



Vranch House
Ideas to help Develop Ability to Cross Midline

Definition:

The ability to cross midline reflects the degree of bilateral integration development. Mature midline crossing patterns should be demonstrated by ages 5 - 7 years.

Functional implications:

- During writing the student tends to pull or place the paper to the dominant side and will tend to slide to that side of the chair,
- If asked to draw a line across the paper the child may turn the paper so that there is no need to cross the midline.
- The child may begin writing with the dominant hand and upon reaching the centre of the body may change the pencil to the other hand.
- Students may have difficulty visually scanning from the dominant to the non-dominant side - this may be evident when reading or copying from the board.
- Doing some patterns will be tricky e.g. eeee.
- Shoelace tying is very difficult

Activities to Help Improve Midline Crossing:

1. Place rubber hoops / bangles on each arm and encourage the child to remove them with the opposite hand.
2. Encourage child to hit at a suspended balloon - ensuring that they do not turn their body to avoid crossing the midline.
3. Wrap one arm loosely in toilet paper and encourage the child to remove the paper with the opposite hand.
4. Sit on the floor or on paper and draw a circle all round with chalk - ensuring no changing of the drawing hand or turning the body round.
5. Sit on the floor and roll a ball all the way around you on the floor using one hand.
6. Place finger puppets on one hand so they can be removed with the opposite hand.
7. Place Blue-tac pictures to the wall that have to be retrieved by reaching for them in different directions.
8. Play with a small car along a road map, ensuring wide areas and movement that requires the child to cross from left to right.
9. Walk sideways along a line/rope/balance beam - crossing legs over each other.
10. Cut out right and left feet shapes - place these so the child must cross his legs when walking on the shapes.
11. Play percussion instruments / cymbals / triangle / clapping hands etc.
12. Bi-lateral activities: threading beads / folding paper / sewing cards / small wind-up toys / cutting and pasting.
13. Position yourself in side sitting on the floor when doing fine motor activities so that one hand has to cross the body.
14. Bang blocks together in midline – preferably with a piece of rhythmic music!
15. Draw large circles / horizontal figure of 8 on the chalkboard without lifting the chalk and keeping the elbows as straight as possible.

CROSSING THE MIDLINE (continued)

16. Make figures of eight, letter 'B's, circles and other patterns with streamers. Hold with both hands or one in each hand. (You can use a ruler or piece of wood and attach long plastic streamers to it e.g. strips of rubbish bags or ribbons).
17. Remove lids from containers.
18. Play lots with constructional games e.g. Lego, Meccano, etc.
19. Dressing up games.
20. Flag drill - copy own arm positions from leader using colourful flags.
21. Simon says e.g. cross your legs / touch your left ear with your right hand / swing your arms side to side across the body.
22. Mirror different postures performed by your parent or another person:
e.g. copy left hand on right ear, cross arms and place hands on opposite knees, stretch left arm out to side and place right hand on left shoulder. The variations are endless – but try to involve some crossing of midline with each movement.
23. Pass beanbags from one hand to the other across the body - try to do this blindfolded.
24. Plant seeds in the garden, keeping trunk of body still. Move arm across body.
25. Reach across the body - hitting a suspended ball with bat, or cardboard tube as a bat or hand e.g. tennis ball in the toe of a stocking hung from the clothes line.
26. Draw large shapes on a blackboard or whiteboard. Don't turn body – just arms!
27. Draw a huge clock on a board. Keep the body still while you write the numbers on.

Strategies to Help Develop Midline Crossing:

- Talk to the child about crossing of the midline. Make sure they understand.
- Make sure the chair is central to the desk with paper centrally in front of them.
- Reinforce good sitting posture - asking the child to sit squarely on the chair and avoid twisting the body or tilting the head.
- When passing objects to the child, hold them initially at a distance so as to encourage reaching past the body's midline to grasp them.
- Watch out for compensatory turning!

Some writing patterns that you can practise in conjunction with the above:

- ❖ Any patterns that change direction
- ❖ Patterns which cross midline.
- ❖ Try with eyes open, eyes closed

Examples:

//// \\\ \ o o o uuu leading to:
 ccccc oooo eeeee **lelelele** lelele llll lllll

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Adapted for Vranch House

leaflets/crossing midline updated Jan 2016