game Cards

To help ensure a smooth and successful experience, the layout of every game is consistent. The top panel provides key information in easy-to-read circles, giving you a quick snapshot of essential details like music, equipment, participation type, and age suitability.

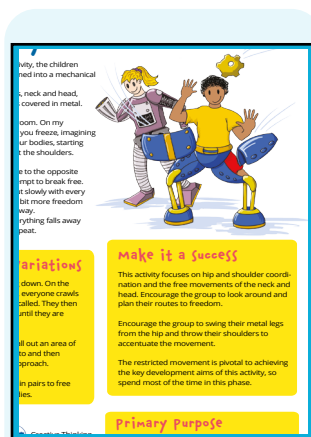
The "How to Play" section contains the main instructions, with each game featuring only 3 simple steps. This design is intended to keep things clear and straightforward, so you can deliver a fantastic experience for your pupils without feeling overwhelmed by too much detail.

In most games, the "How to Play" instructions are directly readable from the page. When this isn't possible, rest assured that the instructions are still simple to follow and understand. Below, you'll find additional information to help you create variations and ensure success in your sessions.



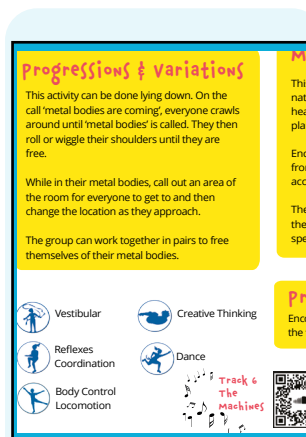
## Progressions & Variations

The first instruction suggests how to make the main game simpler. The following instructions offer ways to increase the challenge for your students. Before progressing, check the 'Make it a Success' panel to ensure children are meeting the current challenge.



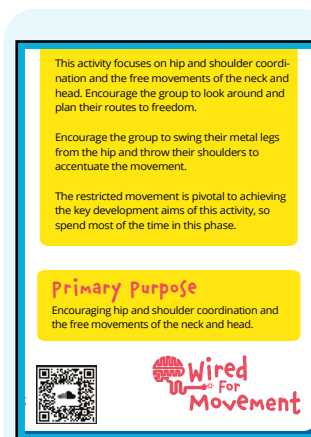
## Make it a success

This panel outlines how the game, exercise, or technique should be performed, including key points to look for to support improvement and development. Following this advice will help your students gain the full benefits from the activity, ensuring better outcomes.



## Areas of Development & Music Links

In the lower left section, you'll find the areas of motor, sensory, personal, and social development the game supports (see page 6). Any equipment required is listed at the top and here below. If music is included, scan the QR code to access the track directly.



## Primary Purpose

Each game focuses on a specific area, detailed in the primary purpose to provide you with an overview of its key benefits. Other elements are woven into the game, and the icons to the left indicate the additional areas the game aims to improve.

# The Small Group Postural Reflexes Programme

## Block 1 - Weeks 1 - 8

	Game	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week 1	Rocking Eyes Elephants on the March					
Week 2	Speedy Flips Zombie Bodies					
Week 3	Olympic Skydivers Tightrope Walk					
Week 4	Beanbag Rain Criss-cross Beanbags					
Week 5	Rocking Eyes Elephants on the March					
Week 6	Speedy Flips Zombie Bodies					
Week 7	Olympic Skydivers Tightrope Walk					
Week 8	Beanbag Rain Criss-cross Beanbags					

Weeks 9 - 16 next page...

# The Small Group Postural Reflexes Programme

## Block 2 - Weeks 9 - 16

	Game	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week 9	Elephants on the March I'm Keeping an Eye on You!					
Week 10	Speedy Flips The Slow Motion Escape					
Week 11	Sways Olympic Skydivers					
Week 12	Beanbag Rain Hypnotic Eyes					
Week 13	Elephants on the March I'm Keeping an Eye on You!					
Week 14	Speedy Flips The Slow Motion Escape					
Week 15	Sways Olympic Skydivers					
Week 16	Beanbag Rain Hypnotic Eyes					

# Beanbag Rain

Equip

Solo

Integration

## How to play

- 1** Provide each child with a hoop and four beanbags. If resources are limited, pair the children up. Around the room, each child places a hoop on the floor, stands inside it and keeps hold of their beanbags.
- 2** The aim is to throw a beanbag high above their head and have it land back inside the hoop. Start with small throws and increase the height.
- 3** Set up some challenges; Can they get all the bags in the hoop, how high can they throw them but still get them in the hoop?



