

Primitive 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 Primitive Reflexes 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 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 the Primitive Reflexes?

Primitive reflexes are automatic, involuntary movements that babies are born with, serving as the foundation for more complex movements and behaviours that develop over time. These reflexes include sucking, rooting, grasping, the Babinski reflex, and the Moro reflex.

Primitive reflexes typically develop in utero and are fully present at birth, playing a crucial role in an infant's survival and early development. For instance, the Moro reflex is a defensive mechanism that allows the newborn to respond to impending danger and alerts the caregiver that they need to be comforted or held.

As a child grows, these primitive reflexes are naturally inhibited by the brain, usually by the age of one year. This process of inhibition allows higher brain functions to take over, enabling the development of more advanced motor skills and voluntary movements. For example, the grasping reflex, where a baby instinctively grips anything placed in their palm, is replaced by voluntary grasping and fine motor skills as the child matures.

However, when primitive reflexes do not become naturally inhibited during a child's development, they are considered retained primitive reflexes. Retained reflexes can affect children in various ways, including delays in gross and fine motor development, challenges with balance and coordination, difficulty with sensory processing and integration, problems with attention and concentration, and issues with emotional regulation and behaviour. A retained Moro reflex, in particular, can affect a child's balance and coordination and make them more prone to anxiety and sensory overload. In general, retained primitive reflexes can contribute to conditions such as ADHD, dyslexia, and other learning disabilities.

The Moro reflex, or startle reflex, is particularly noteworthy. When a baby experiences a sudden change in position or a loud noise, they react with an involuntary startle, extending their arms and legs before bringing them back in. This reflex is crucial for early survival, but if it persists beyond the first few months, it can lead to hypersensitivity and overreaction to sensory stimuli, affecting the child's daily functioning.



Primitive Reflexes

A Summary view

- Primitive reflexes are automatic, involuntary movements present at birth that serve as the foundation for more complex movements and behaviours. These reflexes typically develop in utero and are fully present at birth.
- As a child grows, these reflexes are naturally inhibited by the brain, usually by the age of one year, allowing higher brain functions and voluntary movements to develop.
- When these reflexes do not become naturally inhibited, they are considered retained, which can affect motor development, sensory processing, attention, and behaviour.

COMMON SIGNS

Clumsiness, or difficulty standing on one leg.
Overreaction to sudden noises or movements
Struggles with fine motor tasks like writing
Difficulty sitting still or maintaining good posture.
High levels of anxiety, frequent outbursts

IMPACT ON LEARNING

Difficulty maintaining concentration
Poor handwriting, trouble with cutting
Issues with eye tracking and visual processing
Increased impulsivity and inattention
Struggles with forming friendships

Using Wired for Movement to make a difference

By combining neuro-developmental movement patterns, coordination sequences, and vestibular exercises, the Wired for Movement games in this program aim to enable children to have:

- ✓ Boosted Self-Esteem: Increased success in physical and academic tasks
- ✓ Enhanced Social Skills: Greater confidence and ability to participate in group activities
- ✓ Heightened Emotional Regulation: Reduced anxiety and emotional outbursts.
- ✓ Better Academic Performance: Increased focus, improved handwriting, & enhanced reading skills
- ✓ Improved Balance and Coordination: Enhanced ability to perform physical activities with ease

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?

Primitive 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 react strongly to sudden stimuli, like loud noises, unexpected touches, or changes in head position? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 2 Do they struggle to calm down or self-soothe after becoming stressed or overwhelmed? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3 Do they experience emotional or behavioural challenges, such as anxiety, impulsivity, or difficulty interacting with others socially? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 4 Do they show sensitivity to certain types of touch or pressure, reacting negatively or excessively to things like clothing materials, textures, or physical contact? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 5 Do they have difficulty maintaining balance or coordinating their movements during physical activities, such as running or jumping? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 6 Do they frequently display exaggerated startle responses, even when there is no obvious threat or trigger? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 7 Do they have trouble maintaining focus or paying attention during tasks, such as school work or activities that require concentration? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 8 Do they experience difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or experience restless sleep patterns? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 9 Are they overly sensitive to sensory stimuli, such as bright lights, loud noises, or strong smells? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 10 Do they show signs of insecure attachment to caregivers, such as being clingy, having trouble separating, or needing excessive reassurance? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Total:

