

## Proprioceptive Activities

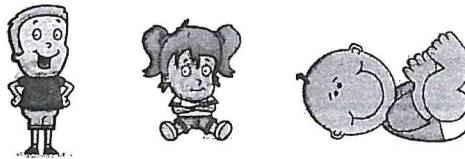
### Definition:

- ◆ Most people know that we have 5 senses: sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. However, there are other very important senses not included in this list.
- ◆ Awareness of our body position / movement, or **proprioception** is one of these.
- ◆ We do not learn about this sense, so most people are unaware of it. This can be a problem when the proprioceptive sense is not working well. If we are not aware of it, it is hard to understand the problems related to it.
- ◆ **Proprioception** refers to the processing of sensations received from the muscles and joints of our body. It allows us to know where each part of our body is and how it is moving.
- ◆ If we close our eyes and move our arm, we know exactly where our arm is in relation to our body without having to look.
- ◆ This helps us to perform everyday tasks i.e. dressing, without having to rely on our vision.
- ◆ Proprioception helps our body **organise** itself for useful activity.

### Functional Implications:

- ◆ Children tend to fidget and move a lot in order to produce the sensation to feed themselves with sensory input
- ◆ Poor attention to task i.e. the child has to pay more attention to things that should happen automatically i.e. sitting in a chair, rather than focusing on task provided
- ◆ Excessive or insufficient force on objects, e.g. holding a pencil so hard it breaks
- ◆ May have inefficient / awkward pencil grip
- ◆ May be clumsy and fall frequently

**Activities to try at home or school**-some of these activities are really useful if provided before or during class activities. It should be remembered that the activities need to be appropriate to the child



### **Standing and sitting and lying**

- Place linked hands on head and press down hard: count out loud slowly to 10 – keep pressing!
- Place palms of hands together in front of chest and press hands together: count out loud slowly to 10 – keep pressing!
- Stamp, slowly and heavily, with alternate feet, in rhythm: 20 stamps
- Jump, slowly and heavily, in rhythm: 10 jumps.
- Bear hug: fold arms over tummy, and hold onto your sides. Give yourself a big hug and squeeze! Keep hugging, and count out loud to 10.
- Sitting, place hands on knees and press down: count out loud to 10.
- Chair press-ups: put your hands on the sides of the chair and press down to lift your body weight off the seat: 5 times
- Desk press-ups: stand between 2 desks, place one hand on each desk, and lift your feet up. Desks must be secure and solid!
- Press-ups, or cat-lapping press-ups (these are press-ups done in a crawl position, with knees drawn up under hips: they are easier!)

This information leaflet has been taken from Virgin Care.

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- Do wall push ups with claps in between
- Hand-walking: from lying on the sofa, walk forward on your hands until just your feet are left supported on the sofa, then walk back on your hands
- Play on pull up bars (can be put in the doorways at home)
- Push against a wall, use other body parts to push against the wall, head and back, hips and shoulders (one side at a time), bottom and feet. Can sing to the tune of 'If you're happy and you know it' with the following words

Push your hands against the wall, on the wall (repeat)

Push your hands against the wall, and do not let them fall

Push your hands against the wall on the wall

- Bounce on a space hopper
- Use cardboard boxes, blankets and pillows to make dens
- Animal walks – walking like a bear, crab, giraffe.
- Encourage child to play on tummy, pushing or weight bearing on their hands
- Colour a rainbow on a large piece of paper or outside with chalk on hands and knees
- Use a squeeze ball and squash it flat in as many different ways as you can
- Blowing games: blow a heavy cardboard tube across the table or floor, straws or empty washing liquid bottles can be used to direct the air flow
- Using playdough, stand at a table, place palms over the dough and press flat. Repeat several times. Roll the dough into sausages, or use a rolling pin.



#### **Movement – with and without partner**

- Army crawl
- Crawl football
- Bunny hops
- Jumping on a trampoline – you may want to add wrist weights around the ankles
- Ride a bike
- Use roller skates
- Encourage climbing activities
- Pushing a box filled with heavy items (filled bottles, cans etc.) This activity is better if the child is on their knees in a crawling position.
- Put child in a heavy cardboard box and get the other to push him along
- Put heavy items in a cardboard box and encourage child to push it around obstacles – “driving a car”
- Participate in activities like horse riding, swimming, karate
- Fill a pillowcase with toys for weight and encourage child to pull up stairs
- Play 'going camping' by pulling heavy blankets over chairs
- Play jumping games
- Jumping and climbing in and out of inner tubes
- Play catch or roll a heavy ball
- Move and crash into sofa cushions
- Roll, walk or run up a hill
- Yoga
- Play 'row, row, row your boat'
- Play by two children sitting back to back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor, interlock arms and then try to stand up at the same time
- Kneel facing each other, and place palms together, and push against each other: see if you can move the other person



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