



**Integrated Community Paediatric Services
Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service**

Worksheet A



Balance, Coordination and Motor Planning

Some children struggle with balancing due to poor core strength. Other's struggle due to instability of their joints. For some, it can be a fear of falling that limits their practise opportunities. Some children lack general coordination skills which makes them appear clumsy and awkward. It can take these children longer to learn unfamiliar motor skills and sequence movements.

Children with more **significant gross motor concerns** e.g. deteriorating or loss of skills, difficulties getting up from the floor, significant trips and falls, pain etc should be **referred for physiotherapy assessment via their GP.**

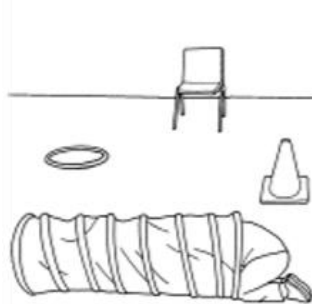
Area of Difficulty	Strategy	Tick when strategy has been tried and add comments.
Child has difficulty balancing	<p>Offer regular opportunities to practise core stability (see sitting posture ideas) and balance activities. These ideas should be completed in PE/Gym Trail sessions and at home at least 3 times a week for 15-20mins.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>©Physiotools</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Half Kneeling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kneel on the floor with one foot positioned forward. - Throw, catch or bounce a ball with your partner or throw objects onto a hoop/box. - Be careful not to fall over or use your hands to support on your legs. - Repeat with other foot positioned forwards. Try swapping feet without falling over or putting hands down. </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>©Physiotools</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <p>Box/Ball Balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stand on one leg with the other foot resting on a low box or ball for 1, 2, 3... etc aim to beat your own record. - A slightly deflated ball would be easier to start with as it wont roll around so easily. - Try rolling the ball forwards, backwards and to the sides just using your foot. - Roll the ball to the child and see if they can stop it by placing their foot on top of it. See if the child can hold the ball still with their foot for 1, 2, 3...etc. <p>Repeat with the other leg.</p> </div> </div>	

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	 <p>©Physiotools</p> <p>Bridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Small gap between your knees. - Lift your bottom off the floor as high as possible. - Hold for 1, 2, 3...secs. Aim to increase length of time. - Try passing a ball under your bottom and over your tummy. - Return to starting position SLOWLY. - Repeat.  <p>©Physiotools</p> <p>Line walking/Line jump</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tape a line on the floor about 5m long using masking tape. - Walk forwards along the line, using your arms to balance. - Once you have mastered walking forwards, try other ways. For example, heel-to-toe, walking sideways, walking backwards, walking on tip-toes, walking on heels. - Start at one end of the line and jump from side to side to the other end. Make sure you bend your knees and keep your feet together. 	
	<p>Include the child in regular Gym Trail (small group gross motor sessions) to enable them to practise their skills.</p>	
	<p>Ensure the child is wearing supportive footwear.</p>	
<p>Child struggles to coordinate their body to perform new or unfamiliar motor tasks or</p>	<p>Offer regular opportunities to practise motor planning and bilateral coordination activities. These ideas can be incorporated into Gym trail, PE lessons, playtimes and leisure activities at home. They should be completed at least 3 times a week for 15-20 mins E.g.</p>	

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movement
 sequences



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Obstacle Course

Go through an obstacle course that incorporates different movements e.g. rolling, creeping, crawling, kneeling, hopping, jumping etc.

Use boxes, barrels, chairs, tables, ropes, blankets, ladders etc.

Follow instructions that tell you how to move your body in space.

For example 'Crawl under the chairs', 'Stand on the chair', 'Make your body as big as an elephant', 'Make your body as little as an ant'.

Practise the following terms: in, out, over, under, little and big.



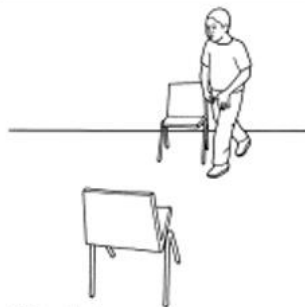
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Imitate Body Positions

Look carefully as someone demonstrates some body positions.

Try to copy them.

Include body positions that involve crossing the midline of the body e.g. hand to opposite knee.



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Weaving around Chairs

Place two chairs or cones about 2 - 3 m apart on the floor.