Primitive Reflexes : Follow up Assessment

Name of child:

Date:

Adult:

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 react strongly to sudden stimuli, like loud noises, unexpected touches, or changes in head position? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 2 Do they struggle to calm down or self-soothe after becoming stressed or overwhelmed? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3 Do they experience emotional or behavioural challenges, such as anxiety, impulsivity, or difficulty interacting with others socially? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
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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 top tip 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 group up for success.

Consistency is Key – Focus on Repetition and Routine:

- 1 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:

- 2 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:

- 3 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:

- 4 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:

- 5 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 retained Primitive 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.

Establish a Predictable Routine

- 1 Establishing a predictable daily routine can help reduce your child's anxiety and provide a sense of security. This routine should include consistent times for waking up, meals, play, study, and bedtime. Additionally, preparing your child for transitions between activities by giving them advance notice can further ease their anxiety and help them feel more in control."

Provide a Calming Environment

- 2 Loud noises, bright lights, and other stimuli can overwhelm children with retained primitive reflexes. Creating a calm environment with soft lighting and white noise can help reduce reflex frequency and intensity. Consider using calming strategies like gentle music or nature sounds to make their surroundings more soothing.

Use Calming Strategies

- 3 Calming strategies such as deep breathing, meditation, and visualisation can help your child relax and reduce the intensity of their startle reflex. Encourage your child to practise these techniques regularly, perhaps incorporating them into their daily routine.

Provide Deep Pressure Input

- 4 Deep pressure input or compression clothing can help calm the nervous system and improve body awareness, aiding in the integration of primitive reflexes. Consider using weighted blankets, compression vests, or snug-fitting clothing to provide this sensory support.

Encourage Physical Activity

- 5 Physical activity, such as running, jumping, and climbing, can help your child develop their gross motor skills and improve their balance and coordination. Encourage your child to engage in age-appropriate physical activities regularly, ensuring they have plenty of opportunities for active play each day.

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.



pushed down into their chest.

On the instruction **'spring time'**, they slowly and gently unfurl their limbs, their petals reaching up to the sun. Their limbs extend high and then wide, ending with their arms and legs wide resting on the floor. They hold this position for 10 seconds.

Then, hearing the instruction **'winter time'**, they reverse their movement by slowly contracting their legs and arms and wrapping themselves up tight. Once they have returned to bud form, they hold for 10 seconds before repeating three to five times.

Make it a success
This repetitive activity is designed to relax and improve body awareness and inhibit startle reflexes. Focus on a rhythmic opening, holding and closing choreography.

Progressions & Variations
For those who find the slow pace too challenging, combine a series of quick opening and closing buds, then incremental movements (like a stop-motion animation) before progressing to a slow, controlled sequence.

Primary Purpose
To help integrate primitive startle reflexes and enhance proprioception.

Proprioception, Body Awareness, Emotional Resilience, Reflexes, Coordination, Gymnastics

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.

On their right hand like a bud wrapped in leaves, they hold for 10 seconds.

Then, hearing the instruction **'winter time'**, they reverse their movement by slowly contracting their legs and arms and wrapping themselves up tight. Once they have returned to bud form, they hold for 10 seconds before repeating three to five times.

Make it a success
This repetitive and rhythmic spatial awareness activity is designed to relax and improve body awareness and inhibit startle reflexes. Focus on a rhythmic opening, holding and closing choreography.

Progressions & Variations
For those who find the slow pace too challenging, combine a series of quick opening and closing buds, then incremental movements (like a stop-motion animation) before progressing to a slow, controlled sequence.

Primary Purpose
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Proprioception, Body Awareness, Emotional Resilience, Reflexes, Coordination, Gymnastics

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

Once they have returned to bud form, they hold for 10 seconds before repeating three to five times.

