



Improving Your Child's Gross Motor Skills

Did You Know?

Typically, children who are 2 years of age can jump in place, and children who are 3 years of age can ride a tricycle and can also stand on one foot for a brief amount of time. These skills involve “gross motor skills.”



“Gross motor skills” refers to the coordinated movement of large muscle groups. It is beneficial for children to have both unstructured opportunities and planned activities in order to develop these skills. Use the following ideas in order to enhance your child’s gross motor development:

Obstacle Courses- For an exciting activity that is also beneficial for developing gross motor skills, set up an obstacle course for your child. This can be done inside and outside. Use tape or objects to design an obstacle course. For example, at the first object or piece of tape, have your child do 10 jumping jacks. At the next object or piece of tape, have them hop 7 times on each leg.

Balance- Make your child’s daily routine fun by incorporating balance activities. For example, while in line at the grocery store or during TV commercials play a balance game with your child. Have them stand on one leg for as long as they can, and then switch to the other leg. For an added challenge, have them try the same activity with their eyes closed.

Ball Skills- Help your child to develop ball skills, by starting slowly. Begin with a small and soft ball, such as a tennis ball, and roll it to your child or toss it lightly using an underhand technique. Be patient, because it takes practice. Ball skills are great for helping children to develop hand eye coordination.

Creative playtime- Allow your child to have unstructured time to play inside or outside in a safe space. This will help foster gross motor skills by allowing them to explore various movements that they choose. For instance, the park is a great place where your child can explore the equipment and how their body moves.

Hopscotch- This game is a great way for children to develop coordination and balance. If you do not have sidewalk chalk, simply play hopping games, such as hop on one foot 5 times and then switch. See who can go the longest without having to take a break!

Each day, make sure your child is physically active and moves in different ways, to promote proper gross motor development and to have fun in the process!