## Progressions & Variations

They can stand three steps away from the hoop and throw the beanbags up high and into it. Then a step closer, repeat, and then at the edge of the hoop and repeat.

Use two-handed throws and single-handed throws using their non-dominant hand.

Play Beanbag Bingo. A mixture of coloured beanbags is placed just outside the hoop. On your instruction, they select the right colour and throw it up. The first one to get all their beanbags in their hoop wins.

## Make it a success

This game improves balance while performing hand-eye coordinated movements, the restricted space creates an ideal challenge to the system.

Encourage the children to throw a little higher each time. Tell them to use their non-dominant hand so that everyone experiences an awkward throw together.

Remind them to first look at the space inside the hoop and then to watch their hand and beanbag when they throw it up. They should let go of the bag as the arm reaches near extension.



Vestibular  
Visual Perception



Games



Hand-Eye Coordination  
Coordination  
Gross Motor Skills



Beanbags  
Hoops



Object Control  
Body Control

## Primary Purpose

To improve balance, hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness using object manipulation movement skills.

 **Wired**  
For  
**Movement**

# Criss-cross Beanbags

Equip

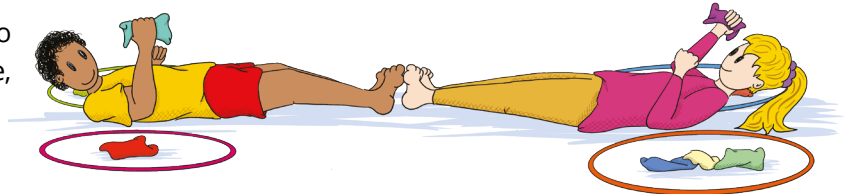
Pairs

Activation

## How to play

**1** In pairs, lie down on your backs in opposite directions with feet touching. Position two hoops on either side of your head and put 6 beanbags in one of the hoops.

**2** On my command you both race to move the beanbags, one at a time, from one hoop to another and then back again using your right hand. Then repeat the race, but this time you can only use your left hand.



**3** For the next part, put three bean-bags in each hoop. When I call the command 'criss-cross', you have 1 minute to get as many bean-bags into your partner's hoops as you can. You have to pick up using the hand opposite to the hoop you're taking from. You can sit up to throw it and land it in either of your partner's hoops. After a minute, count up the bags: the person with the most beanbags in the other person's hoops wins. Swap partners and repeat.



## Progressions & Variations

All six bags start in their right hoop. You call out a coloured beanbag to move. If they have it, they use their left hand to put it in their left hoop. Like bingo, the first to get all bean-bags in the left hoop wins.

The pairs race to take their partner's beanbags. They steal a bag and put it in their hoop on any side they wish. The pair with the most bean-bags in 2 minutes wins.

## Make it a success

Do a whole body warm up that includes shoulder and hip mobility.

The bags should be thrown when they get towards sitting upright. Place the hoops so that they can be easily reached.

The feet of each pair must always stay connected. This really helps with the lifting and lowering of the body. Remind children, and be vigilant, about space to avoid clashing heads.

## Primary Purpose

To increase left and right awareness using homolateral and cross-lateral movements.



Reflexes  
Coordination  
Gross Motor Skills



Games



Muscle Tone



Hoops  
Beanbags



Object Control  
Locomotion

**Wired  
For  
Movement**

## Integration

## How to play

- 1** Find a space in the room and get onto all fours. You are in a jungle and have turned into an elephant! Imagine your nose has grown into a long trunk.
- 2** You are the matriarch (leader) of your herd taking all the elephants through the jungle. Plod forward by moving your left hand and right leg, then your right hand and left leg.
- 3** The jungle is now very dense and you have to pull trees up and throw them to make a path. Grab a tree that's in front of you, move your left hand forward and swing your trunk over to the left to throw the tree aside. Grab another tree in front of you, move your right hand and swing your trunk to the right and throw it aside. Keep creating a path for your herd.