Progressions & Variations
For those who find the slow pace too challenging, combine a series of quick opening and closing buds, then incremental movements (like a stop-motion animation) before progressing to a slow, controlled sequence.

Make it a success
This repetitive and rhythmic spatial awareness activity is designed to relax and improve body awareness and inhibit startle reflexes. Focus on a rhythmic opening, holding and closing choreography.

Primary Purpose
To help integrate primitive startle reflexes and enhance proprioception.

Proprioception, Body Awareness, Emotional Resilience, Reflexes, Coordination, Gymnastics, Mats, Track 7 ZEN

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.

This repetitive and rhythmic spatial awareness activity is designed to relax and improve body awareness and inhibit startle reflexes. Focus on a rhythmic opening, holding and closing choreography.

Everyone should extend and contract their movements from the core.

Encourage everyone to feel the warmth and joyfulness of the sun on their soft petals as they extend their limbs wide.

Primary Purpose
To help integrate primitive startle reflexes and enhance proprioception.

Proprioception, Body Awareness, Emotional Resilience, Reflexes, Coordination, Gymnastics

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 Primitive Reflexes Programme

Block 1 - Weeks 1 - 8

	Game	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week 1	Rise and Shine Egg					
Week 2	Rocking Bubble Capture					
Week 3	Olympic Skydivers The Sneaky Crawler Biscuit Thief!					
Week 4	Criss-cross Beanbags Snow Angels					
Week 5	Rise and Shine Egg					
Week 6	Rocking Bubble Capture					
Week 7	Olympic Skydivers The Sneaky Crawler Biscuit Thief!					
Week 8	Criss-cross Beanbags Snow Angels					

Weeks 9 - 16 next page...

The Small Group Primitive Reflexes Programme

Block 2 - Weeks 9 - 16

	Game	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week 9	Egg Spring Flowers					
Week 10	The Human Rolling Pin The Restful Floor					
Week 11	The Sneaky Crawler Biscuit Thief! The Slow Motion Escape					
Week 12	Criss-cross Beanbags The Artistic Nose					
Week 13	Egg Spring Flowers					
Week 14	The Human Rolling Pin The Restful Floor					
Week 15	The Sneaky Crawler Biscuit Thief! The Slow Motion Escape					
Week 16	Criss-cross Beanbags The Artistic Nose					

Bubble Capture

No
Equip

Solo

Exploration

How to play

- 1** You're walking along when you suddenly become enclosed in a very big bubble! This bubble is very thick and strong and will not pop.
- 2** Now the bubble is starting to shrink all around you and is squishing you! Show how you are trapped in it and use your body to push the bubble away from you.
- 3** As you push the bubble one way, it moves closer in the opposite direction. Use every part of your body to constantly push the bubble away. When I shout **'Pop'**, the bubble disappears. Repeat the game.



Progressions & Variations

Encourage the use of the whole space so children can sit and lie down as the bubble closes in. While on the floor, the bubble starts to squish them and roll them about.

Children work in pairs, standing back to back and/or lying back to back. They work together to push the enclosing bubble away.

Reverse the bubble, so it starts very close to the body and then expands. Children have to pull it back in - as they pull in one piece, another expands away from them.

Make it a Success

This activity stimulates a kinaesthetic response from the imagination, which improves awareness of different proprioceptive states. Help create the drama of the situation and encourage children to be imaginative.

Encourage the children to use their whole body and bend and straighten their limbs, squatting down while pushing out, bending the knee and pushing forward.

Pull and push and stretch this strange bubble, with arms, feet, legs, the front and back of the head etc.

Primary Purpose

To enhance awareness of different proprioceptive states by stimulating a kinaesthetic response from the imagination.