Make sure you have adequate space around them.




Walk around the chairs in a figure of eight pattern.

Can you skip around the chairs in a figure of eight pattern?



Can you hit a balloon up in the air at the same time as walking around them?

Make it more difficult by having a partner start at the other end and try to pass you in the middle without bumping into one another.

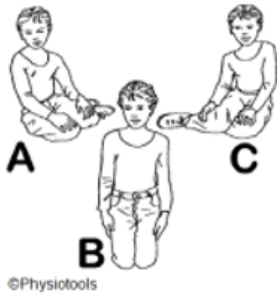
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	 <p>Don't Spill</p> <p>Walk from one side of the room to the other whilst balancing a tray with small non-breakable items on it. Step carefully to avoid obstacles that have been placed in your path e.g. cones, balance beams.</p> <p>©Physiotools</p>  <p>Star Jumps</p> <p>Stand with your legs together and your arms by your sides. Jump into the air, landing with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms out wide. Jump into the air again, bringing your feet back together and your arms by your side. Repeat until a rhythm is obtained. Floor spots could be used to mark foot position on ground e.g. one red spot in the middle with a blue spot either side.</p> <p>©Physiotools</p>	
	<p>Include the child in regular Gym Trail (small group gross motor sessions) to enable them to practise their skills.</p>	
	<p>Remember the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate for the child to copy • Talk the activity through, describing exactly what the child's arms/hands/legs need to do. • Break the activity down into parts and practise each of these first. • Visual cues e.g. spots on the ground for them to position their limbs on may also help. • The child may need more repetition than others when learning new tasks. • You may need to give the child some "hands on" prompting / help to give the child a "feel" of the required movement or position. 	
	<p>YouTube videos, for example those produced by Griffin OT can be used to guide children through easy movement sequences and could be used as part of a warm up.</p> 	
	<p>Refer to above strategies</p>	

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<p>Child trips and falls and bumps into people and objects</p> <p>Child appears clumsy and awkward in their movements</p>	<p>Consider the child's position in the classroom e.g. move them closer to the door to reduce their need to negotiate a busy classroom</p> <hr/> <p>Consider that the child may not be paying attention to their environment and this is why they are having accidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage them to slow down - Encourage them to look where they are going <hr/> <p>Consider offering more focussed activities during playtimes e.g. set up games which will encourage the child/children to stay in one area of the playground rather than moving around the busy playground where they may be more at risk of tripping/bumping into others etc.</p>	
<p>Child is floppy and requires increased effort to initiate movements</p> <p>Child fatigues quickly</p>	<p>Offer 'alerting' activities to help prepare the child to engage their muscles more easily. Fast, exciting movement, with frequent change in direction will help 'wake them up'.</p> <hr/> <p>Provide opportunities for the child to practise some core strengthening exercises. These ideas should be completed in PE/Gym Trail sessions and at home at least 3 times a week for 15-20mins.</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="flex: 1;">  <p>©Physiotools</p> </div> <div style="flex: 2;"> <p>Bridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Small gap between our knees. - Lift your bottom off the floor as high as possible. - Hold for 1, 2, 3...secs. Aim to increase length of time. - Try passing a ball under your bottom and over your tummy. - Return to starting position SLOWLY. - Repeat. </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="flex: 1;">  <p>©Physiotools</p> </div> <div style="flex: 2;"> <p>Sitting on a Gym Ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sit on a gym ball. Make sure the ball is the correct size and allows you to sit with feet flat and thighs level. - Carry out activities at the table, watch TV or listen to a story. - Play throwing and catching - Reach in different directions for puzzle pieces. </div> </div>	

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	 <p>High Kneeling/Side sitting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start in side sitting (A), try to move into high kneeling (B) without using your hands to help push off. SLOWLY lower to side sitting the other side (C). - Child can hold a ball or other object in their hands to prevent them using hands to push off. - Activities can be completed in the high kneeling position (see above 'half kneel' for ideas) - Repeat. 	
	<p>Allow the child to have regular rest breaks to avoid them becoming too fatigued and unable to continue. It is important that they continue to participate in physical activity to help build their stamina and strength.</p>	

<https://www.canchild.ca/en/resources/126-children-with-coordination-difficulties-a-flyer-for-physical-educators>