## Progressions & Variations

Start with a homolateral crawl - left hand and left knee forward, then right hand and right knee. Introduce the swinging of the trunk as per the main activity.

Start off crawling and slowly introduce the idea of swinging the trunk to uproot trees. Some to the left, some to the right.

This activity is being filmed in slow motion: children move in very slow motion.

## Make it a success

Encourage large, and slow movements. The hands move forward and out to the side. The head turns so children look past their fingertips and then up at the ceiling as they toss their tree.

The key to this activity is the coordination of the head turn and hand movement. Spend time focusing children on exaggerated head movements that follow the hand going forward.

Although on the surface this looks like an easy movement, it can be very complicated for some children. Consider having an initial session using the homolateral movement variation.



Vestibular



Body Awareness



Reflexes  
Coordination  
Gross Motor Skills



Gymnastics



Muscle Tone



Body Control

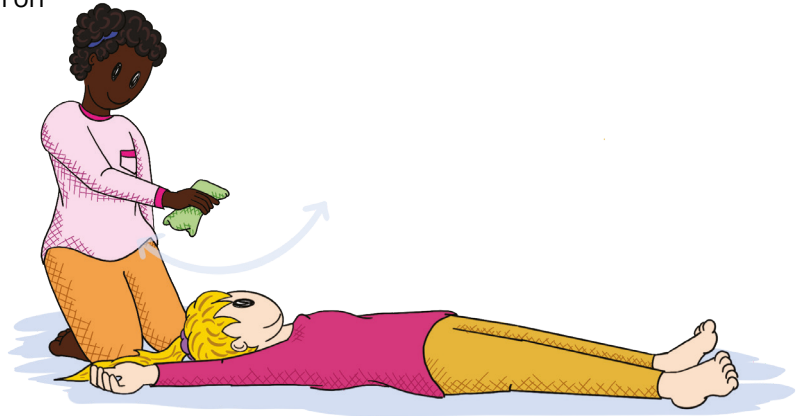


## Primary Purpose

Improving balance, laterality, hand-eye coordination and muscle tone.

## How to play

- 1** In pairs, one starts as a patient, the other as a hypnotist. The patient lies down on their back. The hypnotist kneels by the head of the patient and holds a beanbag about 12 inches above their eyes.
- 2** The hypnotist slowly moves the beanbag side-to-side about 20 times. The patient follows the swing of the beanbag moving their eyes only. The head is kept as still as possible.
- 3** Swap positions and repeat. When you swap again, change the beanbag for one with a different colour.



## Progressions & Variations

Reduce the number of times the beanbag swings from left to right from 20 to 10.

The hypnotist has a beanbag in each hand, each a different colour. They alternate swinging one hand with one colour beanbag, with the other hand holding another colour. Swing with a red colour right to left, then with a blue colour beanbag left to right.

## Make it a success

The swing of the beanbag should be within the boundary of the child's peripheral vision. Use some practice time to adjust the swing if it causes visual strain.

The 'patient' needs to be relaxed, breathing and blinking throughout. The head is still and only the eyes move. It can be helpful if they cradle their head with their hands.

The beanbag is ideally swung around 12 inches above the eyes, and transitions across the visual field rhythmically and slowly.

## Primary Purpose

To improve lateral tracking across the visual midline.



Visual Perception



Teamwork



Coordination



Beanbags



## How to play

- 1** Begin with the children jogging lightly around the room. On your instruction, they find someone to pair up with and face each other, standing about a foot apart.
- 2** One child stares at their partner's nose. Their partner tells them where to move their head - left and right, up and down, diagonally, in circles etc., but they must at all times stare at their partner's nose. Then swap over.
- 3** On your instruction, the pairs break up and jog around the room, repeating the activity with new partners.



### Progressions & Variations

They can work independently by staring at something in the room instead of a partner's nose.

Working in pairs, the activity can be done in various positions, such as one lying on their back and the other leaning above them.

Vary the distance they stand from each other, from six inches to about a foot apart.