Proprioception



Body Control



Gross Motor



Creative Thinking



Cardio Fitness



Dance
Gymnastics

**Wired
For
Movement**

Criss-cross Beanbags

Equip

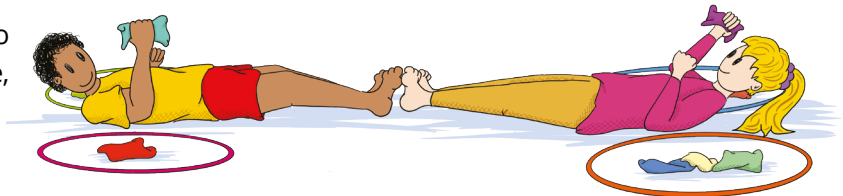
Pairs

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**

Exploration

How to play

- Imagine you are inside an egg and are ready to hatch free. Lie on your back and curl up tight.
- To emerge from your egg, slowly and purposefully push out your hands, arms, legs and head to crack the egg. Crack the shell of your egg. Spread your arms and legs and emerge free and happy into the world.
- Jump up, and wander around the room. When I call out 'Egg', stand still, lower yourself to the floor and curl up tight as if you were in an egg again. Repeat three or four times and then add some of the variations below.



Progressions & Variations

The group can imagine that they are whatever being they choose to be: a bird, a dinosaur, a monster, a mermaid, a lizard, a cloud!

Partner up and pretend that, as twins, they slowly unfurl themselves and stretch out to break through the egg and emerge into the world.

Make it a success

This activity is designed to help integrate the primitive startle reflexes. The participants should focus on the tight foetal position at the start and the control of opening out and the sense of breaking through into a happy world of wonder and freedom.

This is a drama-like activity, so you may need strong leadership to help everyone get the most of it. If you see a few good examples, demonstrate their performance to the class.

Some children may benefit from a weight on them like a towel or a bib, so that they have a tactile sense of their imagined experience.

Primary Purpose

A repeating activity to help integrate the Moro reflex to reduce anxiety and impulsive behaviour



Reflexes
Coordination



Self Esteem



Emotional Resilience
Creative Thinking



Gymnastics
Dance

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



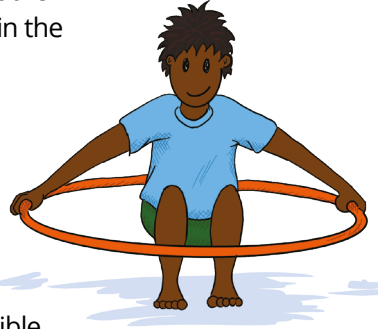
Gymnastics



Muscle Tone

How to play

- 1** (Instruct the children to collect a hoop, find a space in the room facing you, put the hoop on the floor, and then stand in the middle of it).
Crouching down inside your hoop, spread your hands out and slowly pick up the hoop.
Slowly stand up, lifting the hoop around you very slowly, until it is as high above your head as possible.
- 2** Stand on tiptoes. Now walk on tiptoes for 10 steps, stop, then lower the hoop back to the floor and crouch back down.
(Repeat as they move around the room).
- 3**



Progressions & Variations

Go through all the movements but without a hoop.

Close the eyes when the hoop passes up past the eyes. Eyes stay closed while on tiptoe but then open when they move and repeat.

In pairs, the children share one hoop and position themselves outside of it.

Make it a success

The warm up should include the children lifting and lowering themselves in their space, progressing to jumping up and crouching down, then rising quickly and staying on tiptoe before crouching down again.

The purpose of this activity is to improve balance during a controlled movement and a static hold. The hoop is there to help their balance.

To improve balance, the children should follow the movement of the hoop and fix their gaze on it when it's extended above their head.



Vestibular



Body Control
Locomotion



Gross Motor Skills
Reflexes



Gymnastics
Dance



Muscle Tone



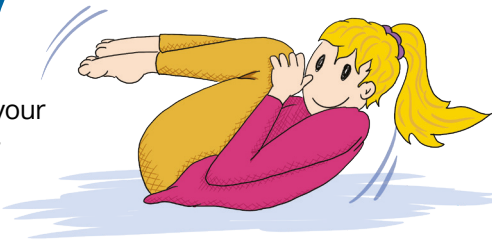
Hoops

Primary Purpose

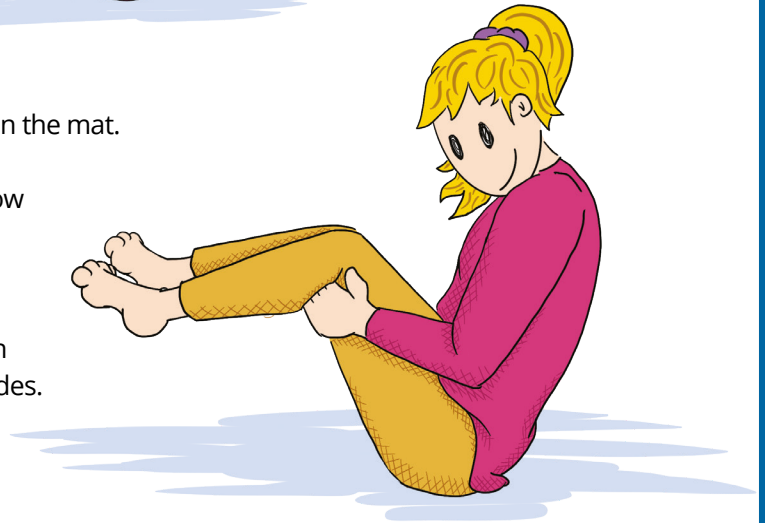
To improve balance and muscle tone

How to play

- 1 Lie on your back on a mat, hug your knees with your arms, tuck your chin into your chest and round your back. Begin to slowly rock forwards and backwards, with control. You should feel every part of your spine being massaged on the mat.



- 2 Once everyone has practised moving in slow and controlled movements, instruct the children to hold their position at either end of the rocking motion, holding for a count of one, three, or five seconds when balanced on their tailbone or shoulder blades.



- 3 Are they able to massage all the bones of the spine during the rocking motion and hold a near motionless pose when either all the way forward or back?

Progressions & Variations

Working in pairs, one rocks and the other supports their partner as they hold their position. Support is provided only when required and only as much as necessary.

The pairs can rock side-by-side and pause in unison.

Start from a standing position and crouch down to rock. This can be extended to start and finish in a standing position.

Make it a success

This activity focuses on inhibiting the spinal Galant reflex and assisting midline and homolateral development. Encourage the group to rock in a straight line, feeling the spine as it rocks along the mat.

It is important to keep the chin tucked into the chest and the back rounded.

Primary Purpose

To improve hand-eye coordination and tracking across the midline



Reflexes
Coordination
Gross Motor Skills



Gymnastics



Muscle Tone



Mats



Body Control

How to play

1 Lying down on their back, the children start with their legs together, stretched out, and arms down, palms to the floor. Then, open the legs wide and bring the arms wide, around the body, hands touching above the head. Hold for three seconds and then return and repeat for about 2 minutes to get a rhythm.

2 Next, change it to combine different coordinated movements, led by your command. Start simple with coordinating just one side, progress to opposing sides and then sequence individual limbs. For example, the left leg and left arm, then left leg and right arm, then individually move right leg first, left arm, left leg, right arm, in order.

3 Always end with a few free-form whole-body snow angels.



Progressions & Variations

For children who find this challenging, simplify by moving one limb at a time and progressing to both arms, then both legs, then same sided leg and arm until they can form a snow angel.

Working in threes, the partners work together with one child, applying light resistance to the leg and the other to the arm being moved. One of them needs to give the instruction to move.

When doing this solo, each child has to have their eyes closed and move only on the sound of a clap.

Make it a success

Movements are to be slow and coordinated. The hands connect at the point the legs fully open, the hands touch the legs when the legs close.

When children are confident with the move, guide them to breathe in during the creation of the snow angel shape and slowly breathe out to return to the starting position.

Emphasis is always on the coordinated movement, the speed of each limb to be constant with every limb.

Primary Purpose

To improve spatial awareness, left and right coordination and inhibit the spinal Galant reflex.