### Make it a Success

This can be very demanding, so build up the time spent on the activity gradually. Keep the activity relaxed and encourage the children to breathe calmly.

Encourage a full range of movement and remind the children to blink while they move their head.

The vestibular-ocular reflex is crucial for tracking ball movements, this activity helps to improve it.

### Primary Purpose

To improve functional visual skills and to help inhibit the vestibular-ocular reflex.



Vestibular  
Visual Perception



Reflexes

## How to play

- 1 In a circle as a group of four or five, the children begin by squatting down, imagining that they are skydivers in a plane and are about to leap out.
- 2 On the instruction **'Skydivers Go'**, children imagine they're leaping out from planes to freefall. They lie on their fronts with their forehead on the floor, legs straight back about hip-distance apart, arms stretched out above their head. On the instruction **'Skydivers Display'**, children lift their legs, chests and hands up off the ground and hold hands. You count **'5000, 4000, 3000, 2000, 1000'**.
- 3 When done, call out **'Skydivers Land'**. They roll onto their backs, curl up and hug their knees. Mix the groups up so they are in new positions and repeat.



## Progressions & Variations

To simplify this activity, pair children up. They carry out the same sequence of moves but facing each other.

Extend, or shorten, the times the children spend holding the elevated posture.

## Make it a success

The held posture is key to this. It's quite an effort, so ensure a good warm-up with limbering and stretching is done prior.

Explain the correct position for the freefall: the spine should be extended, the chest lifted, the muscles of the shoulders should lift the arms and the thighs should lift the legs. The eyes should look ahead and slightly down.

The curl at the end is important. Stretching the back muscles in the opposite way will help improve the flexibility and control for the subsequent skydive.

## Primary Purpose

To help inhibit the Moro reflex and enhance awareness of the body in space through controlled movement



Proprioception



Body Control



Reflexes  
Gross Motor Skills



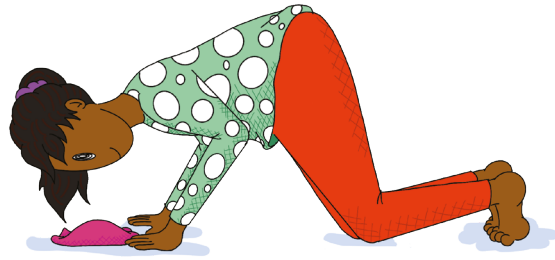
Gymnastics



Muscle Tone

## How to play

- 1** Kneel down with hands on the floor. Place a beanbag in front of you.
- 2** Look at the beanbag and rock forwards, bending your elbows, and lower yourself so that your nose is nearly touching the beanbag. Hold for 3 seconds.
- 3** Slowly start to rock backwards, move your head and turn your eyes to look up towards the ceiling. Rock as far back as you can while keeping your hands on the ground. Hold for 3 seconds, then repeat rocking all the way forwards, then all the way back again. Repeat 8 - 10 times.



## Progressions & Variations

While in a kneeling posture, children position one beanbag between their knees and another in front of them.

Children keep their eyes down and rock backwards to look at the beanbag by their knees, and forwards to look at the beanbag in front of them.

## Make it a success

The focus of this activity is the eyes tracking along a vertical line. The motion of the head moving from looking up to down is to engage the vestibular ocular reflex, an essential component for most skills in physical education.

Encourage children to blink and relax their eyes during the movement. As they rock forwards, they need to be looking at the beanbag in front of them.

Breathe in as they rock backwards and breathe out as they go forwards. With practice, the transition of body, breath and visual focus will be smooth and flowing.

## Primary Purpose

To train the vestibular ocular reflex and improve visual tracking.



Visual Perception  
Vestibular



Body Control



Reflexes



Beanbags

## How to play

- 1** Begin in pairs. One of you starts off lying down on your belly on a mat. Turn your head to the left and bend your left leg and left arm out at right angles. You should be looking straight at the fingers of your left hand. The right leg and arm are straight.
- 2** Your partner will clap. When you hear a clap, reverse this shape so your head turns to the right and at the same time you straighten your bent arm and leg, while lifting up your right arm and leg. Your fingers should be directly in line with your eyes.
- 3** Clap again, and flip to face left, then clap so they face right. Increase the pace so the flips get speedier and speedier. After 20 or so flips, swap with your partner and repeat.