Proprioception



Reflexes
Coordination
Gross Motor Skills



How to play

1 Everyone begins this activity on their back on a mat, curled up tight like a bud in early spring. Their arms are wrapped around their legs and their legs are pushed down into their chest.

2 On the instruction '**spring time**', they slowly and gently unfurl their limbs, their petals reaching up to the sun. Their limbs extend high and then wide, ending with their arms and legs wide resting on the floor. They hold this position for 10 seconds.

3 Then, hearing the instruction '**winter time**', they reverse their movement by slowly contracting their legs and arms and wrapping themselves up tight. Once they have returned to bud form, they hold for 10 seconds before repeating three to five times.



Progressions & Variations

For those who find the slow pace too challenging, combine a series of quick opening and closing buds, then incremental movements (like a stop-motion animation) before progressing to a slow, controlled sequence.

Make it a success

This repetitive and rhythmic spatial awareness activity is designed to relax and improve body awareness and inhibit startle reflexes. Focus on a rhythmic opening, holding and closing choreography.

Everyone should extend and contract their movements from the core.

Encourage everyone to feel the warmth and joyfulness of the sun on their soft petals as they extend their limbs wide.

Primary Purpose

To help integrate primitive startle reflexes and enhance proprioception.



Proprioception



Body Awareness
Emotional Resilience



Reflexes
Coordination



Gymnastics



Body Control



Mats

Track 7
zen



Wired
For
Movement

How to play

- 1 Everyone lies on their back and imagines that instead of a nose, they have a long paintbrush. With their imaginary paintbrush, they paint the room around them with any colour they like, dipping their brush into the many imaginary pots of paint next to them.
- 2 To paint, they need to move their head to create the paintbrush strokes. They can use long, steady motions, short flicks, and curved, circular or straight lines. To change the colour of the paint, they dip their brush into a new pot and continue again.
- 3 Now let them move around, standing near objects or the wall and painting along the lines, or perhaps adding new designs of all manner of colours and textures.



Progressions & Variations

Place a finger along the nose and point the finger at the areas to paint. Close one eye and move the head to paint using the nose and finger combo.

Provide the group with objects to paint that they can hold, like a football.

Make it a success

Encourage the group to envision a rich mixture of colours, and to blink, relax, and breathe deeply as they create their masterpieces.

This may be an invisible creation, but we want to encourage lots of long movements to relax the neck muscles. The length of the paintbrush and thickness of the brush is their choice.

Remind everyone to paint ahead, to their left and right, down low and up high. A full range of motion - not all at once, but throughout the activity.

Primary Purpose

To integrate the visual-ocular reflex and reduce strain in the visual system.



Visual Perception



Creative Thinking
Introspection
Calm and Relaxation



Reflexes



Self Esteem

How to play

1 In pairs sit by your mat. Start by rolling from one end of the mat to the other and back again. To roll, interlock your fingers, rest your head between your arms, and keep your legs and ankles together.

2 One of you becomes a rolling pin. Lie down on your back and hold a ball (football, or similarly sized) in both hands above your head, legs and ankles together. Your partner is the baker. They are going to roll you along the pastry (mat) and back. Don't drop the ball!

3 After each there-and-back, swap over. After a few of these, the activity changes and the bakers bring their mats together to create a longer pastry and rapidly roll the person to each end.



Progressions & Variations

Do this as a group of three, two bakers working together to roll the pin back-and-forth. One baker is positioned by shoulder and hip, the other by the hip and ankles.

Use balls of assorted sizes. The rolling pins can hold a ball between their hands or ankles.

Have a rolling pin race against other groups.

Make it a success

The child being rolled should remain rigid throughout the movement. They can do this by locking their head between their arms and holding their thighs and ankles tightly together.

The core muscles will be activated to hold the hips and torso in this rigid position.

To really activate the vestibular, the bakers should work together in the rapid movement of the pin, moving it forwards and backwards in coordinated moves.