## Progressions & Variations

Simplify the movement so that it starts by flipping their head and arms only. Keep one knee up, but don't move it.

Working in pairs at their own speed, the partner taps the leg and arm to stimulate the flip. They make sure the pose is accurate before the next tap.

## Make it a success

The posture is important, so before speed is introduced, perfect the form.

When good form is achieved, help them with the flip motion. The emphasis should be on the twisting action of the hips with the simultaneous rotation of the head.

Speed should help integrate automation of this movement pattern. As the quality of the movement improves, increase the speed.



Vestibular  
Proprioception



Non Verbal  
Verbal  
Teamwork



Reflexes  
Coordination



Gymnastics



Body Control



Mats

## Primary Purpose

Integrate essential neuro-developmental reflexes to improve whole-body coordination and sensory organisation.

## Exploration

### How to play

**1** Find a space and stand still with your feet together or just slightly apart, arms by your sides. Close your eyes and allow your body to gently sway left or right, forward or backward. Keep your eyes closed and return to the centre with small movements, without moving your feet. To sway back to centre, tighten and relax the muscles in your arms, legs, torso, and shoulders.

**2** After a few minutes, try swaying with your head down, or with one foot on the floor and the other resting on top of it. You can also position your arms so one is in front and the other is behind, or spread them out wide. Feel your body swaying and your ability to balance by using small movements to return to the centre.

**3** Continue this for a few more minutes, allowing your body to find its balance and rhythm.



### Progressions & Variations

The feet can be moved slightly apart or closer together with knees slightly bent, if they find the balance too challenging.

Challenge their balance by putting beanbags or a wobble board under their feet.

### Make it a success

They should be barefoot and feel the floor on the sole of their feet with their toes spread wide.

If they are struggling too much to balance, let them widen their base of support or bend their knees.

To exaggerate the swaying experience, they can imagine a large magnet is slowly moving around and pulling on them.



### Primary Purpose

To activate the vestibular system and improve balance.

## Integration

## How to play

- 1** You are a jungle explorer, moving through the undergrowth. You have to brush the undergrowth off each knee by using your opposite hand at every step, as you march forwards, in time to the music
- 2** When I call out **'Tiger!'** You run, screaming, from the tiger, but you are in a silent, slow motion film! Your right arm can only come forwards with your left leg, and your left arm can only come forwards with your right leg. How slow can you go?!
- 3** When I call **"Safe!"** Go back to marching forwards, brushing aside the undergrowth, in time to the music.



## Progressions & Variations

For children who find the opposite arm-leg coordination challenging, start with same sided movements. This simplifies the movement and builds confidence. You can also allow them to lean against a wall.

To make the marching movement more challenging for those who are ready, encourage them to perform the movements with their eyes closed, stopping their hand just before it connects with their knee.

Add fun by changing the imaginary pursuer to different animals or characters. For instance, pretend a dinosaur, superhero, or robot is chasing you. This keeps the activity engaging and encourages creative thinking.

## Make it a success

Make sure that the hands move across the middle (midline) of the body while the knees lift straight up. This is crucial for the effectiveness of the exercise.

Encourage your child to hold themselves tall and keep their back straight, imagining that their head is being lifted by an invisible thread. This helps maintain proper posture throughout the activity.

Call out to remind your child when running from the tiger, to only bring the right arm forward with the left leg, and left arm with the right leg.

## Primary Purpose

To improve lateral coordination, balance and core postural stability



Vestibular



Creative Thinking



Reflexes  
Coordination  
Gross Motor Skills



Dance



Body Control  
Locomotion



Wired  
For  
Movement

# Tightrope walk

Equip Team

Activation

## How to play

- 1 Group children into even teams of 3 - 5 for this relay race. Put a pile of 3 bean-bags per person at a start line. For each team space three hoops along a line.

On the command 'Go', the first person of each team stretches out their arms to the side, palms down. Teammates put one bean-bag on the head and one on the back of each outstretched hand.

- 2 Then walking heel to toe, as if walking along a tightrope, they race to the first hoop, drop one bean-bag in, then carry on to the second hoop and drop, then to the last hoop and drop a bag, and then run back.

The next person repeats this and so on until everyone in the team has done it.

The first team to finish gets 10 points, the next gets 9 and so on.

- 3 Each team gets an additional 1 point for each bag in the first hoop, 2 for the second, and 3 for the last hoop. Minus 3 points for every bag not in a hoop.



## Progressions & Variations

Complete the circuits without beanbags and if possible use lines on the gym floor as physical guides.

If this is too challenging, remove the heel-to-toe move and focus on walking a straight line, preferably using an actual line.

Additional challenges can include a beanbag on the head, but balancing small balls in slightly cupped palms.



Vestibular



Body Control  
Locomotion



Reflexes  
Gross Motor Skills



Gymnastics



Muscle Tone



Hoops  
Beanbags

## Make it a success

Balance is everything here. The warm-up should familiarise the children with the controlled heel-to-toe movements.

Remind the children that they should fix their eyes on something ahead of them to help them balance.

Children look straight ahead with their chin level to the ground. Straight spine, soft knees and as little a bounce with their steps as they can.

## Primary Purpose

Improve core stability, balance and neck control while in motion.

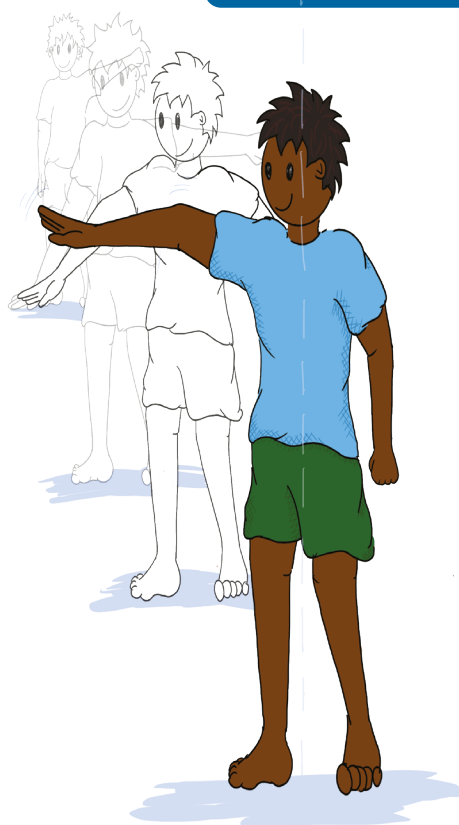
 **Wired  
For  
Movement**

## Exploration

### How to play

- 1 The children draw a line up and down the middle of their bodies, imagining that their line divides the body into two parts. They now have no control over the right side of their body.
- 2 As their left arm or foot moves slowly and deliberately, they copy the movement with their right side, using either symmetrical or asymmetrical movements.
- 3 They should move around their space in as many different ways as possible. They come to a halt after a few minutes, reassemble their bodies, and then re-cut.

They now only have control over their left side. As you go, mix it up and tell the group to interact. Perhaps they try to shake hands, pat each other on the back, and so on.



### Progressions & Variations

To simplify the activity, the children can remain static. Tell them that their legs are trapped and only their body above the waist can move.

Position half the class along one wall and the other half along the opposite wall. Together, they slowly make their way toward each other. When they touch, they retreat to their wall. As they return, they focus on the other side of their body.

Introduce their vertical midline. Between the first movements, stop and instruct children to re-cut around the waist, their vertical middle, so they now have to focus on the lower part, then the upper part.



Proprioception



Creative Thinking



Coordination  
General Motor Skills  
Reflexes



Dance  
Gymnastics



Locomotion

### Make it a success

Drawing up and down the body is an essential element as this gives them a sensory awareness of the centre from which their left and right start and finish.

It is important for the labyrinthine reflexes that the eyes and head follow the movement of the arm. Demonstrate with exaggerated movements of the head following the movements of the dysfunctional arm.

### Primary Purpose

To integrate the ATNR reflex and improve laterality and left-right coordination.



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