Vestibular
Proprioception



Teamwork



Reflexes



Gymnastics



Muscle Tone



Mats
Balls of assorted sizes



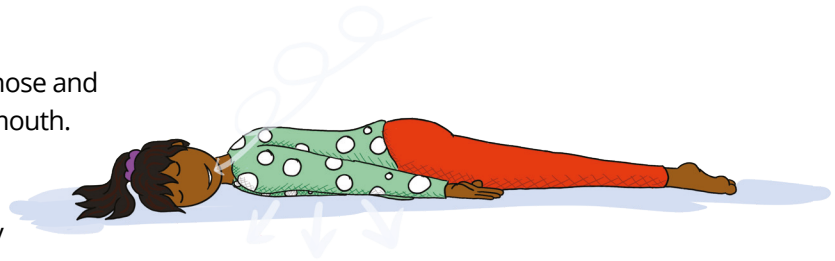
Body Control
Locomotion

Primary Purpose

To improve balance, muscle tone and whole body coordination

How to play

- 1** In a space within the room, lie down on your front with your eyes closed, head turned to one side and arms loose by your sides.
- 2** Breathe deeply in through the nose and exhale slowly out through the mouth. You should feel your tummy pushing into the floor as you inhale, and moving away from it as you exhale.
- 3** Focus on the rhythm of your breathing and the feeling of the changing pressures from the floor. What sensation does this have on your body?



Progressions & Variations

Lying on their backs and placing the flat of their hands on their stomach, they can feel the rise and fall of their hand as it moves with their breathing.

Turn the head halfway through the time spent on the activity.

Make it a success

This relaxing activity is designed to induce a state of calmness and relax the sympathetic nervous system. Keeping a steady rhythm helps this; help them by counting slowly up to three as they breathe in, and then slowly back down to one as they breathe out.

This feeling of the stomach on the floor focuses the attention on deep, diaphragmatic breathing.

Primary Purpose

To become deeply relaxed and experience a connecting whole-body sensation



Tactile



Calm & Relaxation
Emotional Resilience
Body Awareness



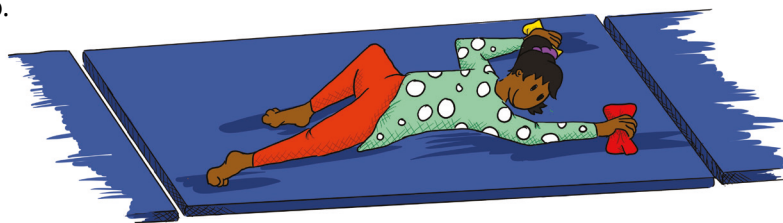
Self Esteem

How to play

- 1 Set out a number of lines of mats with a pile of beanbags at one end. Group the children evenly per mat, ready for a relay.
- 2 At the end of the mats there are biscuits (beanbags). You must army-crawl to the biscuits, collect 2 each without being seen and return to your group and tag the next person to go.

The crawling action is this: keeping your body flat, reach far forward with the left hand and, at the same time, bend the right knee up to the side of your body.

- 3 Move by pushing down with the foot and pulling with the hand. When you can't move forward any further, swap over limbs - reach up with your right hand and bend your left knee. Always watch the hand which is in front of you.



Progressions & Variations

As the children travel, create a clapping rhythm for children to move to. On the first clap, they go to one side and on the next to the other side. Change the speed and tempo to keep it engaging.

This game can be competitive. Stretch out a rope above the mats that mustn't be touched. Children who touch it can only bring one biscuit back.

The first team to bring back a certain number of biscuits wins.

Make it a success

This is a specific neuro-developmental movement pattern, so the focus is on the quality of the coordinated movement. Left leg-right arm pull and push, right leg-left arm pull and push.

Reach far ahead and pull the body with the hand and push down with the foot. The head turns slightly so the eyes track the movement of the forward reaching hand.

Keep the body as flat as possible. The tummy, chest, legs and toes should all be on the floor.



Vestibular



Games



Reflexes
Coordination
Gross Motor Skills



Mats
Beanbags



Body Control
Locomotion



Body Awareness



Primary Purpose

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



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